

# NOTRE DAME SEMINARY

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## GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY



## FORMATION HANDBOOK

### 2022-2023

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# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

## **A. The Mission of Notre Dame Seminary**

1. The immediate aim of the theologate level formation program at Notre Dame Seminary is to assist seminarians in their preparation for ordained ministry. Seminarians at the theologate stage of priestly formation have already participated in a seminary program discerning a priestly vocation and therefore bring to the theologate stage of formation a mature experience of formation.

2. Notre Dame Seminary also provides a two year pre-theology program for seminarians who possess an undergraduate or graduate degree and seek to discern if they are called to the diocesan priesthood. The pre-theology program is structured according to the norms of the USCCB's *Program of Priestly Formation* by which seminarians are fulfilling the philosophical, theological and language requirements necessary for formal study of theology.

3. While discernment of a priestly vocation does not formally conclude until ordination to the diaconate, a seminarian who has completed college or pre-theology formation enters the theologate stage of formation with a commitment to prepare for ordination.

4. The seminarian therefore embraces completely and unconditionally the expectations of the seminary program. Seminarians who enter the pre-theology program (the discipleship phase) are men who have sufficiently demonstrated their readiness to embrace priestly formation, academic rigor, and communal living. Seminarians who enter into first theology (the configurative phase) have demonstrated proficiency in all four dimensions of priestly formation and therefore are understood as Candidates for theologate formation.

5. The seminary program consists of an integrated array of formation experiences centered on the human, spiritual, intellectual, liturgical, pastoral, and personal aspects of the seminarian's life. Notre Dame Seminary supports seminarians in the discipleship, configurative, and pastoral synthesis aspects of priestly formation.

6. Every human community exists for a purpose, and each community strives to articulate the principles by which it lives. Notre Dame Seminary follows the guidelines of the governing documents on priestly formation in its formation program. These guidelines express the intent and purpose of the seminary community.

7. A priest is expected to serve God's people wholeheartedly. This loving, unselfish response to the needs of others may at times conflict with personal needs or desires. The world in which we live may view unselfish love and service to others as foolish or unfulfilling. The pursuit of a vocation to ordained ministry in the Roman Catholic Church, therefore, should be understood as a decision that may not be appreciated by everyone. It is, in that sense, a radical decision against some prevailing cultural visions.

8. The role of the priestly formation program is to assist the seminarian to understand the human dimension of life while also challenging him to direct his life toward the loving service of God's people. In order to accomplish this ideal, the seminary formation program places emphasis upon a seminarian's ability to show initiative and progress within the formation program in a personal yet verifiable manner. Each seminarian is to take personal accountability in accomplishing the demands of seminary formation.

9. The policies that order the lived experience of any community are essential in articulating the purpose for which the community exists. While they must not obscure the purpose, they are nonetheless essential to its achievement. Seminarians are expected to follow closely and purposefully the *horarium* established by the priestly formation program at Notre Dame Seminary as well as the *Rule of Life*.

10. This handbook contains policies and procedures for the purpose of allowing seminarians to discern and pursue their formation with a deliberate intent to accomplish what the Lord is asking of them. The Formation Handbook does not contain all the directives of priestly formation rather highlights for seminarians how Notre Dame Seminary implements the governing documents on priestly formation.

11. The Board of Trustees reviews and approves the following mission statement on an annual basis.

*From its establishment as a free-standing seminary in 1923 by the Archdiocese of New Orleans, Notre Dame Seminary has as its primary mission the preparation of men for the ministerial priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church. The seminary, through an integrated and balanced program of priestly formation, seeks to prepare competent pastors for the Church in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd. Additionally, in order to foster a broader outreach in service to the needs of the local Church, the seminary offers educational and formational opportunities to the lay faithful.*

*As a graduate school of theology, the seminary offers those preparing for the priesthood a Master of Divinity degree program of study. A pre-theology program is also offered to prepare seminarians for entry into this graduate theology program. Additional degree and formation programs are offered for those who aim to deepen their understanding of the Catholic intellectual tradition while preparing for leadership in the Church.*

*While primarily preparing men to serve as priests in the southern region of the United States, Notre Dame Seminary participates in the missionary activity of the Church by promoting a spirit of mission among its candidates for priesthood and lay leadership and by assisting certain missionary dioceses in other areas of the world (Spring 2019).*

## **B. Brief History of Notre Dame Seminary**

12. The establishment of a diocesan seminary in lower Louisiana was a keen concern of Bishop Louis Dubourg (1815–1826). It also proved a point of honest disagreement between himself and Bishop Joseph Rosati, C.M., the first rector of St. Mary's Seminary of the Barrens in upper Louisiana (1818), and his coadjutor since 1824. Bishop Rosati reasoned that, although property was available for a seminary on a thousand-acre site donated for that purpose by Father Bernardo de Deva in Platteville on Bayou Lafourche, priests were too scarce in both upper and lower Louisiana to assure staffing adequately a second seminary.

13. Bishop Dubourg's plan was finally realized by Bishop Antoine Blanc (1835-1860) who, in 1838, negotiated an agreement with Father John Timon, C.M., Superior of the Congregation of the Mission or Lazarist Fathers, to open a seminary in Platteville next to Assumption Church on Bayou Lafourche.

14. The official name of the institution was "The Ecclesiastical Diocesan Seminary of St. Vincent de Paul," but it was popularly known as Assumption Seminary. The first rector was Father Bonaventure Armengol, C.M. In describing the building, the editor of the 1839 issue of the Catholic Almanac noted, "The house ... is 75 feet long, 50 feet deep and two stories high, with a basement."

15. This brick building housed seminarians until 1855 when fire completely destroyed it. The students moved to Faubourg Bouligny, a New Orleans suburb, and lodged in the rectory of St. Stephen's Church on Napoleon Avenue.

16. Three years later a building was erected next to St. Stephen Church and served as a seminary staffed by Lazarists until 1867 when it was suppressed due to the financial distress of the diocese following the Civil War. Despite the shortage of funds, another effort was made little more than a decade later to establish a diocesan seminary. At the end of his life, and just before he sailed to Rome for the First Vatican Council, Archbishop Jean Odin, C.M., had plans drawn up for a building to be constructed next to the Old Ursuline Convent (then his residence) on the site of the former Ursuline chapel which had been known as St. Mary of Consolation. This building was functioning by the end of 1870, at which time Napoleon Joseph Perche was appointed the new archbishop. Although by 1873 this seminary, which was much later remodeled to become St. Mary's Italian School, had forty students and was staffed by priests of the Archdiocese, it too succumbed to financial pressure and was closed in 1881.

17. Nearly another twenty years passed before it was decided to reopen the seminary that had been built in the Faubourg Bouligny district next to St. Stephen Church. However, Archbishop James H. Blenk, S.M., rescinded that decision after only seven years.

18. Two years after his arrival as Archbishop Blenk's successor, Archbishop John W. Shaw (1918-1934) called a meeting of laymen at his Esplanade Avenue residence for the purpose of discussing with them the ways and means of erecting a substantial building on



a site acquired in 1910 through the efforts of Father Francis Prim, a pastor of Mater Dolorosa Church in the Carrollton section of New Orleans.

19. An outcome of the August 20, 1920, meeting was the launching of a capital campaign. By the following January the campaign netted close to \$1 million from some 50,000 subscribers. Encouraged by this broad-based display of interest and generosity towards a permanent major seminary, the archbishop commissioned the architect, General Allison Owen, to draw plans for Notre Dame Seminary.

20. The corner stone was laid for the handsome chateau-like building on May 7, 1922. The seminary began functioning on September 18, 1923, with 25 students from the three Louisiana dioceses registering for philosophical and theological courses. In 1925, the current archbishop's residence was built next to the seminary.

21. From the beginning of the seminary until 1967, the Marist Fathers of the Washington Province administered the seminary. The first rector was Father Charles Dubray, S.M. The number of students remained small through the formative years, not exceeding 60 until September 1932.

22. Substantial benefit for the seminary was designated from the Capital Campaign which was launched by Archbishop Francis B. Schulte.

23. In 1997, the first history of Notre Dame Seminary was published entitled, *The History of Notre Dame Seminary*, written by Reverend Mark Raphael, who was a seminarian at the time. This history was produced for the 75th anniversary of the seminary's opening, a jubilee celebrated throughout the academic year of 1998-1999 with an Open House in September, a special Eucharistic Celebration in October, and a special Alumni Day celebration in February 1999.

24. Notre Dame Seminary observed its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary during the 2013-2014 academic year. Preparing for this historic anniversary, Archbishop Gregory Aymond, the first native-born priest to be appointed Archbishop of New Orleans, received a \$7 million gift from Mr. and Mrs. Thomas and Gayle Benson, owners of the New Orleans Saints NFL football franchise, for the renovation of the Shaw Hall residential rooms. Renovations included the installation of an air temperature control system in each room, the installation of new restrooms, and a complete redesign of the dining room.

A \$25 million joint campaign was launched in Fall 2012 between Saint Joseph Seminary, Covington, Louisiana, and Notre Dame Seminary. The campaign was co-chaired by Archbishop Aymond and the Bensons. Saint Joseph Hall was renovated as a result of this joint campaign.

Tom and Gayle Benson also pledged \$2 million to renovate the convent on campus for residence by seminarians. The convent was dedicated in Fall 2018 as the Gayle and Tom Benson House of Priestly Formation. The Benson House, more familiarly called, houses 24 seminarians.

Additional upgrades and improvements to the campus in recent years include the recreation area, gym, parking lots, HVAC, outside lighting, dining room, and guest rooms.

25. In the early 1950's, as enrollment proved too large for the 90 students' rooms, Archbishop Joseph Francis Rummel (1935-1964) raised nearly \$1 million to construct St. Joseph Hall. The archbishop raised the funds to coincide with his 25th anniversary of episcopal consecration and his 50th in the priesthood. The architect for this building was Jack J. H. Kessels.

26. St. Joseph Hall, which has some student and faculty rooms, houses the seminary library with a capacity of 200,000 volumes and has an auditorium attached. Previously, Archbishop Rummel had provided a permanent brick residence on the campus for the Sisters of the Holy Family, which later was occupied by the Order of Discalced Carmelites under whom the house was known as the John of the Cross House of Studies. Today, the house serves as a House of Discernment for men who are discerning the possibility of entering the seminary.

27. During his relatively short tenure as apostolic administrator and archbishop, the Most Reverend John P. Cody (1962-1965) laid the groundwork for the emergence of Notre Dame Seminary into a provincial seminary exclusively for theological students. Prior to the establishment in 1964 of the St. John Vianney Preparatory School, also located in the Carrollton section, diocesan seminarians normally spent six years at St. Joseph Preparatory Seminary (established by the Benedictines at Gessen, Louisiana in 1891) and then six more years at Notre Dame Seminary. St. Joseph Seminary College (in Covington, Louisiana since 1902) became a four-year college seminary in 1968, serving principally the province of New Orleans.

28. In addition to the Marist Fathers, diocesan priests and others of specialized competence have been professors and lecturers at Notre Dame Seminary since the arrival of Archbishop Philip M. Hannan in 1965.

29. In 1984 a special evaluation team created by the Vatican for the purpose of studying and advising American seminaries visited Notre Dame Seminary. In 1993, Notre Dame Seminary completed its 70th year of service to the Archdiocese of New Orleans and to the Gulf South Region. In 1995 a self-study was conducted and was followed by visits from the accrediting agencies.

30. A few noteworthy events have occurred which have become a part of the seminary's history. Outstanding among these has to be the visit of Blessed Pope John Paul II in 1987. Not only was this the first visit of any Roman Pontiff to New Orleans, but for the two nights of his sojourn here, the Pope slept in the adjoining residence of the Archbishop. The first enthusiastic group to greet the Pope was the Notre Dame seminarians.

31. In 1993, the archdiocese celebrated its bicentennial. Many different events marked the year-long festivities: special liturgical services, an exhibit at the New Orleans Museum

of Art, the publication of a nearly 700-page volume of collected essays, gatherings for the young and events for the faithful. The faculty and seminarians were active participants at many of the events. A. Notre Dame Seminary will use the funds to renovate Saint Joseph Hall.

32. As a graduate school and a seminary, Notre Dame Seminary continues to be an apostolic community of faith forming future priests for the Church as well as a center of theological studies preparing the laity for ministry and leadership positions in the Church.

### **C. Location**

33. Notre Dame Seminary is located in the Carrollton section in the heart of New Orleans, Louisiana. Minutes from the beautiful “Garden District” and picturesque Audubon Park, the seminary is just minutes from downtown via Interstate 10. The longest running street car in the world which brings travelers to the French Quarter section of New Orleans is blocks from the seminary. Seminarians have at their disposal opportunities for entertainment, cultural activities, exhibits, and fine dining.

### **D. The Archdiocese of New Orleans**

34. The diocese was created on April 25, 1793 and was established as the archdiocese on July 19, 1850. It is comprised of 4,208 square miles incorporating Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, St. Tammany, and Washington Parishes. The Catholic population is 485,973 from a total population of 1,214,932. The first bishop was Luis Penalvery Cardenas. Archbishop Gregory Aymond is the current Archbishop and the first New Orleans native born Archbishop. He is the fourteenth Archbishop and the seventeenth Bishop of New Orleans.

### **E. The City of New Orleans and the Parish of Orleans**

35. The New Orleans metropolitan area offers many cultural attractions. Seminarians are encouraged to attend off-campus lectures, forums, seminars, plays, operas, films, *etc.* Reduced rates are available at many galleries and theaters in New Orleans. The City celebrated its 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary during the 2017-2018 year which included archdiocesan hosted lecture series that were held at Notre Dame Seminary for the public.

36. Educational institutions, which afford many such programs, include Loyola University, Xavier University, Tulane University, Our Lady of Holy Cross College, Southern University of New Orleans as well as the famed New Orleans Museum of Arts located less than ten minutes from the seminary.

### **F. The Purpose of a Priestly Formation Program**

37. The formation of men for the priesthood of Jesus Christ is one of the Church’s most sacred duties. It comprised a significant portion of Christ’s earthly ministry as he himself formed the apostles to carry out the mission of salvation. The Church has been entrusted with the same mission; thus, the priesthood becomes an essential ministry in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ. Saint Pope John Paul the Great writes in his post-synodal apostolic exhortation on priestly formation *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (PDV 1):

Without priests the Church would not be able to live that fundamental obedience which is at the very heart of her existence and her mission in history, an obedience in response to the command of Christ: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (*Mt 28:19*) and “Do this in remembrance of me” (*Lk 22:19*).

38. The fundamental connection between priestly formation and the pastoral ministry of the Church is so intimate that any variance of this relationship becomes a disservice both to the nature of pastoral ministry and the purpose of priestly formation. Yet, priestly ministry is exercised in collaboration with all ministry in the Church. Therefore, Notre Dame Seminary emphasized the collaborative nature of pastoral ministry which requires both ordained and non-ordained cooperation.

39. *You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide* (John 15:16). These words spoken by Jesus Christ to his apostles remind us that He is the one who calls everyone to the universal vocation to holiness. Our vocation to discipleship as Christians is rooted in the sacrament of baptism. The Lord also gives each person a specific vocation to holiness, according to the mystery of His divine will. The priestly formation program therefore assists the seminarian with his discernment of a vocation by challenging him to consider first the call to holiness.

40. A call to the priesthood demands that the recipient freely respond to it, that the call be answered. In order to answer the call, the seminarian must place his “total trust in God’s unconditional faithfulness to His promise” (PDV 2). The seminarian must also express an unconditional trust in God by placing himself before the Church who must verify with the seminarian the authenticity of a priestly vocation.

## **G. Governing Documents on Priestly Formation**

41. Notre Dame Seminary strives to implement the ideals of the governing documents on priestly formation that exist both nationally and universally. The vision of priestly formation expressed so beautifully by Blessed Pope John Paul the Great in *Pastores Dabo Vobis* is the instrument that provides the vision for the faculty and administration of Notre Dame Seminary.

42. The theological and ecclesial understanding of priesthood is treated in the documents of the Second Vatican Council particularly in *Lumen Gentium*, *Christus Dominus*, and *Presbyterorum Ordinis*. The specific direction of priestly formation is addressed in the Council’s document *Optatum Totius*. The Holy See’s guidelines for establishing national directives for priestly formation are contained in the *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis* (1970, revised in 1985, revised again 2016).

43. The Holy See has given further direction in many cases regarding specific elements of priestly formation since the Council. Additionally, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the *Code of Canon Law* (CIC) provide a clear understanding of the theological nature of priesthood with the rights and duties accorded to priests. The United States Conference

of Catholic Bishops has also given direction to the formation of priests in various documents specifically in the *Program of Priestly Formation* (PPF, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, 2005).

## **H. The Unique Mission of Notre Dame Seminary**

44. The brief history of Notre Dame Seminary outlined earlier reflects the missionary dimension of seminary formation. The seminary has always been inspired by the pastoral realities of Church and the needs of the faithful. Hence, the language and vision of seminary formation considers the practicalities of pastoral ministry while always preserving the universal theological ideals of priestly formation.

45. The pontificates of Saint John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis continue to frame the vision of priestly formation at Notre Dame Seminary. The “new evangelization” is the integrating force that unifies the dimensions of formation. Rector conferences, formation conferences, course syllabi, homilies, and workshops use regularly the language of the new evangelization thus providing the seminarians a consistent direction to their discernment and formation.

46. The formational theme that captures the direction of the formation program is: *“Disciples of the Lord: Missionary Priests for the New Evangelization.”* This theme summarizes the understanding of the new evangelization as articulated by the USCCB’s document *Disciples Called to Witness: The New Evangelization* (2012) as well as the priority of the new evangelization discussed at the Synod of Bishops in October 2012. The post-synodal exhortation on the new evangelization by Pope Francis also gives practical inspiration to the formation program as well as his Magisterium expressed in encyclicals and pastoral directives. A description of the formational theme is on the seminary’s website and is reviewed annually with the seminarians and faculty by the rector at the start of each academic year.

47. Discernment of a priestly vocation involves formation – the seminary is not a retreat center but rather a home of God’s Word forming in men the virtues and charisms needed for priestly ministry. This requires from the seminarian a deliberate readiness to cooperate with the work of God. The seminarian therefore is the chief protagonist of his own formation taking accountability for how he will use the resources made available to him.

48. To be a successful priest, the seminarian will learn that he must be an agent of authentic Christian humanism, a promoter of culture, a patron of all that is good in the human condition lived in society.

49. The seminarian therefore discerns his own faith formation, the transformation needed to put aside the “old self” and put on Christ, and his cultivation of the human virtues. Notre Dame Seminary provides a priestly formation that will create in the seminarian a renaissance man.

50. By “renaissance” the formation program emphasizes the need for an integrated formation that considers the human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation of a seminarian with an outlook of living priesthood in the particular culture of man.

51. Following the incarnational paradigm of God's Word becoming man within a particular culture and in a particular family, so too the Church seeks to incarnate herself in the family of man. Priestly ministry serves to communicate the grace of God through the life of the Church into each culture.

52. Notre Dame Seminary places before the seminarian the mission of the new evangelization as articulated and defined by the Magisterium of Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis. Through conferences, homilies, formation and spiritual direction, classroom instruction, and discussions with faculty and peers, the seminarian discerns his call as a Catholic to be a missionary of evangelization, considering if the Lord is calling him to the priesthood.

53. Seminarians who are aggressive in receiving a priestly formation will be prepared to shoulder the joys and burdens of pastoral ministry. They will be motivated for the mission of the new evangelization, prepared to engage culture, be spiritual fathers for the People of God, and celebrate the sacred mysteries of our Faith with joy and apostolic vigor.

## **I. Accreditation**

54. Notre Dame Seminary was incorporated in 1948 by the State of Louisiana as a non-profit educational institution with the power to confer degrees. It operates under a charter drawn up in 1970, revised in 1975 and again in 1995. The seminary has been approved by the Louisiana Board of Regents and the Louisiana State Department of Education.

Notre Dame Seminary Graduate School of Theology is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate and master's degrees. Questions about the accreditation of Notre Dame Seminary Graduate School of Theology may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website ([www.sacscoc.org](http://www.sacscoc.org).)

Notre Dame Seminary Graduate School of Theology (NDS) is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of The Association of Theological Schools ([www.ats.edu](http://www.ats.edu)) and is approved to offer the following degree(s): MA (Philosophy for Theological Studies); MA (Theological Studies); MA in Pastoral Leadership; and, Master of Divinity (MDiv).

The school is approved for comprehensive distance (online) education: Yes

The school is approved for the following additional location(s): None

The school has been accredited since 1979 and was last reaffirmed in February 2017, based on an institutional self-study report and an onsite evaluation visit by a committee of peer and public reviewers. The school's next comprehensive evaluation visit will be in fall 2026, followed by a COA review for reaffirmation of accreditation in February 2027. The school's current period of accreditation expires March 31, 2027.

The school's current status of "Accredited in Good Standing" means the school meets all applicable COA Standards of Accreditation. The school demonstrates educational quality and financial stability and provides evidence that its student learning outcomes are appropriate, rigorous, and being achieved. The school has no public sanctions (notation/warning, probation, or show cause).

55. Beginning July 1, 2017 NDS no longer offers its students the opportunity to participate in the Title IV student financial assistance programs (federal student loans). However, NDS maintains the status of an eligible nonparticipating school that allows students to take advantage of non-FSA programs or benefits, such as the American Opportunity and Lifetime Learning tax credits, and to apply for in-school deferments of payments on their existing federal education loans.

## **PRESUPPOSITIONS TO FORMATION**

### **A. Formation in the Present Context**

56. The human character of the priesthood is affirmed as necessary in the exercise of priestly ministry. God himself verifies this throughout the sacred scriptures. Moreover, the call of the apostles to priestly service presumed the human qualities of each man. Priestly formation in the seminary is attentive to the realities of the candidates who come with societal influences that demand a formational response that supports those characteristics consistent with priestly vocations and purifies the elements which would be contrary. The influence of faith indeed brings the seminarian to a certain appreciation of the role that the Church exercises in his formation.

God always calls his priests from specific human and ecclesial contexts, which inevitably influence them; and to these same contexts the priest is sent for the service of Christ's Gospel (PDV 5).

57. The human and ecclesial contexts influencing the seminarian are the very arena for preaching the Gospel of Christ. Priestly formation presumes that after ordination the former seminarian returns as a priest to similar human and ecclesial contexts. This particular dynamic of priestly formation parallels the new evangelization, which Blessed John Paul II had called the Church to embrace (*cf.* PDV 2). Priestly formation prepares the seminarian for pastoral ministry to the community of believers in which the seminarian finds his origin.

All priestly formation takes place within the context of the Church as the Body of Christ and in relationship to the Mission of the Church. Thus it is essential that the formation of the candidate for priesthood be integrated within the wider ecclesial dimension so that the candidate understands his role as a priest to be the representative and servant of the Church (PPF 69).

58. Notwithstanding the necessary considerations of present circumstances, the objectivity of priestly formation is clearly defined in the related governing documents. The Priesthood of Christ is not redefined with every age or generation. Priestly formation of

the present day considers both the unchanging nature of priesthood and the circumstances of life which influence the faithful.

59. Nevertheless, each seminary must provide a vision of priestly formation considering its particular charism. The previous section introduces the pontifical character of Notre Dame Seminary as it serves the seminarians in this discernment and formation.

## **B. Hopes and Obstacles of Today**

60. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* succinctly identifies the hopes and obstacles of the present day which undoubtedly offer a challenge not only for preaching the Gospel but also for priestly formation since seminarians enter the seminary as products of their culture (see PDV 6-9).

61. The obstacles to conversion that bring unique challenge for the believer include rationalism, subjectivity, individualism, practical and existential atheism, breakdown of the family, distortion of human sexuality, lure of consumer society, catechetical deficiencies, theological pluralism, and resistance to the Magisterium. All of these obstacles to conversion can influence the seminarian's approach to faith.

62. Priestly formation in the present day also has some unique opportunities for forming seminarians since young people in the United States today are often very open to values inherent in the Gospel and to attitudes which foster life in Christ. These include a renewed desire for justice and peace, care for creation, search for the truth, efforts to safeguard human life and dignity, international solidarity, the contribution of science and technology for human advancement, decrease in libertarian tendencies, an increased love for sacred scripture, a desire to share faith, and a renewed appreciation for sacramental faith.

63. A dialogue between faith and culture is present in priestly formation. The post-synodal exhortation *Ecclesia in America* provides a framework in which this conversation can take place and, at the same time, encourages the development of a true, authentic humanism to which culture aspires.

## **C. Priestly Formation and the Call to Holiness**

64. Ongoing conversion is the vocation of any disciple of Christ. The seminarian pursues ongoing conversion in the priestly formation program in a particular way considering how he might be serving the Church as a diocesan priest. The call to holiness is the vocation of all believers in Christ. Yet each lives their discipleship according to their state in life. The particular vocation to holiness must be proper and specific to the priest who is configured at ordination to Christ as Head of the Church.

65. The pursuit of holiness is a call to perfection in the ways of the Lord. The seminarian grows in his understanding of faith, hope and love and come to understand how the priest, configured to Christ, is called to be Head, Shepherd and Spouse of the Church.



Priests are bound in a special way to strive for this perfection, since they are consecrated to God in a new way by their ordination. They have become living instruments of Christ the eternal priest (PDV 20).

66. Following the ways of the Lord constitutes the path to perfection. The seminarian must learn that the exercise of pastoral ministry in the Church is conducted in the name of Christ himself. “In this way the exercise of his ministry deeply involves the priest himself as a conscious, free and responsible person.” Priestly formation enables the seminarian to understand the ontological bond existing between the ministry performed and the holiness of the priest, thereby emanating a truly authentic representation of Christ, the Good Shepherd. “The bond tends by its very nature to become as extensive and profound as possible, affecting one’s way of thinking, feeling and life itself: in other words, creating a series of moral and spiritual dispositions” (PDV 25).

#### **D. The Identity and Life of the Priest**

67. The call to holiness and the disciplines of conversion move the seminarian from the internal dispositions of spirituality to the external realities of ministry.

And so it is that they are grounded in the life of the Spirit while they exercise the ministry of the Spirit and of justice, as long as they are docile to Christ’s Spirit, who gives them life and guidance. For by their everyday sacred actions, as by the entire ministry which they exercise in union with the bishop and their fellow priests, they are being directed towards perfection of life (*Presbyterorum Ordinis* [PO] 12).

68. The priestly formation program teaches the seminarian the relationship between the spiritual life and the exercise of pastoral ministry.

Spiritual formation also involves seeking Christ in people. Especially in a seminary context, seminarians are to learn how prayer is to be lived out in service of others, particularly the poor, the sick, sinners, unbelievers, and the stranger, but extended to all in the outreach of charity and mercy, and in the quest for justice. Whatever growth in formation and prayer take place, it is not simply meant for the personal enhancement of the seminarian but as a gift to be given in the course of his priestly mission and ministry for the benefit of the Church—for he is a servant of this body (PPF 110).

69. The spirituality of the priest, which involves attention to the spiritual life and the exercise of pastoral ministry, requires that the seminarian have a clear and unequivocal understanding of the priesthood.

“Knowledge of the nature and mission of the ministerial priesthood is an essential presupposition, and at the same time the surest guide and incentive towards [...] training those called to the ordained ministry [...] A correct and in-depth awareness of the nature and mission of the ministerial priesthood is the path which must be taken” (PDV 11).

70. The goal of priestly formation is to form in the seminarian the proper identity of a priest. *Pastores Dabo Vobis* exclaims that “the priest’s identity like every other Christian identity has its source in the Blessed Trinity.” And, it is the Church who possesses the character of this Trinitarian mystery since she has been endowed with all of the gifts of God necessary for leading mankind to the Kingdom (cf. PPF 26).

71. The priestly formation program of the seminary must, therefore, delineate the relational dimensions of priesthood which are ultimately sustained in and through the Church. The seminarian must be careful to not search for his identity apart from the *mystery, communio, and mission* of the Church.

The nature and mission of ministerial priesthood cannot be defined except through this multiple and rich interconnection of relationships which arise from the Blessed Trinity and are prolonged in the communion of the Church. In this context the ecclesiology of communion becomes decisive for understanding the identity of the priest, his essential dignity, and his vocation and mission among the People of God and in the world (PDV 12).

72. The life of the priest radiates the identity of being a priest in the image of Jesus Christ. The fundamental relationship that the seminarian comes to cultivate with Christ is that of recognizing the Lord as being Head and Shepherd of his Church (cf. PPF 30-32). The *tria munera* charge of the priest, the *munus docendi, munus sanctificandi, and munus regendi* is the life and ministry of the priest. It is for this reason that the seminarian begins to live a life of Gospel radicalism in order that the faithful can see in the priest a true representation of Christ, as Head and Shepherd of the Church.

73. The priestly formation program must challenge the seminarian to embrace the radicalism of the Gospel in living the evangelical counsels of obedience, celibacy and poverty (cf. PPF 90-102). Each of these counsels has an apostolic, communal and pastoral character that challenges the seminarian to orient his life to service of the People of God.

74. The priestly formation program keeps the seminarian focused on the person of Jesus Christ in the way he lived his earthly life. The disciplines of the spiritual life connect directly to how Jesus conducted himself particularly in his relationship with the Father and those whom he encountered.

To live in intimate and unceasing union with God the Father through his Son Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit is far more than a personal or individual relationship with the Lord; it is also a communion with the Church, which is his body (PPF 108).

## **E. Priestly Consciousness of the Church**

75. “Reference to the Church is therefore necessary, even if it is not primary, in defining the identity of the priest” (PDV 12). Priestly formation attempts to form in the seminarian a healthy sense of ecclesial *communio*, the multitude of relationships that a

priest is necessarily involved in. “The Trinitarian, Christological, and ecclesiological foundations give us a sense of the nature, mission, and ministry of priests. It is important, however, to add that these foundations only become real and operative in a presbyterate in communion with its bishop” (PPF 18).

76. Because of the strong emphasis on individualism that is so dominant in the culture of the United States and because a diminished Catholic culture, the seminarian who lives in the circumstances of the present day can nurture a false understanding of spirituality which places oneself in a relationship with the Lord apart from the Church herself who is the Body of Christ (*cf.* PPF 108). In developing relationships, it must be noted that special caution in observing “boundaries” is necessary in mature relationships.

77. “Like every authentically Christian spiritual life, the spiritual life of the priest has an essential and undeniable ecclesial dimension which is a sharing in the holiness of the Church herself” (PDV 31). Priestly formation is to foster the seminarian’s appreciation of and dedication to the particular church of which he is a part. This involves his relationship to his bishop and the local presbyterate.

“The priest’s relationship with his bishop in the one presbyterate, his sharing in the bishop’s ecclesial concern, and his devotion to the evangelical care of the People of God in the specific historical and contextual conditions of a particular Church are elements which must be taken into account in sketching the proper configuration of the priest and his spiritual life” (PDV 31).

78. These ecclesial foundations of priesthood must be incorporated into the priestly formation program in order that the seminarian be properly disposed to exercising pastoral ministry with the mind of the Church. The ministry of the priest is exercised entirely in the name of the Church and in collaboration with the diocesan bishop who charges the priest with a particular assignment (*cf.* PPF 18).

79. The seminarian comes to understand that participation in the priesthood of Christ cannot be separated from his relationship to the bishop. “Through the priesthood of the bishop, the priesthood of the second order is incorporated into the apostolic structure of the Church. In this way priests, like the apostles, act as ambassadors of Christ” (PDV 16).

80. In a certain sense, therefore, priestly formation will always have an ecclesial orientation and will take the interests of a particular church to heart since it is to and for that church that a seminarian is preparing for ordination. Ecclesial orientation also includes a pursuit of skills necessary for ministry in the world and society.

81. Notre Dame Seminary is preparing men who are truly pastors of the Church. The formation program reflects the pastoral and practical aspects of priestly ministry. Leadership in today’s culture requires a collaborative and cooperative ministry that seeks to build up God’s Kingdom considering the many charisms and gifts given to both the ordained and the non-ordained.

82. Seminarians at Notre Dame Seminary are supported with a clear and unambiguous promotion of priestly identity and ministry while also challenging them to consider how leadership promotes ecclesial unity that considers the role of the lay faithful in their call to the apostolate.

83. This formation handbook reflects the efforts of the administration, faculty, staff, and seminarians to fully implement the norms of priestly formation and to discern how men are being formed to respond to the concrete pastoral needs of the Church. In this sense, priestly formation always has an organic character by which a certain flexibility of vision exists in order that true discernment of spirits prevails.

## **AGENTS OF THE PRIESTLY FORMATION PROGRAM**

### **The Holy Spirit**

84. *“The Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you”* (John 14:26).

85. The Holy Spirit is the principal agent of formation allowing and providing all the graces needed to be formed after that of Christ, the Good Shepherd. A spirit of humility in a seminarian is a clear sign of how that seminarian has embraced the Cross and has gained a true freedom to follow the formation program.

86. To this end, everyone engaged in the work of priestly formation discerns the ways in which the Holy Spirit is teaching and guiding us to the will of the Father.

### **The Seminarian**

87. “All formation, priestly formation included, is ultimately a self-formation. No one can replace us in the responsible freedom that we have as individual persons” (PDV 69).

88. The seminarian demonstrates “his own convinced and heartfelt cooperation in this work of formation” (PDV 69) by active participation in all areas of the seminary program.

### **The Holy See**

89. The Congregation for Clergy is a major dicastery of the Holy See with competence over all matters related to Catholic universities and seminarians. The Congregation is charged with establishing and approving governing documents on priestly formation for the Universal Church. The *Ratio Fundamental* (2016) provides universal principles and structure to priestly formation that Notre Dame Seminary has implemented in conjunction with national norms set forth by the Bishops of the United States.

90. The Board of Trustees and the faculty of Notre Dame Seminary review any documentation that pertains to priestly formation and implements accordingly all norms and guidelines of the Church including the review of this Formation Handbook.

## **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**

91. The conference of bishops for the United States promulgated the national document on priestly formation the *Program of Priestly Formation* which is now in its fifth edition. The document is considered binding on all seminarians since it has the *recognitio* of the Holy See.

92. Notre Dame Seminary has structured the priestly formation program in conformity with the *Program of Priestly Formation*.

## **Chancellor**

93. The Chancellor of Notre Dame Seminary is the Archbishop of New Orleans. After consultation with the Board of Trustees, the Chancellor appoints the Rector-President of Notre Dame Seminary.

94. The Rector-President consults with the Chancellor regarding faculty appointments, major revisions to the formation program, and any significant matters related to the temporal needs of the seminary.

## **Board of Trustees**

95. The Board of Trustees acts as fiduciary body assuring that the priestly formation program has all the resources required to provide an effective, competent formation program to the seminarians.

96. The ex-officio members of the Board are the Archbishop of New Orleans (chair); all the bishops of the New Orleans Province, the Archbishop and Bishops of the Province of Mobile, the Abbot of Saint Joseph Abbey, the Rector of Saint Joseph Seminary, and the Rector-President of Notre Dame Seminary.

97. The By-Laws and the Articles of Corporation are filed in the Rector-President's office and are available for review by any person.

## **Rector-President**

98. The Rector-President, always a priest, is appointed by the Chancellor to be the chief administrator and principal agent responsible for the implementation of the programs of formation at Notre Dame Seminary.

99. The Rector-President seeks the counsel and expertise of the Board of Trustees to provide him the material resources to carry out the Church's vision of priestly formation.

100. The Rector-President nominates faculty members for appointment by the Chancellor to carry out the mission of the seminary. The task of formation of candidates for the priesthood requires the seminary faculty to have a spirit of communion and cooperation, so that the unity of the pastoral action of the seminary is always maintained under the leadership of the Rector-President (PDV 66).

101. The Rector-President publishes a current seminary handbook of guidelines (The Formation Handbook and Rule of Life) and is responsible for its interpretation according to the directives of the governing documents on priestly formation.

102. The Rector-President sets the direction and tone of the seminary program. By creating a climate of mutual confidence and trust, he elicits the full cooperation and involvement of faculty and seminarians. The Rector-President serves as the pastor and spiritual father of the seminary community and is the visible presence of the diocesan bishop/religious superior to the seminarians.

103. The Rector-President lives on the seminary campus and can act as one of the formation advisors. The Rector-President always serves in the external forum.

104. The Rector-President chairs meetings of the formation advisors in preparation for yearly seminarian evaluations.

105. The Rector-President is responsible for the evaluation process conducted each year. He assures that the evaluation is conveyed to the individual seminarian and maintains the evaluation in the seminarian's personnel file.

106. The Rector-President ensures the conformity of written evaluations of seminarians by formation advisors.

107. The Rector-President works closely with Vocation Directors regarding all matters related to the admissions process.

108. The Rector-President is to nominate to the Archbishop of New Orleans qualified priests from the diocese to serve as adjunct Spiritual Directors. These priests are to possess a sound theological understanding of the priesthood, understand the dynamics of human development, and enjoy a good reputation in the presbyterate. All Spiritual Directors at Notre Dame Seminary are approved by the Archbishop of New Orleans.

109. The Rector-President assigns formation advisors to seminarians and facilitates requests from seminarians who seek to change their advisors.

110. The Rector-President adjudicates disputes between a seminarian and his formation advisor.

111. The Rector-President directs administrative referrals of seminarians for counseling when suggested by the formation faculty.

112. The Rector-President is responsible, in collaboration with the faculty, for making clear to the seminary community the concrete expectations of celibate living and the kinds of behavior which are wrong and inappropriate for seminarians.

113. The Rector-President grants routine and extraordinary permission to be excused from those areas required in the formation handbook according to his judgment. The Rector may delegate Vice Rectors to grant approved absences.
114. The Rector-President is responsible for the disbursement of any financial assistance or grants given to seminarians.
115. The Rector-President is responsible for maintaining complete and accurate records on all seminarians currently enrolled in the seminary program.
116. The Rector-President is responsible for all official seminary correspondence.
117. The Rector-President issues all invitations to official seminary activities.
118. The Rector-President will give periodic conferences to the seminary community.
119. The Rector-President is responsible for maintaining a current calendar of all seminary activities including liturgy and house activities.
120. The Rector-President, in concert with the faculty, meets regularly with the seminarian association and the leaders of the community ministries.
121. The Rector-President chairs the seminary formation board and all faculty meetings; he schedules and conducts regular faculty meetings. He may delegate the academic dean to chair faculty meetings in his absence.
122. The Rector-President is ultimately responsible for preparing accurate budgets for review and approval by the board of trustees at the appropriate time each year.
123. The Rector-President is ultimately responsible for preparing a detailed capital improvements budget at the appropriate time each year. He is also responsible for coordination of all aspects of approved projects.
124. The Rector-President is ultimately responsible for all records pertinent to the seminary property and all employees.
125. The Rector-President is ultimately responsible for the hiring and termination of all seminary employees. In consultation with employee and faculty handbooks, he is responsible for the implementation of personnel policies.
126. The Rector-President or his designee (Director of Facilities) meets regularly with the department supervisors to coordinate the planning and work of: administrative services, food service, housekeeping and maintenance. The rector may create an administrative committee to assist with the oversight of temporal operations at the seminary.

127. The Rector-President is ultimately responsible for approving all individuals and groups seeking access to seminary facilities.

128. The Rector-President is responsible for preparing an annual report which is given at the Board of Trustees meetings each Fall and Spring regarding all matters related to the formation program at Notre Dame Seminary.

### **Vice Rectors for Discipleship, Configuration, Pastoral Synthesis**

129. In order to implement the *Ratio Fundamentalis* (2016) generously and with intentionality to distinguish the phases and thresholds of priestly formation, the seminary provides for three vice rectors who each oversee seminarians within their formational cohort: the Vice Rector for Discipleship (Pre-Theology), Vice Rector for Configuration (Theology 1-3), and Vice Rector for Pastoral Synthesis (Theology 4).

130. The Vice Rectors, always priests, are nominated by the Rector-President to the Chancellor for appointment.

131. The Vice Rectors report to the Rector-President relative to his responsibilities in the formation program.

132. The Vice Rectors serve only in the external forum and serve as a formation advisor.

133. The Vice Rectors have immediate supervision over the seminarians regarding the implementation of the Formation Handbook and the Rule of Life. He communicates the policies and guidelines of Notre Dame Seminary to their cohort of responsibility.

134. The Vice Rectors handle all requests and permissions by seminarians. He will consult with the Rector-President when appropriate particularly when requests are made for over-night permissions.

135. The Vice Rectors are responsible for implementing the goals and objectives of the priestly formation program according to the *Program of Priestly Formation* working under the direction of the Rector and in collaboration with the other program directors.

136. The Vice Rectors facilitate a climate of encouragement and trust in the work of forming seminarians for the priesthood. The Vice Rectors therefore assist in reviewing and coordinating formation instruments, *i.e.* faculty evaluation report, formation plan, *etc.*

137. In collaboration with the other core formation staff, the Vice Rectors assist the Rector-President in scheduling conferences and presenters for weekly formation conferences.

138. The Vice Rectors live among the seminarians and acts as one of the formation advisors always serving in the external forum.



139. The Vice Rectors act in place of the Rector-President in his absence. The Rector will designate one Vice Rector to oversee administration and faculty in the Rector's absence and handle day-to-day responsibilities.

140. The Vice Rectors are members of the seminary formation board, formation faculty, faculty council, and faculty council committees.

### **Director of Spiritual Formation/Spiritual Director**

141. The Director of Spiritual Formation at Notre Dame Seminary, always a priest, is recommended for appointment by the Rector-President to the Chancellor. The positions of Director of Spiritual Formation and Spiritual Director may be served by one director or by two different directors. Or, the Rector could recommend an Assistant Director of Spiritual Formation/Assistant Spiritual Director to assist the Director. The Spiritual Director, however, has oversight of the entire spiritual formation program under the direction of the Rector.

142. The Director of Spiritual Formation reports to the Rector-President relative to his responsibilities in the seminary program.

143. The Director of Spiritual Formation, with the collaboration of the faculty, proposes names for adjunct Spiritual Directors. These names are then submitted to the Rector-President for his approval. The Director of Spiritual Formation will nominate priests to the Archbishop of New Orleans for final approval.

144. The Director of Spiritual Formation facilitates the program of individual spiritual direction. He assures a Spiritual Director is provided for each seminarian in consultation with the formation faculty. The Director of Spiritual Formation explains to the seminary community how spiritual direction works, the role of the Spiritual Director, the understanding of the internal forum, and assures that the spiritual direction agreement form is completed in a timely manner.

145. The Director of Spiritual Formation serves as the chair of the spiritual life committee which is comprised of faculty and seminarians.

146. The Director of Spiritual Formation is responsible for the ongoing development of those who serve as Spiritual Directors. This may be accomplished in various ways, including periodic meetings and continuing education opportunities.

147. The Director of Spiritual Formation and Director of Liturgy are responsible for the quality of community prayer and are to address all issues related to prayer on a periodic basis.

148. The Director of Spiritual Formation is responsible for scheduling days of recollection each year and securing those who will lead these days.

149. The Director of Spiritual Formation is responsible for scheduling the annual retreat and securing the retreat master.

150. The Director of Spiritual Formation oversees how the sacrament of penance is being provided to the seminarians.
151. The Director of Spiritual Formation is to give periodic conferences to the seminarians. These will be reviewed and approved by the Rector.
152. The Director of Spiritual Formation and Director of Liturgy insure that the seminarians develop a spirituality consistent with diocesan priesthood, especially through living the liturgical year. This necessarily includes proper instruction on the *Liturgy of the Hours* and devotional practices including the rosary, stations of the cross, and worship of the Eucharist outside of Mass.
153. The Director of Spiritual Formation is to insure that the seminarians have proper instruction on spiritual reading.
154. The Director of Spiritual Formation is to insure that the seminarians have adequate access to common resources for spiritual reading.
155. The Director of Spiritual Formation shall live among the seminarians and act as one of the Spiritual Directors.
156. The Director of Spiritual Formation, although a member of the seminary faculty, does not participate in faculty conversations regarding individual seminarian matters. He also serves on the priestly formation board.

### **Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education**

157. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education, always a priest, is nominated by the Rector-President for appointment by the Chancellor. If advantageous, the Director could also serve as the Vice Rector of Pastoral Synthesis while also overseeing the entire pastoral formation program.
158. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education is responsible for implementing the goals and objectives of pastoral formation into the priestly formation program according to the governing documents on priestly formation, particularly the *Program of Priestly Formation*.
159. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education serves only in the external forum and serves as a formation advisor.
160. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education is a member of the seminary formation board, formation faculty, and faculty council.
161. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education serves as the chair of the pastoral formation committee which is comprised of faculty and seminarians.

162. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education delivers presentations as a part of the weekly formation conference program.

163. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education participates in the yearly evaluation process of seminarians.

164. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education coordinates the summer assignments of all seminarians considering the expectations of each diocese/religious community as well as the expectations of the seminary.

165. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education shall meet periodically with the seminarians to discuss the general area of apostolic activity and the specifics of their particular apostolate.

166. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education coordinates the annual mission trip for first year theologians.

167. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education coordinates the CPE/CPI programs which include inviting CPE supervisors to the seminary who interview CPE candidates, providing an orientation to the seminarians about the CPE/CPI programs, and coordinating post-CPE evaluation.

168. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education coordinates the intern assignment of each newly ordained deacon providing them the formational materials used by the seminarian and the pastor throughout the assignment.

169. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education coordinates the field education programs during the academic year working with site supervisors to confirm how seminarians are receiving pastoral formation in the field education experiences.

170. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education, to the best of his responsibilities, visits each seminarian during the summer to provide support and encouragement to the seminarian as well as receive initial feedback from the supervisors regarding the seminarian's progress.

171. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education coordinates and publishes all and any pastoral formation handbooks, particularly the Internship Handbook, in order to provide a detailed account of how seminarians are evaluated, supervised, and achieve pastoral formation goals as set forth in the governing documents of priestly formation.

### **Director of Human Formation**

172. The Director of Human Formation, always a priest, is recommended for appointment by the Rector to the Chancellor.

173. The Director of Human Formation serves in the external forum as a formation advisor and is a member of the seminary formation board and the faculty council.

174. The Director of Human Formation also serves on the administrative committee.  
175. The Director of Human Formation serves as the chair of the human formation committee which is comprised of faculty and seminarians.

176. The Director of Human Formation is responsible for implementing the Rule of Life assuring that all seminarians are in compliance particularly relative to room maintenance and cleanliness, dress attire, time management matters, *etc.*

177. The Director of Human Formation assists the three vice rectors in implementing the goals and objectives of priestly formation providing direction to the seminarians in their human development.

178. The Director of Human Formation assists in a particular way the director of pastoral formation in making visits to the apostolic assignments (summer and during the school year) bringing the lens of human formation to the pastoral development of seminarians.

179. The Director of Human Formation assists the Seminarian Association with its programming that promotes human development with athletics, the gym, food service, recreation, and other activities which support the integrative development of the person.

### **Director of Liturgy**

180. The Director of Liturgy, always a priest, is nominated by the Rector-President for appointment by the Chancellor.

181. The Rector-President is ultimately responsible for all liturgical matters in the seminary and makes final decisions regarding liturgical practices. The Director of Liturgy assists the Rector-President in the liturgical formation of seminarians instructing them in how to participate in liturgy according to the norms of the law.

182. The Director of Liturgy oversees the scheduling of all ministers for all liturgies as well as house ministries associated with the sacred liturgy.

183. The Director of Liturgy is a member of the seminary formation board and the faculty council.

184. Depending on his formation assignment, the Director of Liturgy may serve in either the external forum or the internal forum.

185. The Director of Liturgy chairs the liturgy committee comprised of faculty and seminarians.

186. The Director of Liturgy supervises the Director of Sacred Music,

187. The Director of Liturgy coordinates and delivers formation conferences and other instructional conferences to assist seminarians in their overall liturgical formation.

### **Director of Sacred Music**

188. The Director of Sacred Music is nominated by the Rector-President for appointment by the Chancellor.

189. The Director of Sacred Music is responsible for implementing the goals and objectives of liturgical formation as they relate to sacred music into the priestly formation program according to the governing documents on priestly formation, particularly the *Program of Priestly Formation* as well as documents on sacred music from the USCCB and documents from the Holy See.

190. The Director of Sacred Music is responsible for directing and coordinating all choirs and the schola.

191. The Director of Sacred Music organizes instrumentalists, as needed, assigning seminarians or contracted instrumentalists to assist with liturgies.

192. The Director of Sacred Music is responsible for music selection and choral/schola pieces used at all liturgies.

193. The Director of Sacred Music coordinates cantors for liturgies.

194. The Director of Sacred Music assists seminarians in areas related to voice and chant development according to the needs of seminarians.

195. The Director of Sacred Music is responsible for conducting community-wide rehearsals when needed.

### **Academic Dean**

196. The Academic Dean is nominated by the Rector-President for appointment by the Chancellor.

197. The Academic Dean is assisted by an assistant Academic Dean (appointed by the Rector-President) and a Registrar (appointed by the Rector-President).

198. The Academic Dean is responsible for implementing the goals and objectives of intellectual formation into the priestly formation program according to the governing documents on priestly formation, particularly the *Program of Priestly Formation*.

199. The Academic Dean oversees the registration, course selection, and degree programs of Notre Dame Seminary.

200. The Academic Dean facilitates professional relationships with the teaching faculty including the implementation of the faculty handbook.

201. The Academic Dean coordinates the faculty seminars that are usually scheduled three times per semester.
202. The Academic Dean provides recommendations to the Vice Rector and Rector-President regarding disciplinary actions for seminarians, *i.e.* academic probation, termination, *etc.*
203. The Academic Dean serves on the priestly formation board and the faculty council. In the absence of the Rector-President, the Academic Dean chairs the faculty council.
204. The Academic Dean assists the Rector-President in the recruitment and retention of teaching faculty members.
205. If the Academic Dean is a priest, he serves as a formation advisor, attends formation advisor meetings, and participates in the evaluation process.

### **Director of Intellectual Formation/Assistant Academic Dean**

206. The Director of Intellectual Formation, always a priest, is nominated by the Rector-President for appointment by the Chancellor.
207. The Director of Intellectual Formation assists the Rector and the Academic Dean with implementing the goals and objectives of intellectual formation as described in the *Program of Priestly Formation*.
208. The Director of Intellectual Formation offers assistance to the faculty by promoting the goals and objectives of intellectual formation relative to the curriculum, syllabi, and general business of the faculty council.
209. In his service as Assistant Academic Dean, the Director of Intellectual Formation assists the dean tracking the academic progress of seminarians, reviewing transcripts of new seminarians, and making decisions about the degree status of seminarians.
210. The Director of Intellectual Formation is a member of the faculty council and the academic affairs committee.

### **Director of Hispanic Formation**

211. The Director of Hispanic Formation is nominated by the Rector-President for appointment by the Chancellor.
212. The Director of Hispanic Formation assists the admissions office in receiving new seminarians who are unable to speak English.
213. The Director of Hispanic Formation assists the Director of Academic Resources Center with the administration of testing new Hispanic seminarians.
214. The Director of Hispanic Formation assists the Director of the English as a Second Language Program when admitting new Hispanic seminarians.

215. The Director of Hispanic Formation assists the Vice Rector with formational matters of Hispanic seminarians.

216. The Director of Hispanic Formation assists the Director of Liturgy and Director of Sacred Music with preparations for Hispanic liturgies.

217. The Director of Hispanic Formation assists in the formation of seminarians who need instruction regarding Hispanic culture and language. The director will provide resources accordingly.

218. The Director of Hispanic Formation is a member of the priestly formation board and is a member of the faculty council.

219. If the Director of Hispanic Formation is a priest, he serves either as a formation advisor or a Spiritual Director. If the Director serves as a formation advisor, he participates in the evaluation process of seminarians.

### **Director - Office of Academic Support and Instructional Services**

220. The Director is appointed by the Rector-President.

221. The Director reports to the Academic Dean concerning routine matters related to the position.

222. The Director reports directly to the Vice Rectors regarding formational matters of seminarians.

223. The Director administers a battery of tests to all new seminarians to assess reading comprehension, math and analytical skills, and writing ability.

224. The Director of Instructional Support Services provides testing for all new seminarian non-native speakers to assess the type of programming needed for the new seminarian. This information is provided to the Academic Dean.

225. The Director offers recommendations to the Rector-President and Vice Rectors regarding any support services needed for individual seminarians. The Director provides the Academic Dean with information about these recommendations.

226. The Director recommends to the Vice Rectors and Rector-President the type of programming needed for the seminarian to learn English and provides a copy of these recommendations to the Academic Dean.

227. The Director provides confidential information to the Academic Dean and professors according to civil law when seminarian need academic accommodations due to learning needs.

228. The Director assures that all seminarians being provided academic assistance are protected by civil law requirements.

229. The Director provides information to all faculty members throughout the academic year regarding statistics, trends, and pertinent information relative to academic support services for seminarians.

230. The Director assists professors in providing accommodations for seminarians who receive support services.

231. The Director may be asked to provide reports and information to diocesan vocation directors.

232. The Director may be a member of the faculty council.

### **Director of Counseling Services**

233. The Director of Counseling Services is appointed by the Rector-President and reports directly to the Rector-President.

234. The Director of Counseling Services assists in the admissions process of new seminarians by reviewing the psychological report provided by dioceses and religious congregations that the Rector deems necessary for admission. The director does not review all reports – only those identified by the Rector.

235. While the Director of Counseling Services does not offer a recommendation concerning the acceptance or rejection of applicants, he or she may identify areas of concern in the report and the difficulties that may or may not occur if an applicant is accepted into the seminary program.

236. The Director of Counseling Services offers recommendations regarding seminarians who should receive an administrative referral to meet with the counselor to determine if counseling is needed.

237. The Director of Counseling Services will offer presentations as a part of the weekly formation conference program.

238. The Director of Counseling Services maintains office hours for seminarians to meet for counseling.

239. It is understood that when seminarians who refer themselves for counseling those meetings remain confidential.

240. When the Rector refers seminarians to meet with the Director of Counseling Services, the conversations remain confidential between the Director and the seminarian however the Rector is able to inquire regarding the progress of the counseling services and may even ask for a report.



241. The Director is a member of the seminary formation board and may serve on the faculty council.

### **Business Manager**

242. The Business Manager is appointed by the Rector-President.

243. The Business Manager reports directly to the Rector-President regarding property, campus personnel, financial, budget, or administrative matters affecting the governance of Notre Dame Seminary.

244. The Business Manager attends the Board of Trustees meetings as a staff resource.

245. The Business Manager is a member of the administrative board.

246. The Business Manager oversees the budget and prepares regular budget reports to the offices and departments of Notre Dame Seminary.

247. The Business Manager oversees the billing of seminarian expenses/tuition to dioceses and religious congregations.

248. The Business Manager pays all bills and accounts all expenditures to line items in the budget.

### **Administrative Assistant to the Rector-President**

249. The Administrative Assistant to the Rector-President is appointed by the Rector-President.

250. The Administrative Assistant maintains all seminary files and records including materials related to the application process and seminary evaluations.

251. The Administrative Assistant prepares acceptance letters and materials for new seminarians.

252. The Administrative Assistant coordinates all information needed for the Board of Trustees meetings. The Administrative Assistant serves as recording secretary to the Trustees.

253. The Administrative Assistant is a member of the administrative board.

254. The Administrative Assistant helps coordinate the responsibilities of the other Administrative Assistants at Notre Dame Seminary.

255. The Administrative Assistant assists the Rector-President in preparing reports to diocesan bishops, religious superiors and vocation directors.

256. The Administrative Assistant coordinates meetings between the Rector-President and individual seminarians.
257. The Administrative Assistant observes professional confidentiality in handling all matters related to seminarians.
258. The Administrative Assistant prepares all faculty and staff contracts each year.
259. The Administrative Assistant prepares official canonical documentation regarding candidates for the ministries of lector and acolyte, admission of seminarians for candidacy, and candidates recommended for ordination to the diaconate and priesthood.
260. The Administrative Assistant maintains professional confidentiality regarding the financial matters of individual seminarians.
261. The Administrative Assistant assures that all international seminarians are in compliance with all federal and state laws related to immigration status.

### **Director of Facilities**

262. The Director of Facilities is appointed by the Rector-President.
263. The Director of Facilities reports to the Rector-President and the Vice Rector.
264. The Director of Facilities oversees all maintenance and housekeeping staff.
265. The Director of Facilities oversees the maintenance of the buildings and grounds of the campus.
266. The Director of Facilities oversees all purchases of supplies and commodities for the seminary facility.
267. In collaboration with and pending the approval of the Rector-President, the Director of Facilities will normally be responsible for the hiring and termination of all seminary employees. In collaboration with the archdiocesan personnel office, the Director of Facilities is also responsible for the implementation of lay employee personnel policies.
268. The Director of Facilities is a member of the administrative board, which is chaired by the Rector-President.
269. The Director of Facilities will meet regularly with the department supervisors to coordinate the planning and work of: administrative services, food services, housekeeping, and maintenance.
270. The Director of Facilities will meet regularly with the Rector-President to plan and review concerns and issues involving the property, buildings, temporalities, staff, and use of the physical facilities at Notre Dame Seminary.

271. The Director of Facilities receives and facilitates requests made by faculty and seminarians concerning issues related to the facilities, *i.e.* repairs needed in rooms, *etc.*

272. The Director of Facilities collaborates with the Vice Rector concerning security and emergency procedures, *i.e.* fire alarm drills, safety measures.

273. The Director of Facilities assures that all civil law policies are observed at Notre Dame Seminary, *i.e.* facilitating inspections, *etc.*

274. The Director of Facilities reports to the Vice Rector any matters related to seminarians' behavior detected by staff that is inconsistent with seminary formation policies.

### **Directors of Admissions**

275. The Directors of Admission are the Rector-President, Academic Dean, Director of Intellectual Formation, and the Registrar.

276. The Rector is responsible for the admissions process, with assistance from his administrative assistant and the registrar, that all necessary materials are received and reviewed.

277. The Rector may consult with the Vice Rectors for assistance and review of application files.

278. The Rector will determine the acceptance or non-acceptance of all seminarian applications.

### **Registrar**

279. The Registrar is appointed by the Rector-President.

280. The Registrar reports directly to the Academic Dean.

281. The Registrar oversees the seminarians' registration of all courses.

282. The Registrar monitors for the seminarians the courses needed to earn the specific degree pursued by the seminarian although primary responsibility rests with the seminarian to insure that he is progressing toward its completion.

283. The Registrar assists the Academic Dean in scheduling the course times each semester.

284. The Registrar facilitates the course evaluation process at the end of each semester.

285. The Registrar assures that Notre Dame Seminary is in compliance with all academic federal and state civil policies.

286. The Registrar works closely with the Business Manager regarding billing and tuition matters.

287. The Registrar assists the Rector-President's Office with the admission of new seminarians as well as new students enrolled in the M.A. Program.

288. The Registrar coordinates the production of formation materials, *i.e.* handbooks.

289. The Registrar is a member of the faculty council.

### **Director of Library Services**

290. The Director of Library Services is appointed by the Rector-President.

291. The Director of Library Services reports directly to the Academic Dean regarding responsibilities associated with the position.

292. The Director of Library Services provides an orientation to all new seminarians about the services and resources of the library provided by Notre Dame Seminary.

293. The Director of Library Services maintains all the resources of the library.

294. The Director of Library Services is responsible for making the library and its resources available to the seminary community by maintaining hours of operation.

295. The Director of Library Services is a member of the faculty council and administrative board.

### **Information Technology Department**

296. The Information Technology Department is staffed by personnel of the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

297. The Information Technology Department works in collaboration with the Director of Facilities.

298. The Information Technology Department oversees the computer systems, hardware and software of Notre Dame Seminary.

299. The Information Technology Department oversees the internet, email and website systems.

300. The Information Technology Department oversees the telephone system and the outside telephone contractors.

301. The Information Technology Department oversees the acquisition and maintenance of the photocopiers under the direction of the Director of Facilities.

302. The Information Technology Department reports any misconduct associated with inappropriate use of technology by seminarians to the Rector-President.

303. The Information Technology Department provides information and an orientation to all new seminarians regarding the computer and information systems of Notre Dame Seminary.

### **Director of Food Service**

304. The Director of Food Service is hired and contracted by the Rector-President.

305. The Director of Food Service reports to the Director of Facilities regarding routine matters.

306. The Director of Facilities represents the interests of Notre Dame Seminary to the Director of Food Service.

307. The Director of Food Service works closely with the Vice Rector regarding seminary events.

308. The Director of Food Service works closely with seminarian representatives regarding seminarian concerns and menu selections.

### **Director of the Development Office**

309. The Director of the Development Office is appointed by the Rector-President and reports directly to the Rector-President.

310. The Director of the Development Office coordinates the annual Gala and Christmas Luncheon with the assistance of seminarians.

311. The Director of the Development Office oversees the coordination of special events that include Alumni Day, fundraising dinners, the publishing of newsletters, mailings to alumni, *etc.*

312. The Director of the Development Office oversees the production of the newsletter.

313. The Director of the Development Office is a member of the administrative board.

### **Consultative Bodies**

314. The Rector-President establishes consultative bodies that assist the Rector-President in discharging the priestly formation program.

### **Faculty Council**

315. The Faculty Council is comprised of all full-time teaching faculty members, both lay and clergy. The chair of the council is the Rector-President or his designate, the Academic Dean. The Registrar and Librarian are also members of the Council.

316. The Faculty Council provides consultation to the Rector-President regarding all aspects of the academic program including curriculum, courses, teaching personnel, faculty handbook, faculty development, accreditation matters, etc.

317. The secretary to the council is the Administrative Assistant to the Academic Dean.

### **Seminary Formation Board**

318. The Formation Board is comprised of all the Directors of programs at Notre Dame Seminary including the Rector-President (chair), Vice Rectors, Director of Spiritual Formation, Academic Dean, Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education, Director of Human Formation, Director of Hispanic Formation, Director of Liturgy, Director of Music, Director of Library Services, and others appointed by the Rector.

319. The Formation Board is convened to review all aspects of the priestly formation program and to implement the norms of the *Program of Priestly Formation* and the *Formation Handbook*.

320. The secretary to the board is the Administrative Assistant to the Academic Dean.

### **Administrative Board**

321. The Administrative Board is comprised of professional staff who have oversight of the campus and the temporalities of the seminary including the Rector-President (chair), Director of Facilities, Business Manager, Director of Development, Administrative Assistant to the Rector-President, Receptionist, Director of Library Services, and a resident priest other than the Rector-President.

322. Administrative Board is convened to review and address matters related to maintenance, housekeeping, campus matters, service contracts, fundraising events, and matters related to temporalities.

323. The Board may be chaired by another designee of the Rector.

### **Formation Advisors Committee**

324. All priests who serve as formation advisors comprise the formation advisors committee chaired by the Rector-President.

325. This committee is responsible for reviewing the progress of individual seminarians according to the norms of the *Program of Priestly Formation*.

326. The Formation Advisors Committee is responsible for recommending advancement of seminarians to the next class level, to receive the ministries of lector and acolyte, to receive admission to candidacy, to the Order of Deacon, and to the Order of Presbyter.

327. The Formation Advisors Committee is also responsible for recommending the dismissal of seminarians from the program, recommending seminarians for pastoral year, and all other recommendations regarding the status of seminarians.

## **THE DIMENSIONS OF PRIESTLY FORMATION**

### **A. Premise**

328. The governing documents of priestly formation speak about the areas of formation a seminarian must address in his discernment and preparation for priesthood. Notre Dame Seminary emphasizes an integrated formation that considers the following dimensions: human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation.

329. While certainly all of these dimensions are related, for the sake of clarity, distinctions have been made among the various elements of the program. The functioning of a priestly formation program depends upon the interrelationship of those elements. No one part of the formation process works independently of any other.

330. Each dimension of formation cooperates with the others to prepare the seminarian for an integrated approach to ordained ministry. Priestly formation at Notre Dame Seminary is structured on two different levels: pre-theology formation and theologate formation.

331. Both levels of priestly formation consider the integrative theme – *Disciples of the Lord: Missionary Priests for the New Evangelization*. This description of priestly formation captures the priestly vision of St. Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis.

332. The Rector-President will delineate this theme of priestly formation, Disciples of the Lord: Missionary Priests for the New Evangelization, at the beginning of each academic year. The formation faculty will reflect on this theme in formation conferences. Teaching faculty will emphasize this theme as it relates to the intellectual formation of seminarians.

### **B. Theology Level Formation**

333. As indicated earlier, theology level seminarians have already been exposed to seminary life and have advanced into this stage of priestly formation. Therefore, it is expected that theology level seminarians bring with them a maturity and eagerness to embrace priestly formation.

334. Moreover, a shift of emphasis occurs from “discernment” to “preparation.” While discernment is always an underlying activity in a priestly formation program, theology level seminarians direct their formation towards the real possibility they will be ordained to the priesthood. Their attitude, disposition, and focus in formation takes on a sense of preparation whereby the seminarian seeks to cultivate the charisms, virtues, and skills necessary for competent, effective priestly ministry.

335. No doubt the intensity of formation may result in the seminarian needing to discern if, in fact, the Lord is calling him to the priesthood. He therefore approaches his formation in a spirit of humility and obedience.

336. The seminarian places his trust in the Church following the prescriptions of the formation program. What must be avoided is any inclination to subvert the formation program choosing one's own sense of how to be prepared for ordained ministry.

337. Parallel formation results when a seminarian chooses other people or resources apart from the priestly formation program that he believes will better prepare him for the priesthood. This Gnostic tendency can injure one's relationship to the Church and ultimately to the Lord.

338. Submarine formation results when the seminarian chooses to follow the external dimensions of the formation program without interiorizing the meaning or impact of priestly formation. Conversion and transformation does not authentically or completely occur resulting in a candidate for ministry who is not truly prepared for Holy Orders.

339. The theology level seminarian is a humble, obedient and energetic man choosing to embrace the formation program aggressively and without condition allowing the grace of God to prevail.

### **C. An Integrated Formation**

340. Notre Dame Seminary has tailored the priestly formation program to integrate and unify the four dimensions of formation in conformity with the *Program of Priestly Formation*, *Ratio Fundamentalis*, and *Pastores Dabo Vobis*.

341. The specific aim of formation is to prepare the seminarian for priestly life and ministry. He must be ready to embrace the final years of formation with a sound theological training, a love for the sacramental life of the Church, and a commitment to form the charisms of prayer, celibacy and obedience.

342. "The seminary and its entire life, in all its different expressions, is committed to formation, the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation of future priests. Although this formation has many aspects in common with the human and Christian formation of all the members of the Church, it has, nevertheless, contents, modalities, and characteristics which relate specifically to the aim of preparation for the priesthood" (PDV 61).

### **D. Human Formation**

343. "Future priests should...cultivate a series of human qualities, not only out of proper and due growth and realization of self, but also with a view to the ministry" (PDV 43). Human formation is neither psychotherapy nor intensive psychiatric assistance but rather an interactive process entered into with a responsible other who facilitates personal growth through listening and speaking. (see 355) It also involves the collaborative formulation of



realistic goals and establishing the means by which these goals may be measured. The goal of human formation is the achievement of mutually recognized goals.

### **Purpose**

344. The purpose of human formation is to develop the personal and interpersonal qualities that will allow each seminarian's personality to develop after that of the Good Shepherd. The diocesan priest leads people to Christ and His Church. Therefore, his personality, attitude, and disposition are to serve as "a bridge and not an obstacle for others in their meeting with Jesus Christ the Redeemer of humanity" (PDV 43).

345. St. Pope John Paul II reminded those engaged in the work of priestly formation that human formation is foundational for the life of grace but also for the other dimensions of formation. "The whole work of priestly formation would be deprived of its necessary foundation if it lacked a suitable human foundation [...] Future priests should therefore cultivate a series of human qualities, not only out of proper and due growth and realization of self, but also with a view to the ministry" (PDV 43).

### **Criteria**

346. The goals of human formation are summarized in *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (43-44) and confirmed in the *Program of Priestly Formation* (2005).

- a) Seminarians will possess the human qualities that are signs of personal maturity and that are needed for pastoral service. These include the capacity "to love the truth, to be loyal, to respect every person, to have a sense of justice, to be true to their word, to be genuinely compassionate, to be men of integrity and, especially to be balanced in judgment and behavior" (cf. PDV 43).
- b) Seminarians will manifest the skills required to relate well to all the people they will encounter in their ministry in a variety of cultural contents. Among the qualities the seminary looks for are affability, generosity, kindness, hospitality, courtesy, civility, and magnanimity (PDV 43).
- c) Seminarians will have an affective maturity that is manifested in the capacity for friendship and for living chaste celibacy in a healthy, joyful manner (PDV 44).
- d) Seminarians will demonstrate a well-formed moral conscience through their actions that indicate a responsible freedom (PDV 44).

347. The criteria for human formation, summarized by the *Program of Priestly Formation* challenges seminarians to consider cultivating the following qualities:

- a) The human qualities of truthfulness, respect for others, justice, humility, integrity, affability, generosity, kindness, courtesy, integrity, and prudence, docility, flexibility, joy, inner peace, common sense, and zeal;

- b) The capacity to relate to others in a positive manner and the ability to get along with others and work with them in the community;
- c) Good self-knowledge, self-discipline, and self-mastery, including emotional self-control;
- d) Good physical and mental health;
- e) A balanced lifestyle and balance in making judgments;
- f) Affective maturity and healthy psychosexual development; clarity of male sexual identity; an ability to establish and maintain wholesome friendships; the capacity to maintain appropriate boundaries in relationships;
- g) Skills for leadership and collaboration with women and men;
- h) Capacity to receive and integrate constructive criticism;
- i) Simplicity of life, stewardship of resources, and responsibility for financial obligations;
- j) Temperance with material goods; use of alcohol; awareness of manifestations of consumerism/materialism;
- k) Mature respect for and cooperation with church authority;
- l) Engagement in the community life of the seminary

### **Instruments**

348. The formation program unifies and integrates the goals of human formation in the programming of the seminary. Notre Dame Seminary uses a number of instruments to assist the seminarian in his discernment and formation.

- Instruction from the Rector-President and faculty through weekly conferences, courses, and occasional workshops.
- The personal reflection of the seminarian who examines with regularity his behavior, motivations, inclinations, respect of boundaries, and appropriation of life experience.
- Community life that develops in the seminarian a generosity of spirit and that fosters discipline, self-mastery, and faithful perseverance in commitments.
- Living the rhythm of seminary life that enables the seminarian to accept authority, develop the habit of using freedom with discretion, learn to act with initiative, and work harmoniously with other members of the community.

- Formation advisors who serve in the external forum to observe and assist the seminarians to grow humanly by offering feedback about their general demeanor, their relational capacities and styles, their maturity, their capacity to become a public person and leader in a community, and their appropriation of the human virtues that can make them men of communion.
- Spiritual Directors who serve in the internal forum and contribute to the human formation of the seminarians with open and frank discussions addressing topics including sexuality, chastity, celibacy, affective maturity, intimacy, friendships, freedom, moderation, *etc.* The Spiritual Director assists in cultivating the virtues of self-reflection and self-discipline, which are foundational for human development.
- Counseling and psychological services, offered in house or through referrals to outside professionals, intended to help a man work through particular emotional or psychological issues that are stunting growth in affective maturity. The specific goals of counseling are varied depending on the presenting issue of the seminarian. Confidentiality is upheld, with certain limitations, unless a seminarian is specifically referred for counseling services by the rector or his formation advisor, where an agreement is signed to disclose information pertinent to the reason for referral.

## **Goals**

349. The priestly formation program at Notre Dame Seminary seeks to prepare the seminarians for ordained ministry and for ongoing formation after ordination. Thus, seminarians completing their formation at Notre Dame Seminary ought to be men who are:

- men of communion
- good communicators
- prudent and discerning persons
- persons of affective maturity
- men who respect, care for, and exercise vigilance over their bodies
- men who can take on the role of a public person
- men who are free to be at the service of the Gospel
- men of solid moral character with finely developed moral consciences
- men who are good stewards of material possessions

## **Relationships**

350. An essential part of a seminarian's human formation concerns the types of relationships he establishes. The presence of healthy friendships is an important indicator of personal conference. The capacity to establish such relationships with men and women is one of the elements to be considered in discerning the presence of a vocation to ordained ministry particularly diocesan priesthood.

351. Discerning a vocation to the priesthood, however, also includes discerning a call to a chaste, celibate life. An essential component of the personal development of the seminarian, therefore, is the development of a capacity to establish authentic friendship in the context of celibate commitment. This development is both complex and absolutely necessary.

352. In an effort to support and foster that development, the following guidelines are followed at Notre Dame Seminary:

- Seminarians should learn how to transform “the experience of loneliness into a holy solitude based on a ‘strong, lively, and personal love for Jesus Christ’ ” (PPF 79).
- Seminarians avoid codependent personal relationships.
- Seminarians should foster the ability to develop friendships with individuals while remaining open, cordial and approachable to all the members of the community.
- Since honesty, openness, and trust are the basis of good friendship, any friendship or relationship that tends towards a devious or secretive nature must be looked upon with concern.
- Romantic relationships are not consistent with the commitment expected of a seminarian. If a seminarian feels the need for such relationship he is to withdraw from the seminary formation program.
- Seminarians are expected to be committed to and lead a chaste celibate life.
- Any pattern of inappropriate sexual behavior with another would indicate that the seminarian is not yet ready to pursue the program of priestly formation and he will be dismissed.

## **E. Spiritual Formation**

353. One of the most challenging questions of the New Testament is that which Jesus addressed to the disciples when he said: “Who do you say that I am?” (Matthew 16:15). Elsewhere in the Gospel, Jesus asks: “Can you drink of the cup I am to drink of?” (Matthew 20:22). Jesus also told his disciples to “be made perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matthew 5:48). These questions and statements required a lifetime for the disciples to understand and answer. Yet these questions are essential ones for anyone who is called a disciple of Jesus. They form the foundation of what has traditionally been called “conversion,” and conversion is the goal of spiritual formation.

354. The seminary community is a real ecclesial community in the life of the Church. Each seminarian, while a member of his home parish, practices his Catholic Faith in the context of the seminary community. Moreover, the priestly formation program challenges each seminarian to cultivate a diocesan priestly spirituality. In one sense, this goal is a

lifelong process yet there are certain measurable achievements, both internally and externally, that demonstrate a true priestly spirituality (cf. PPF 109-110).

355. Founded upon a personal faith, Christ urged his disciples to “...go therefore and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:19). This command binds each disciple to a commitment of evangelization. This commitment forms the indispensable context of one’s ongoing conversion. As one shares faith, one experiences anew its depth and richness.

356. Conversion is a lifelong process that has many dimensions. The role of the Spiritual Director is to facilitate one’s ever more intense conversion to Christ. The Spiritual Director enables a person to formulate and examine the questions related to this conversion and to answer them honestly in the light of experience. The Spiritual Director assists a person to establish a personal spirituality that resounds with the authentic teaching of the Church and to integrate the spiritual, human, intellectual, and pastoral dimensions of formation.

### **Purpose**

357. The spiritual formation program strives to establish a foundation within the seminarian for a lifetime of priestly ministry for the Church. This foundation is an intimate relationship with the triune God, the source of all love and truth, a relationship nourished by Scripture and Tradition, celebrated in the sacraments, most particularly the Eucharist, and marked by a sincere devotion to Our Lady, the Mother of God and the Mother of the Church. To this end, the spiritual formation program challenges the seminarian to grow in loyalty to the Church, the sacrament of salvation.

358. The spiritual formation program at Notre Dame Seminary proposes basic expectations that each seminarian must strive for:

- To live in intimate communion with God through a life of celibacy, obedience and prayer;
- To seek Christ in the faithful meditation on the Word of God and in active participation in the sacred mysteries of the Church especially in the Eucharist, the sacrament of penance, and in the *Liturgy of the Hours*;
- To love and revere the Blessed Virgin Mary, seeking her protection and counsel.

### **Criteria**

359. The goals of spiritual formation are summarized in *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (45-50) and confirmed in the *Program of Priestly Formation* (110).

- a) Seminarians are to be men of prayer. They will form a habit of daily personal and liturgical prayer flowing from the celebration of the Mass and the *Liturgy of the Hours* with prayerful meditation on the Scriptures (*lectio divina*) and with a filial devotion to Mary.

- b) Seminarians will incorporate into their personal spiritual lives the frequent reception of the sacrament of penance under the direction of a Spiritual Director.
- c) Seminarians will discern their call to priestly celibacy manifesting an ability to live chastely in mature relationships with other people. They are to cultivate through their spiritual formation an affective maturity and an understanding of the gift of celibacy as a stimulus to pastoral charity and love of others in ministry.
- d) Seminarians will learn and be challenged to develop a diocesan priestly spirituality with a prayer life consistent with the demands of community living, pastoral and ecclesiastical expectations, and the needs of the Church. Spiritual formation is to form in the seminarian a personality of humility and obedience so they will be men of the Church who view the needs of the Church as greater than their own.
- e) Seminarians will cultivate a spirituality of service imitating Christ, who came “to serve and not to be served,” by living a life of simplicity and virtue.

360. The criteria for spiritual formation, summarized by the *Program of Priestly Formation* challenges seminarians to consider cultivating the following goals:

- a) Commitment to a life of prayer and the ability to assist others in their spiritual growth; expectation of developing a daily holy hour;
- b) Abiding love for the sacramental life of the Church, especially the Holy Eucharist and penance;
- c) A loving knowledge of the Word of God and a prayerful familiarity with that Word;
- d) Appreciation of and commitment to the *Liturgy of the Hours*;
- e) Fidelity to the liturgical and spiritual program of the seminary, including the daily celebration of the Eucharist, and participation in days of reflection and retreats;
- f) Fidelity to regular spiritual direction, to regular celebration of the sacrament of penance, to meditative prayer, and to a habit of spiritual reading;
- g) A positive embrace of a lifelong commitment to chaste celibacy, obedience, and simplicity of life;

- h) A love for Jesus Christ and the Church, for the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints; an active practice of the devotional life of the Church (adoration, rosary, etc.)
- i) A spirit of self-giving charity toward others.

## **Instruments**

361. The priestly formation program at Notre Dame Seminary unifies and integrates the goals of spiritual formation in its programming. The seminary uses a number of instruments to assist the seminarian in his discernment and spiritual formation.

- Instruction from the Rector-President and faculty through conferences, courses, and occasional workshops on various topics related to priestly celibacy, obedience, prayer, and simplicity.
- The personal reflection of the seminarian, who regularly examines the disciplines of his prayer life and how he is scheduling the proper and appropriate time for prayer and reflection each day.
- Community life that develops in the seminarian a sense of diocesan priestly spirituality in light of the daily schedule which includes the celebration of Mass, *Liturgy of the Hours*, stations of the cross or praying the rosary, and daily adoration before the Blessed Sacrament.
- In addition to the opportunity for celebration of the sacrament of penance with the Spiritual Director, the opportunity to celebrate the sacrament with the house confessor, who hears confessions on a regular basis and coordinates outside confessors and occasional communal penance services.
- Formation advisors who serve in the external forum to observe and assist the seminarian to grow more spiritually in a lifestyle of service, simplicity, and virtue. The advisors offer feedback about general perceptions shared by both the faculty and seminarians while also challenging the seminarian to develop a spirituality consonant with the public expectations of pastoral ministry.
- Spiritual Directors who serve in the internal forum and contribute to the spiritual formation of the seminarian by directing him to learn more about the spiritual patrimony of the Church with devotion to the saints, particularly Our Lady, evaluating the proper discipline needed in developing a spirituality consistent with diocesan priesthood, encouraging meditation and reflection on the Word of God contained in the sacred scriptures, and determining how the seminarian can celebrate the sacrament of penance on a regular and frequent basis.

## Goals

362. The priestly formation program at Notre Dame Seminary seeks to prepare the seminarians for ordained ministry and ongoing formation after ordination. Hence seminarians completing their formation at Notre Dame Seminary ought to be men who:

- Appreciate and love the sacred liturgy of the Church
- Cultivate a Eucharistic spirituality
- Foster a regular practice of the sacrament of penance
- Are faithful in their prayer of the *Liturgy of the Hours*
- Can hear and receive the Word of God (*lectio divina*)
- Revere and love the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Have formed a habit of daily, personal meditation
- Assimilate the mystery of Christ with devotional prayer
- Understand the dimensions of an ecclesial, diocesan priestly spirituality
- Embark on a path of simplicity, poverty, and virtue
- Grow in spousal love for the People of God in the gift of chaste celibacy
- Are forming the divine and apostolic quality of obedience
- Are developing the notion of integration of human, intellectual, and pastoral formation in their spiritual life

## Components

363. Spiritual formation in the seminary seeks to lay the foundation for men who will be ordained to the diocesan priesthood and will be given an assignment by the diocesan bishop to carry out the pastoral mission of the Church. The newly ordained priest will have cultivated in his seminary formation those habits, attitudes, practices, and disciplines which will enable him to shoulder the burdens and celebrate the joys of priestly ministry.

364. Notre Dame Seminary includes opportunities for spiritual formation and development in its regular programming and scheduling. The personal accountability of the seminarian is presumed and so he is to avail himself of all the opportunities at his disposal for discernment and formation.

365. The celebration of the *Mass* is the source and summit of Christian life and the wellspring of priestly formation. Daily participation at Mass is expected of all seminarians. Seminarians participate in the seminary community Mass by carrying out liturgical ministries with full use of the many options and expressions that reveal the richness of the Roman Rite.

366. The *Liturgy of the Hours* sets the daily rhythm of prayer for all priests. Seminarians pray Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer each day as a community. Seminarians are encouraged to gather frequently to pray Night Prayer with their diocesan brothers or by hallway (PPF 117, 119).



367. The regular and frequent celebration of the *Sacrament of Penance* is an expectation of priestly formation and a requirement for ongoing conversion. The sacrament is scheduled for the community on a regular basis by the Director of Spiritual Formation, with outside confessors, and House Confessor. The Spiritual Director serves in the internal forum at all times. Communal celebrations of the sacrament are celebrated during the year. All seminarians are encouraged to celebrate the sacrament with their Spiritual Director (PPF 110, 120).

368. *Spiritual Direction* is a special opportunity for ongoing discernment, formation in prayer, and integration of personal, moral, and spiritual growth. Seminarians are required to meet with their Spiritual Directors once a month, but strongly encouraged to meet every two to three weeks. The Spiritual Director serves in the internal forum and therefore does not participate in any external forum gatherings, *i.e.* formation advisor meetings. At the pre-theology stage of formation, spiritual direction is critically important in the discernment process; therefore, seminarians are to approach this relationship with a most trusting attitude (PPF 110, 127-135).

369. *Retreats and Days and Evenings of Reflection* provide the time and place for sustained prayer, silence, and solitude necessary for men who discerning a priestly vocation. The intimate and loving relationship a disciple of the Lord has with God requires a serious approach and time for prayer. The formation program includes an annual retreat, which is usually scheduled at the beginning of the second semester. Days or evenings of reflection take place on a monthly basis (PPF 110, 122). The Director of Spiritual Formation coordinates all retreats and days and evenings of recollection.

370. Candidates for ordination to the Order of Deacon and Order of Presbyter will have a class retreat according to the *Code of Canon Law* and the *Program of Priestly Formation*. Candidates for ordination to the diaconate will take their retreat in January and candidates for ordination to the priesthood will have their retreat at the end of the spring semester.

371. *Formation Conferences* given each week by the Rector-President and the Formation Faculty guide the seminarians in learning the value, practice, and cultivation of celibacy, simplicity of life, obedience, and pastoral service. Additionally, the homilies given by the priest celebrant always highlight the formative elements of discernment and preparation for pastoral ministry in light of diocesan priestly spirituality (PPF 110, 122).

372. The use of *Sacred Scripture* is a most important component in sustaining a healthy spiritual life. Seminarians who seek to draw closer to Christ and live in intimate communion with him must draw daily nourishment from the scriptures. The prayerful meditation on the Word of God (*lectio divina*) is encouraged as a daily practice (PPF 110, 123).

373. In order to foster growth in personal devotion and love for the Eucharist, seminarians are encouraged to spend time in prayer before the *Blessed Sacrament*. The seminary provides the opportunity for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament almost every day and on Sunday evenings as well as on other special occasions. Seminarians are

encouraged to spend personal time in the chapel each day to develop the discipline of prayer and reflection (PPF 110, 116, 124).

374. Devotions are a most important aspect of diocesan priestly spirituality. Through spiritual direction and conferences, the seminarians are directed to develop a special love and devotion to Our Lady. The seminary community prays the rosary periodically as a community; in addition, the rosary is offered several times a week in English and Spanish. The rosary is offered three times a week as an optional devotion and is prayed in community weekly during the Marian months of October and May. The seminarians are also introduced to the patrimony of sacred music that honors Mary through song (PPF 110, 125). The seminarians also pray the Stations of the Cross weekly in Lent. The Divine Mercy Chaplet is offered each Friday afternoon.

375. *Instruction* regarding the history and theology of liturgy is provided through house courses and addressed in formation conferences. The Director of Liturgy provides suitable instruction to the seminary community.

## **F. Intellectual Formation**

376. One of the overall goals of a seminary formation program is to prepare a seminarian who is widely knowledgeable in humanity and the human condition, deeply engaged in a process of understanding Divine Revelation, and fully committed and adequately skilled to communicate his knowledge to as many people as possible.

377. “If we expect every Christian to be prepared to make a defense of the faith and to account for the hope that is in us, then all the more should candidates for the priesthood and priests have diligent care of the quality of their intellectual formation in their education and pastoral activity. For the salvation of their brothers and sisters they should seek an ever deeper knowledge of the divine mysteries” (PDV 51).

378. Notre Dame Seminary has integrated the requirements of intellectual formation into the priestly formation program as stipulated by *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (51-56) and the *Program of Priestly Formation* (PPF 136-140, 146-190).

### **Purpose**

379. The purpose of intellectual formation is for the seminarian to grasp the Catholic intellectual and liturgical tradition, to be able to proclaim and teach the Gospel of Christ, to communicate effectively the mystery of God to people of today, and to be equipped for the continuing pursuit of truth.

380. The commitment to study, which takes up no small part of the time of those preparing for the priesthood, is not in fact an external and secondary dimension of their human, Christian, spiritual, and vocational growth. In reality, through study, especially the study of philosophy and theology, the future priest assents to the Word of God, grows in his spiritual life, and prepares himself to fulfill his pastoral ministry (PDV 51).

### **Criteria**

381. “Intellectual formation in the seminary program centers on theology as a search for ‘an ever deeper knowledge of the divine mysteries’ (PDV 51). This kind of theological study which far exceeds a purely technical approach to ‘religious phenomena’ unfolds” in a particular, deliberate way (PPF 163).

382. Notre Dame Seminary seeks to present the study of theology in a style characterized by the pastoral mission of the Church and the seminarian’s cultivation of the spiritual life that draws him into the heart of the Church.

383. In following the *Program of Priestly Formation* (cf. 163), the following criteria is observed:

- Theology is truly to be *fides quarens intellectum*. This direction is not the same as the approach of religious studies or the history of religions. The seminary study of theology begins in faith and ends in faith, as should all theological inquiry and study.
- In the seminary, the study of theology is oriented to one’s own faith and also to the faith of others. The study of theology is apostolically motivated.
- The study of theology enriches and expands the personal faith of the seminarian studying it.
- When theology is studied in the context of priestly formation, it cannot be detached other human knowledge. In fact, it is to be integrated with other elements of human understanding, especially philosophy and the human sciences.
- The seminary study of theology, because it begins in faith and ends in faith, must flow from prayer and lead to prayer.
- The theology studied in preparation for priestly ministry must find integration and focus in the sacred liturgy.
- Because theology studied in light of priestly ministry must be directed to a practical wisdom, it must offer a complete and unified vision of the truths of faith.

## Goals

384. The priestly formation program at Notre Dame Seminary seeks to prepare seminarians for ordained ministry and ongoing formation after ordination. Seminarians completing their formation at Notre Dame Seminary ought to be men who:

- Evidence an ability to learn and value knowledge for its own sake and for the sake of ministry;

- Possess the readiness and capacity to become learned individuals;
- Participate in class and coursework to their full potential and have the ability to meet the minimum standards for all courses;
- Appreciate intellectual pursuits marked by motivation, application, thoroughness, consistency, and soundness of judgment;
- Have the ability to engage in intelligent discussion, discern issues, grasp details, and master concepts;
- Possess the capacity to think and use ideas and concepts in the disciplines of liberal studies;
- Can integrate knowledge both conceptually and practically;
- Have the ability to reflect critically on their own experience and make reasoned, prudential judgments.

## **Instruments**

385. The *Rector-President* provides oversight of the intellectual formation program to support the faculty with resources and to assure that seminarians are receiving the best education possible. He reports particular concerns and needs to the Rector-President and Academic Dean.

386. The *Formation Advisor* works closely with each seminarian in course selection and other matters related to the academics. He assists the seminarians in making decisions about degrees, adding/dropping classes, and developing a plan to complete all the course work in the duration of a seminarian's stay at the seminary.

387. The *Academic Dean and the Director of Intellectual Formation* assists the seminarian in selecting courses that meet the obligations of the particular degree although the seminarian is ultimately responsible for tracking which courses are needed for the degree,

388. The *Formation Advisor and Spiritual Director* can also be resources for a seminarian who may need to discuss his challenges in completing academic assignments, understanding the Church's position or teaching in areas being discussed during classes, addressing matters related to time management, and the forming of study habits.

389. The *Academic Dean* can assist seminarians in making decisions about fulfilling degree requirements and electives. The Academic Dean can also direct the seminarian to various offices that provide academic assistance. The Academic Dean can also discuss with professors, with the seminarian's permission, any difficulties the seminarian may have that are causing him not to meet certain expectations of a course.

390. *Study Hours/Library*: Seminarians are encouraged to make good use of their time for study and research. When classes are not in session, particularly during the evening

hours, seminarians generally are expected to be involved with their academic formation notwithstanding other areas of formation. The seminary facility includes a library, computer room, spiritual reading rooms, and several common areas for study, reading, and research.

## **G. Pastoral Formation**

391. Seminarians enter a priestly formation program with an already formed idea of how the Church carries out her pastoral mission on the universal, national, diocesan, and local level. The seminarian usually has a particular interest, skill, characteristic, or quality that somehow confirms or motivates his desire for ministry in the Church. The formation program at the seminary helps the seminarian cultivate those skills that are necessary for ordained ministry and are external and practical expressions of Christian discipleship.

392. “The whole formation imparted to candidates for the priesthood aims at preparing them to enter into communion with the charity of Christ the Good Shepherd. They should be trained to undertake the ministry of the Shepherd, that they may know how to represent Christ to humanity” (PDV 57).

393. The priestly formation program at Notre Dame Seminary introduces the seminarian to pastoral formation in a number of ways but most particularly through the apostolic works program. Since the formation program for collegians is more introductory at this stage, the demands of field education are limited. However, the seminarians are exposed to an array of pastoral opportunities.

### **Purpose**

394. The purpose of pastoral formation is for the seminarian to learn and understand how to be a shepherd imbued with the charity of Christ, filled with a missionary spirit, and possessing pastoral competence. Pastoral skills are developed through formative, supervised experiences in ministry and reflection upon those experiences.

### **Criteria**

395. The goals and criteria for pastoral formation are outlined in *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (57-59) and in the *Program of Priestly Formation* (235-256). The priestly formation program at Notre Dame Seminary has implemented these goals into its pastoral formation program.

396. The delineation of these principles seeks to achieve an objective formation of the seminarian who is to cultivate certain qualifications (*cf.* PPF 239). Therefore, the goals of pastoral formation are:

- a) To promote growth as mature persons and as active Catholics by having authentic experiences of Gospel living emphasizing Christian service as basic preparation for priestly ministry.

- b) To expose the seminarian to the challenges of everyday, ordinary life considering the varied situations in society especially the condition of minorities, the underprivileged, the imprisoned, and the homeless.
- c) To acquaint seminarians with the rich diversity of the Church's ethnic and racial life considering the social and geographic situations of the local Church.
- d) To imbue in the seminarian's discernment and formation the ecclesial dimension of pastoral service so as to demonstrate the integration of social service to the wider pastoral mission of the Church thus avoiding a reductionist view of ministry to simply social service.

## **Goals**

397. The priestly formation program seeks to prepare the seminarians for ordained ministry and ongoing formation after ordination, hence, seminarians completing their formation ought to be men who:

- Develop basic skills often related to human formation for effective ministry to people;
- Have an initiation into and understanding of practical, pastoral experiences, especially in a parish;
- Understand the ecclesial nature and purpose of apostolic service and its relationship to the overall good of the Church;
- Appreciate how all ministry relates to the vision of the diocesan bishop, the chief shepherd of the local Church;
- Cultivate a preferential love for the poor;
- Are able to emphasize the Word of God in pastoral ministry as it is contained in the sacred scriptures and Tradition of the Church as authentically interpreted by the Magisterium;
- Possess a missionary motivation or quality for ministry;
- Understand the communal and collaborative nature of pastoral ministry;
- Are beginning to cultivate mature leadership skills in dealing with people in the proper and appropriate way as one who represents Christ and the Church.

## **Components**

398. “Every seminary is required to offer a coordinated program of pastoral formation that forms candidates for the priesthood who are able to support men and women in answering the universal call to holiness” (PPF 242).

399. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education, a member of the formation faculty of the seminary, oversees the program.

400. Apostolic placements should progress from simpler experience with limited objectives for beginners to more complex involvements for experienced students” (PPF 184).

401. “Pastoral Formation cannot be reduced to a mere apprenticeship, aiming to make the candidate familiar with some pastoral techniques. The seminary which educates must seek, really and truly, to initiate the candidate into the sensitivity of being a shepherd, in the conscious and mature assumption of his responsibilities, in the interior habit of evaluating problems and establishing priorities, and looking for solutions on the basis of honest motivations of faith and according to the theological demands inherent in pastoral work” (PPF 397).

## **Pre-Theology**

389.a Pre-Theology - Pastoral Ministry. In order for seminarians to understand adequately how they are called to serve as a pastoral minister, they will focus their initial pastoral ministry on building up the community at Notre Dame Seminary. This will help the seminarian recognize he is called to be a member of the community of disciples that follows the Lord at Notre Dame Seminary. During the final semester of Pre-Theology the seminarian will continue his pastoral ministry development by participating in a supervised introduction to pastoral ministry. The goal of this pastoral ministry experience is to help the seminarian to realize how he is called to serve as a representative of Christ and his Church to those needs. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education will organize off-site visitations to various Catholic Charities sites for seminarians to interact with others in need. By interacting with others and reflecting on these experiences, the seminarian will come to see the role and responsibilities of pastoral ministry in the life of a priest. At the conclusion of this one semester pastoral ministry experience, the seminarian will turn in a theological reflection paper on his pastoral ministry, a self-evaluation and supervisor’s evaluation of the seminarian. The pastoral ministry evaluations will be used by the seminarian to set future goals and to guide the seminarian’s development. The evaluations and goals will be shared with the seminarian’s formation director.

## **Pre-Theology Summer**

389.b. Supervised Summer Parish Ministry for Pre-Theology Seminarians, Institute for Priestly Formation (IPF), or Spanish Language training. During the summer(s) of Pre-Theology the seminarian may participate in a supervised summer parish ministry, IPF or a Spanish Language program. The purpose of the supervised summer parish ministry

is to provide the seminarian with the opportunity to continue his vocational discernment while working in a parish setting. The seminarian should be involved in all parish ministries and meetings, especially participating in Vacation Bible School and Mass. He should be involved in visitation to the hospital/shut-ins, feeding the hungry, and participating in religious education programs. He should participate in all meetings at the parish including the pastoral council, finance council, school board, and liturgy planning meetings. The purpose of IPF is to help the seminarian further his formation especially focusing on his spiritual formation. The purpose of Spanish Language training is to help the seminarian prepare for using the Spanish language in his future ministry.

At the conclusion of the summer, the seminarian will turn in a theological reflection paper on his summer ministry, a self-evaluation and supervisor's evaluation of the seminarian. The summer ministry evaluations will be used by the seminarian to set future goals and to guide the seminarian's development. The evaluations and goals will be shared with the seminarian's formation director.

### **First Theology Fall/Spring**

390. Pastoral Exposure Program (PEP). During the year of First Theology the seminarians will expand their participation in pastoral ministry so as to further discern the Lord's call to priestly ministry. The Pastoral Exposure program will give the seminarians an opportunity to further reflect on their vocation and call to serve those in need. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education will organize off-site ministry opportunities to various Catholic Charities sites for seminarians to visit. By interacting with others and reflecting on these experiences, the seminarian will come to see his strengths and areas of needed growth in pastoral ministry. At the conclusion each semester, the seminarian will turn in a theological reflection paper on his pastoral ministry, a self-evaluation and supervisor's evaluation of the seminarian. The pastoral ministry evaluations will be used by the seminarian to set future goals and to guide the seminarian's development. The evaluations and goals will be shared with the seminarian's formation director.

391. Pastoral Theology Course. All first year seminarians are enrolled in the pastoral theology course in the fall semester. This course sets the foundation for pastoral ministry exploring human, spiritual and intellectual formation come together for a proper understanding of pastoral care. During this course seminarians will become more familiar with the documents of the Second Vatican Council and the interpretation of these documents oriented to the pastoral mission of the Church.

392. Teaching and Preaching the Word of God Course. All first year seminarians are enrolled in this course in the spring semester. This course is designed to provide seminarians the theological foundation for the practice and art of teaching and preaching. Seminarians will be familiar with the principles of evangelization and catechesis necessary for pastoral ministry.



393. Acompaño Mission Trip. All first year seminarians participate in a mission trip to Granada, Nicaragua to experience the missionary dimension of pastoral ministry. The following experiences are provided to the seminarians: they reflect theologically on the mission of Christ and the Church; they become aware of the universality of the Church; they pray for the mission of Christ in the world today; they study issues of social justice; they live and work with missionaries; they are introduced to another language and culture; they learn from the people; they provide manual labor to improve the living conditions of the people; and they make pastoral home visits particularly to the poor.

### **First Theology Summer**

394. Supervised Parish Ministry for First Theology Seminarians, Institute for Priestly Formation (IPF), or Spanish Language training. During the summer(s) of First Theology the seminarian may participate in a supervised summer parish ministry, IPF or a Spanish Language program. The purpose of the supervised summer parish ministry is to provide the seminarian with the opportunity to continue his vocational discernment while working in a parish setting. The seminarian should be involved in all parish ministries and meetings, especially participating in Vacation Bible School and Mass. He should be involved in visitation to the hospital/shut-ins, feeding the hungry, and participating in religious education programs. He should participate in all meetings at the parish including the pastoral council, finance council, school board, and liturgy planning meetings. The purpose of IPF is to help the seminarian further his formation especially focusing on his spiritual formation. The purpose of Spanish Language training is to help the seminarian prepare for using the Spanish language in his future ministry.

395. At the conclusion of the summer, the seminarian will turn in a theological reflection paper on his summer ministry, a self-evaluation and supervisor's evaluation of the seminarian. The summer ministry evaluations will be used by the seminarian to set future goals and to guide the seminarian's development and integration of the four dimensions of formation. The evaluations and goals will be shared with the seminarian's formation director.

### **Second Theology Fall/Spring**

396. Supervised Ministry of Religious Education. Seminarians participate in a supervised catechetical ministry selected according to the seminarians' previous experience and present interests. Seminarians will be assigned to a ministry of teaching. Possibilities include teaching religion in an elementary or high school, or teaching in a parish program for elementary, high school or teaching adults in RCIA. At the conclusion each semester, the seminarian will turn in a theological reflection paper on his pastoral ministry, a self-evaluation and supervisor's evaluation of the seminarian. The pastoral ministry evaluations will be used by the seminarian to set future goals and to guide the seminarian's development. The evaluations and goals will be shared with the seminarian's formation director.

397. Pastoral Counseling Course. This course is an introduction to pastoral counseling. It studies the relationship of spirituality, morality, psychology, the teaching of the Church, pastoral counseling, and the sacramental life of the Church. Seminarians will be able to

articulate and demonstrate an understanding of the basic counseling skills of pastoral counseling and have an understanding of approaches to counseling considering the differences in individuals, couples and family counseling. Seminarians will develop an understanding of some of the common issues in counseling including crises, trauma, sexual abuse, physical abuse and violence. Seminarians will understand various approaches to grief and loss. Finally, seminarians will develop an awareness of the more serious psychological/mental illnesses such as mood disorders and personality disorders.

398. Homiletics Practicum. The seminarians will have a practical study of the preparation and presentation of the Sunday homily aimed at deepening the homilist's appreciation of how to preach the Word of God enhancing his public speaking ability. The seminarian will have familiarity with various homiletic resource materials; a knowledge of the verbal and non-verbal dynamics involved in public communication; ability to derive homiletic themes from any given set of lectionary readings; ability to synthesize homiletic themes theologically and creatively; ability to listen to oneself critically, to hear oneself as the congregation does; and the ability to continually update one's development as a minister of the Word.

399. Preparation for Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), Preparation for Clinical Pastoral Immersion (CPI). Workshops will be hosted throughout second year for seminarians who are expected to participate in CPE or CPI. For seminarians who are not expected to participate in CPE, the Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education will work with the Vocation Director of the seminarian to determine how to fulfill the three credit hours required in the curriculum – the most common alternative is Spanish Language training.

## **Second Theology Summer**

400. All seminarians are required to participate in a pastoral ministry assignment after second theology. The ordinary summer assignment is either CPE or CPI. Notre Dame Seminary collaborates with diocese using CPE centers and with diocese that place their seminarians in hospitals in their diocese to serve as chaplains. Seminarians doing CPE will complete the required CPE program and those seminarians doing CPI will complete the Notre Dame Seminary requirements for CPI along with any other requirements set by the diocese. The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education will arrange for seminarians to be interviewed by CPE Directors as a part of the process required in preparing for CPE. The most common alternative to CPE or CPI is a Spanish Language training program that is chosen by the diocese. At the conclusion of the summer, the seminarian will turn in a theological reflection paper on his summer ministry, a self-evaluation and a supervisor's evaluation of the seminarian. The summer ministry evaluations will be used by the seminarian to set future goals and to guide the seminarian's development and integration of the four dimensions of formation. The evaluations and goals will be shared with the seminarian's formation director.

## **Third Theology Fall/Spring**

401. Integrated Pastoral Ministry. During third Theology, Seminarians will be expected to pick a pastoral ministry assignment that helps the develop and demonstrate their integration of the four dimensions of formation. Possible ministry assignments include,

parish ministry, hospital ministry, and special assignments at the seminary. The seminarian will choose his pastoral ministry assignment with his formation director. At the conclusion each semester, the seminarian will turn in a theological reflection paper on his pastoral ministry, a self-evaluation and supervisor's evaluation of the seminarian. The pastoral ministry evaluations will be used by the seminarian to set future goals and to guide the seminarian's development. The evaluations and goals will be shared with the seminarian's formation director.

402. a) Homiletics Practicum. After having had a general review of the theology of preaching from second theology, this course explores: the theologies of baptism, marriage and death; the Catholic rites used in baptisms, weddings and funerals; and the relevant pastoral issues related to these liturgies. The course also includes presentations on preaching the weekday homily, preaching at special occasions, preaching to youth, and the effective use of homiletic resources.

402. b) Diaconate Ministry Practicum. This course reviews with seminarians the liturgical and sacramental rites of the Church that a deacon can celebrate, namely, Baptism, Marriage, Funeral Rites, and Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction. The deacon's role at Mass will also be treated. The *Prenotanda* (introductions) of the Rites and the particular rubrical directives and options given in the various official ritual books of the Church will be studied and the Rites simulated in class.

402. c) Pastoral Theology of Marriage and Family. This course will offer the seminarian an overview of pastoral care to those seeking marriage and to their families. The seminarian will see how his vocation and the vocation of marriage and family are to work together. The seminarians will see how God's plan for marriage and family is to be seen as a call to holiness for the laity.

### **Third Theology Summer/Fall Internship**

403. Seminarians ordained to the Order of Deacon at the conclusion of their third year of theology are assigned by their bishops/superiors to a parish assignment that takes place from summer until mid-October. The assignment includes a learning agreement between the Pastor and Deacon, theological reflection sessions, and working with a parish lay support committee.

404. The deacons will acquire experience and expertise in the pastoral tasks of parish ministry; learn about himself, his potentialities and his limitations through his work with the people in the parish and in association with other ministers; seminarians will continue to appropriate their theological education so as to establish patterns of pastoral ministry through reflective study, prayer and supervision. The seminarian will focus on his integration of the four dimensions of formation. At the conclusion of the parish internship, the seminarian will turn in a theological reflection paper on his internship ministry, a self-evaluation, an evaluation from the lay support committee, and supervisor's evaluation of the seminarian. The summer ministry evaluations will be used by the seminarian to set future goals and to guide the seminarian's development and integration of the four

dimensions of formation. The evaluations and goals will be shared with the seminarian's formation director.

405. The seminarian earns six credits for the summer and fall assignment completing all expectations under the direction of the Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education.

### **Fourth Theology Fall/Spring**

406. Church Administration Course. This course is designed to provide seminarians with selected church management-administrative theory, models, and skills to better understand and facilitate priestly ministry according to the *Code of Canon Law*. Seminarians will study different situations involving the daily administration of a parish as well as aspects related to stewardship.

407. Temporality Formation Workshops. The seminarians will participate in ten workshops that review with the seminarian general information regards parish finances, employee practices, parish budgets, administration of property, policies regarding schools and cemeteries, etc.

408. Priesthood Ministry Practicum. This course reviews with the seminarians the sacramental rites of the Church which only a priest usually celebrates, namely, Mass, Penance and Anointing of the Sick. The *Prenotanda* (introductions) of the Rites and the particular rubrical directives and options given in the various official ritual books of the Church will be studied and the Rites simulated in class. The seminarian will develop the ability to faithfully and prayerfully preside at the celebration of the sacraments. The seminarian will develop the facility and insights in using liturgical texts and rites within a pastoral context. The seminarian will be able to find, examine, and evaluate resources for sacramental preparation and celebration.

409. Spiritual Direction Training. Seminarians will participate in a week-long program in the spring semester training them how to conduct spiritual direction with the faithful. The program integrates spirituality, theology, pastoral counseling, and prayer into a training experience that prepares seminarians to determine how to offer spiritual direction and when to recommend professional help to one who is seeking more than spiritual direction.

410. Weekend Diaconal Ministry. Fourth year deacons are invited to participate in parish ministry on the weekends with the permission of their vocation director and with the permission of the parish pastor. These pastoral experiences will continue to prepare the deacon for priestly ministry. Care should be taken however that the seminarian attend to all of his formation requirements that include successfully completing the requirements of the degree and all other seminary expectations.

### **Instruments**

411. Formation Conferences each week given by the Rector-President and formation faculty integrate all four dimensions of priestly formation into the presentations. Conferences directly relate to cultivating a diocesan priestly spirituality. Since pastoral

formation is concerned with the view to ministry, conferences challenge the seminarian to determine the ecclesial dimensions of how ministry is exercised in the Church. Additionally, homilies given by the priest celebrants always highlight the formative elements of discernment and preparation for pastoral ministry in light of diocesan priestly spirituality.

412. Formation Advising/Spiritual Direction: The seminarian explores with his formation advisor and Spiritual Director his understanding of ministry and the necessary formation needed to carry out the work of the Church. Skills and qualifications are discussed even though discernment and formation are at initiatory stages.

413. Apostolic Works Meetings: The Director of Pastoral Formation and Field Education meets with the seminarians to evaluate their progress in their individual apostolates and to lead discussions which challenge the seminarians to offer pastoral reflection on the concept of ministry and how those being ministered in the apostolic works are served by the Church.

414. Global Workshop: Notre Dame Seminary has diverse cultures represented by the seminarians and faculty. The diversity of culture is also present in the dioceses and religious communities served by the seminary. Recognizing the need to give seminarians a more adequate preparation for priestly ministry among groups of different people within the Church, the seminary sponsors the Global Church Workshop. Each year during a four-year cycle, one day will be given to a cultural immersion in one ethnic or other group. The focus will be on theological, liturgical and spiritual understandings prevalent in the ethnic community and the current pastoral needs. The seminary community will be required to participate in the prayers, devotions, liturgical style, meals and customs of the ethnic group.

415. Yearly Evaluations: The yearly evaluation is an opportunity for the faculty and seminarian to evaluate the progress of the seminarian in their pastoral formation including insights regarding skills, qualifications, maturity, proper ecclesial focus, and interpersonal dynamics involved in ministry.

## **THE GOALS OF INTEGRATIVE FORMATION FOR ALL SEMINARIANS AT NOTRE DAME SEMINARY**

### **A Healthy Integration of all Priestly Formation**

416. Seminarians will complete three stages of priestly formation (discipleship, configurative, and pastoral synthesis) that reflects an appropriate *integration* between human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation toward the end of configuring the seminarian to Jesus Christ for priestly ministry in the Church (PPF 16-7, 22-26, 74ff, 139, 164).

417. Priestly formation recognizes that a seminarians is a “mystery to himself” in which he possesses talents and gifts that have been molded by the grace of God while also one who is marked by limitations and frailty. The goal of priestly formation is to integrate the

aspects of a man's formation in a journey of faith and of gradual and harmonious maturity, avoiding fragmentation, polarization, excesses, superficiality or partiality. The art of integration therefore includes a period of testing, maturing, and discernment by both the seminarian and the Church (cf. Ratio 28).

418. Notre Dame Seminary has identified broad and overall goals and thresholds for seminarians in each cohort of formation considering the four dimensions of priestly formation. The *Ratio Fundamentalis* provides the general norms for priestly formation while the USCCB's *Program of Priestly Formation* implements those norms into the thresholds that Notre Dame Seminary identifies below as goals for the seminarians to work towards in their journey of discernment and formation.

### **A. Overall Thresholds For Human Formation**

419. Seminarians will complete a program of *human formation*, as "the foundation for the other three" (PPF 72), which will be conducted in a way that reflects its interdependence with both *intellectual* formation (since character formation involves conformity to truth) and *spiritual* formation (because of the primacy of Grace in our transformation in Christ), and its orientation toward *pastoral* ministry (the ultimate goal of seminary formation).

#### **Goal 1: Formation Resulting in Personal and Pastoral Prudence**

420. Seminarians will demonstrate in their particular stage of formation the virtues of personal and pastoral prudence (PPF 76, 92, 280) in the form of sound judgment (PPF 76, 82, 86, 280), responsibility (PPF 76, 101, 156, 239, 266, 280), stewardship (PPF 76), discernment (PPF 76), common sense (PPF 85), reasonable stewardship of resources (PPF 280), and practical wisdom (PPF 136, 163). The accomplishment of these goals will be evidenced in how the seminarian manages his time and responsibilities, how he demonstrates self-possession during the multi-faceted experience of seminary formation, and how self-knowledge is expressed in the decision-making process of discernment.

#### **Goal 2: Formation to be Ministers of Charity and Justice**

421. Seminarians will demonstrate, in their particular formation program, the virtue of justice in its various forms (PPF 76, 280): respect for others (PPF 76), integrity (PPF 76, 260, 262, 280), truthfulness (PPF 76, 100, 280), keeping one's word (PPF 76), and respect for, cooperation with, and obedience to superiors (PPF 76, 100-102, 280). Seminarians will demonstrate a basic understanding of the virtue of justice (in its various forms) through the completion of their academic requirements and by a successful participation in priestly formation. This goal will result in the seminarian as a man of responsibility.

#### **Goal 3: Formation to be Men of Fortitude/Courage**

422. Seminarians will demonstrate, in their stage of formation, the virtue of fortitude or courage (PPF 76, 86) in its various forms, especially through taking initiatives (PPF 80, 86, 238, 239), and in exercising perseverance and patience in the face of difficulties. Seminarians will demonstrate a basic understanding of the virtue of fortitude through the completion of their academic requirements and completion of all priestly formation requirements. Seminarians will demonstrate the development of a devotion to Christ crucified through spiritual reading, participation in various devotions, and through the

development of their prayer life. Seminarians will demonstrate, through their participation in the formation program, the ability to take initiative and to persevere in the midst of difficulties. The seminarian will be prepared to shoulder the joys and burdens of pastoral ministry.

#### **Goal 4: Formation for a Simplicity of Life: Temperance/Moderation**

423. Seminarians will demonstrate, in their particular formation program, the virtue of temperance (i.e., moderation according to right reason) in its various forms (PPF 76): that is moderation regarding various goods including, food, drink, possessions, entertainment, honors, etc. Seminarians will demonstrate a basic understanding of the virtue of temperance in the management of their lifestyle as a public person of the Church. Seminarians will demonstrate a commitment to habitual self-denial and asceticism (PPF 76, 98-99, 110), not only for the sake of virtue and thus freedom from disordered desires (i.e., self-discipline, self-mastery or the achievement of affective maturity), but also for the love of Christ. Seminarians will receive a sound education in the meaning and purpose of human sexuality, including the need to achieve self-possession in order to be able to make a gift of their selves in loving service (PPF 78-79, 90-92, 280).

424. Seminarians will cultivate the virtues, habits or skills required to live chaste celibacy, including the following: appropriate self-disclosure, a capacity for self-reflection, the practice of holding all person in the mystery of God, the development of friendship, the ability to set appropriate relational boundaries, a wholehearted acceptance of the Church's sexual teaching in its entirety, a clear male sexual identity, and the determination to master all sexual temptations (PPF 93-94, 280).

#### **Goal 5: Formation for Authentic Friendship/Communion**

425. Seminarians will demonstrate, in their particular formation program, the virtue of friendship and the ability to foster interpersonal communion (PPF 76). Seminarians will receive a basic understanding of the virtue of friendship (and thus charity) according to the philosophical and theological tradition of the Church. Seminarians will develop the traits required to cultivate friendship and interpersonal relations (PPF 280), including good manners (PPF 76), courtesy (PPF 280), affability, cheerfulness, the ability to make conversation, and to cooperate in the life of the community. The seminarian will therefore complete the seminary formation program as a man prepared to live for others, to live in the world but not of the world, to be a spiritual father loving the faithful as a true shepherd.

### **B. Overall Thresholds For Spiritual Formation**

426. Seminarians will complete a program of *spiritual formation* (which is the completion of *human formation* PPF 106) that reflects its interdependence with *intellectual formation* and its orientation toward *pastoral ministry*.

#### **Goal 1: Formation for a Rich, Developed Spiritual Life**

427. Seminarians will participate in an organized and coherent program of spiritual formation (PPF 122). Seminarians will receive formation in a multifaceted, rich heritage of Catholic spirituality including various aspects: Trinitarian, Christological, pneumatological, ecclesial, communal, priestly, Eucharistic, liturgical, Biblical,

devotional, apostolic, ascetical, obediential, contemplative, marked by simplicity of life, effective solidarity with those who are poor, time for solitude with God, and ongoing spiritual formation (PPF 280). Seminarians will become familiar with the rich treasury of Catholic devotions and will develop a personal devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the saints, and they will develop the habit of praying the rosary regularly (PPF 124-125).

### **Goal 2: Formation to Live a Disciplined Personal *Horarium***

428. Seminarians will develop the habit of participation in the daily liturgical life of the Church (PPF 116-117). Seminarians will demonstrate habitual participation in liturgy by attending all required community celebrations (PPF 116). Seminarians will learn to celebrate liturgies according to the approved books and mind of the Church (PPF 118). Seminarians will demonstrate a deepening incorporation of the Liturgy of the Hours into their lives, beginning with Morning and Evening Prayer, and including the entire cycle of Hours as a regular practice (PPF 119).

### **Goal 3: Formation to be a Man of Reconciliation**

429. Seminarians will develop the habit of regular participation in the Sacrament of Penance (PPF 120). Seminarians will have the opportunity to participate in regularly scheduled celebrations of the Sacrament of Penance (PPF 120). Seminarians will have the opportunity to participate in communal celebrations of the Sacrament of Penance during Advent and Lent (PPF 120). Seminarians will develop the practice of daily personal prayer, including traditional elements such as meditation, contemplation, *lectio divina*, and the daily examen (PPF 123).

### **Goal 4: Formation for Transparency and Accountability**

430. Seminarians will participate in a comprehensive and effective program of spiritual direction (PPF 120-121, 127). Seminarians will meet at least monthly with their Spiritual Director (PPF 127) (more frequently, when possible), with sufficient duration to allow discussion of the seminarian's vocational discernment, of his preparation for ministries, orders, and celibacy (PPF 133). Seminarians will be encouraged by their Spiritual Directors to share freely significant aspects of their interior life, including -- but not limited to -- their personal history, cultivation of virtues, prayer experiences, and temptations (PPF 128). They will also be guided in spiritual direction about sharing human formation issues which clearly need to be discussed outside the internal forum so they can be better addressed (PPF 131). Seminarians will be encouraged and assisted by their Spiritual Directors toward the ongoing, practical integration of the four dimensions of their formation (PPF 129-30). Seminarians will gain a clear understanding of the inviolability of the internal forum by their participation in spiritual direction which respects the forum of conscience as understood in the context of Catholic moral theology (PPF 134).

## **C. Overall Thresholds For Intellectual Formation**

431. Seminarians will complete a program of *intellectual formation*, understood as *fides quaerens intellectum*, which will be conducted in a way that reflects its interdependence with *human* and *spiritual* formation and its orientation toward *pastoral* ministry, and in a



way that recognizes this pastoral ministry as taking place in a particular cultural context (PPF 136-139, 63-64).

### **Goal 1: Effectively/Pastorally Communicating the Truth**

432. Seminarians will complete a formation program that builds the foundation as the basis for *ongoing learning* (PPF 227, 233) and *effective communication* of what has been learned, with due attention to the need to communicate effectively in the *contemporary cultural context* (PPF 12, 49, 140, 147-157, 161-163).

### **Goal 2: Sentire Cum Ecclesia**

433. Seminarians will complete an intellectual formation that helps them to think and live in communion with the Church and the Catholic intellectual tradition (PPF 181, 188, 198, 201, 219, 222), and in thoughtful dialogue with the broader contemporary society (PPF 75-76, 139, 210, 228-229).

### **Goal 3: The Renaissance Priest: A Man for All Seasons**

444. Seminarians will develop a basic understanding of the culture in which they minister, and the importance of being attentive to the interaction between faith and culture (PPF 12, 38, 49, 76, 77, 79, 110, 153, 155).

### **D. Overall Thresholds For Pastoral Formation**

445. Seminarians will complete a program of pastoral formation, which is “the culmination of the entire formation process” (PPF 236), and which will be conducted in a way that builds upon its foundations in human, intellectual and spiritual formation. During the configuration stage, the seminarian will strive to grow into a shepherd after the pastoral heart of Jesus Christ. To that end he will attempt to achieve these goals (RF 119-124).

### **Goal 1: Servant-Leadership in the Model of Jesus Christ**

446. Seminarians will have demonstrated in their apostolates and summer assignments the ability to carry out pastoral ministry with a generous spirit, serving the needs of the faithful selflessly, and the ability to lead others to Christ and his Gospel. Being a “servant” presumes the seminarian serves unconditionally and without reservation. Being a “leader”, the seminarian recognizes that Jesus Christ is the High Priest to whom all people are called to serve – not the priest.

### **Goal 2: Responsible as Public Person in the Church**

447. Before they are ordained, seminarians are expected to have cultivated their human formation in such a way that they can represent the Church in the public square in a mature, balanced, and joyful manner. This precludes the development of social skills, the ability to discern how the Gospel can be preached in public settings, and how to proclaim the teachings of the Church appropriately, boldly, and with compassion that is rooted in the evangelical mission of the Church.

### **Goal 3: Priestly Pastoral Charity**

448. Seminarians will have demonstrated an authentic zeal for the salvation of souls rooted in love and justice. This presumes that seminarians are free from any hindrances or

obstacles that would prevent them from living the People of God. Seminarians will have developed a true diocesan priestly spirituality (or one that reflects their religious community) in which, as shepherds, they are able to live and love among the faithful without prejudice, conditions, or personal expectations.

#### **Goal 4: Skill-Set for Multi-Cultural Ministry**

449. To the best of this ability, the seminarian, prior to ordination, will have developed the appropriate pastoral skills necessary to serve the faithful in his diocese. The seminarian will therefore pursued pastoral activity that has exposed him to the array of pastoral settings in his diocese that include the diversity of peoples, the various cultural settings in the diocese, and who comprises the People of God in the local Church.

#### **Goal 5: Skills for Collaborative Ministry**

450. Ministry is exercised in the name of Jesus and the entire Church therefore seminarians will have developed the necessary skill to work with the laity, both men and women, with professionally trained staff, with volunteers, with people of all ages who are involved with ministry in the Church. Seminarians will be required to have demonstrated a collaborative attitude and a collaborative ministry with the non-ordained prior to ordination.

#### **Goal 6: Thorough Grasp of Safe-Environment Practices**

451. In order to provide a safe environment for all in the life of the Church, the seminarian will not only be in conformity with all safe environment policies and practices, but also be thoroughly fluent in the implementation of all safe environment policies so that he is prepared immediately after ordination to exercise pastoral ministry in an environment in which all the faithful, particularly children and vulnerable adults, are able to be ministered to without any concern.

#### **Goal 7: Skill-Set for Leadership and Administration**

452. In addition to the teaching and sanctifying *munera* of the ordained ministry, the seminarian will have been prepared to exercise the *munus regendi* of pastoral ministry having developed a skill set appropriate to his status of priestly formation. The newly ordained deacon and priest should therefore have a basic understanding of parish temporalities in order that he can assist the pastor and the leadership of the parish.

### **THE DISCIPLESHIP STAGE OF FORMATION**

453. The purpose of the Discipleship Stage of formation is provide the seminarian with the knowledge and discipline to offer himself freely and completely to Christ (RF 61). For this reason, special attention is given in this stage to the **human dimension** of formation (RF 62). In order to form an identity as a follower of Christ, the Discipleship Stage aims to cultivate the **virtues** of intellect and will which will enable the seminarian to critically examine himself and discern his vocation. “This process of formation is intended to educate the person in the truth of his being, in freedom and self-control. It is meant to overcome all kinds of individualism, and to foster the sincere gift of self, opening him to generous dedication to others” (RF 63). At the completion of the Discipleship Stage, the seminarian

will be prepared to embrace the evangelical counsels and enter into **candidacy** for ordination (RF 67).

454. In his developing his relationship with Christ, the seminarian at the Discipleship Stage should fully realize his capacity for self-knowledge, self-possession, and self-gift. This perfection of the human person in virtue can be attained only by integrating all four dimensions of formation. Each dimension simultaneously relies on and provides a foundation for the other three dimensions: grounded in self-possession that is the fruit of human formation; perfected by the grace that is the gift of spiritual formation; sharpened by the critical inquiry of intellectual formation; and practically manifested in acts of pastoral formation. These work together to inculcate an interior harmony of mind and will which embraces the nature of reality as true, good, and beautiful: this sapiential appreciation of creation, in turn, is the intellectual and spiritual foundation for appreciating the revealed truth to be studied in the Configuration Stage that follows.

455. Although the Discipleship Stage is typically a two-year program, it is structured as a unified program of formation with one set of goals which are to be incrementally met over that two year period.

#### **A. Human Formation Thresholds**

456. The “foundation of all priestly formation” (RF 94) is human formation, which aims for the integral personal development of the seminarian. The program of human formation in the Discipleship Stage focuses on the growth in virtue so that the seminarian can best discern his gifts in service of his vocation. Thus, during the discipleship stage, the seminarian is led to develop a mature and well-rounded personality which reflects his call as a disciple of Christ, the perfect man (RF 93).

457. The primary location for human formation is in the community of Notre Dame Seminary where a life of friendship and fraternal correction encourages personal growth. Seminarians in the Discipleship Stage are fully integrated into the life of Notre Dame Seminary, and so benefit from the maturity and experience of their brothers who are further advanced in formation. The seminarian should learn to be a man in service to other, developing a healthy balance of reasonable self-care with a concern for the needs of the community.

458. While the concerns of human formation permeate every aspect of seminary life, the attainment of virtue is the special focus of the Formation Conferences during the Discipleship Stage. Human formation inculcates both the cardinal virtues and the theological virtues so that the seminarian comes to realize the fullness of the Christian idea of man, preparing him to embrace the evangelical counsels upon entering candidacy.

#### **1) Responsibility for One’s Own Formation**

459. Seminarians will demonstrate that they have taken responsibility for their formation, with accurate self-awareness, and a disciplined plan of living (PPF 85, 87, 275).

### **Threshold 1:**

460. Seminarians will show from their formation plans and the focus of their sessions with formation advisers that they have taken responsibility to do the work of formation with humility and openness (PPF 80:4-6).

### **Threshold 2:**

461. Seminarians will take deliberate steps toward reaching a high level of accurate self-knowledge regarding their physical, mental, and emotional health, with a readiness to seek appropriate help in any area of need that comes to light (PPF 80, 86, 88, 93 280a-3, 4, 6).

### **Threshold 3:**

462. Seminarians will work out a personal weekly *horarium* that shows how their use of time and energy is effectively directed toward their formation goals and areas physical, mental, and emotional health most in need of growth (PPF 89, 280a-5).

## **2) Life of Virtue**

463. Seminarians will demonstrate a style of life that conforms to the values of the evangelical counsels of simplicity, celibacy, and obedience (PPF 90-102). The seminarians will understand and manifest the cardinal virtues of temperance, fortitude, prudence, and justice in their life in the community.

### **Threshold 1:**

464. Seminarians will show an ability to set aside the clutter and “high-energy” of an “entertainment lifestyle” and reach a level where they have found time for thought and contemplation that makes life richer by its being freed from the drive to have and do more (PPF 97-99).

### **Threshold 2:**

465. Seminarians will show that they understand that they can develop healthy ways of avoiding behaviors or substances that can compromise their ability to live well with their commitment to chaste celibacy (PPF 90-95).

### **Threshold 3:**

466. Seminarians will manifest that they can live well with authority, especially diocesan, formational, and educational, with a level of integrity enhanced by a well-formed conscience (PPF 100-102, and 280a.10).

### **Threshold 4:**

467. In order to enter candidacy, the seminarian must attain self-mastery and integration as manifested in the virtuous life. The external forum will confirm that before a seminarian completes pre-theology, the following virtues and benchmarks must be achieved.

Temperance

Simplicity of Life

Use of Material Goods

Use of Technology  
Use of Alcohol  
Humility  
Gratitude

**Fortitude**

Maintain physical health by exercise  
Develop an orderly work ethic  
Ability to receive criticism  
Emotional Maturity in dealing with personal struggles

**Justice**

Honesty  
Docility to authority  
Establish and maintain mature relationships  
Fraternal relations with seminarian Peers  
Engagement with the community

**Prudence**

Time management skills (punctuality, deadlines)  
Reasonable and salubrious use of Leisure  
Flexibility  
Self-knowledge

### **3) Man of Communion**

469. Both individually and in groups, seminarians will relate to people, in ways that manifest their ability to be bridges rather than obstacles to God and the Church (PPF 76, 92, 260, 261, and 280a.11).

#### **Threshold 1:**

470. Seminarians will manifest the ability to form friendships which are close yet with healthy boundaries, helpful but not controlling, and able to receive help without being needy (PPF 280a-2).

#### **Threshold 2:**

471. All seminarians will show the ability to deal effectively with silence and solitude. From this essential foundation, some will need to show an increased ability to relate to more people, while others will need to learn to relate more deeply with a few (PPF 280a dash 11).

#### **Threshold 3:**

472. Within the limits afforded by life within an all-male community, collegians will show by their interactions with women on the faculty, staff, or apostolic formation placements of the seminary, that they can relate well both professionally and pastorally with women (PPF 280a dash 7).

#### **Threshold 4:**

473. Seminarians will show that they can see the potential goods and the potential harms of the culture in which we live, so that they can find ways to guide and improve it without forcing it into unnecessary confrontation (PPF 99).

#### **4) Spiritual Fatherhood**

474. Seminarians will manifest a high level of understanding of what it means to be a spiritual father and pastoral leader (PPF5-280a-7).

#### **Threshold 1:**

474. Seminarians will by thorough and candid reflection on their own lives and the insights of others show a deep appreciation for the mystery of fatherhood and what it is likely to demand of them as they continue to grow into the role of spiritual fathers (PPF 80:2).

#### **Threshold 2:**

476. Seminarians will begin to manifest behaviors and actions one should expect of a good father (PPF 76).

#### **Threshold 3:**

477. Seminarians will continually increase their understanding of the dynamics of leadership, by observation, discussion, but most importantly by responding effectively to leadership opportunities within the community or apostolic placements as they arise. (PPF 280d:4-6).

#### **Threshold 4:**

478. Seminarians will begin to manifest behaviors and actions one should expect of a pastoral leader (PPF 280a-7 and 280d:4-6).

#### **Threshold 5:**

479. They will learn fatherhood by practicing the virtue of obedience, first to God, then to those who represent God in their lives.

#### **B. Spiritual Formation Thresholds**

480. Formation bears its fullest fruit in the Spiritual Dimension, wherein the seminarian's relationship with Christ becomes the prism through which his personal identity is expressed. "This intimate relationship forms the heart of the seminarian in that generous and sacrificial love that marks the beginning of pastoral charity" (RF 101). "The heart of spiritual formation is personal union with Christ, which is born of and nourished in a particular way by prolonged and silent prayer" (RF 102). This prayer must be grounded in the Word of God and a living faith in the Eucharist as the source and summit of Christian worship (RF 103-104).

481. The Discipleship Stage calls for incremental growth in spirituality, ending in a more profound living out of the virtues of faith, hope, and love. The seminarian deepens his personal

relationship with Christ so that he depends on Christ in all things and conforms his will to that of God. This is attained through a structured introduction to both public and private prayer. In addition to daily participation in Mass, the seminarian should become “accustomed to the prayer of the Church through the Divine Office” (RF 105). Personal devotions, especially the *Lectio Divina* and other spiritual reading should become a regular part of the seminarian’s life. Recourse to frequent penance and spiritual direction, as well as yearly retreats, provides the seminarians with opportunities for reflection and discernment, encouraging a personal appropriation of the virtues as presented throughout the formation program.

482. This habitual disposition to prayer and worship opens the seminarian to the theological virtues. This elementary docility then underlies the seminarian’s openness to formation in the other dimensions. This spiritual discipline thus becomes the *sine qua non* for candidacy to ordination.

### **1) Ecclesial Spirituality**

483. Pre-Theologians will consciously and with integrity adapt to an ecclesial expression of spirituality as opposed to an individualized one which they may have had before they entered formation (PPF 108, 109, 116-119). An important element in spiritual formation in the Discipleship Stage is the completion of the academic classes that provide the intellectual groundwork for personal appropriation of the spiritual life. These include especially DT 111: *Catechism I: Liturgy and Prayer* and SPT 211: *The Catholic Spiritual Tradition*.

#### **Threshold 1:**

484. Pre-Theologians will become aware of the differences between their prior structures of spiritual life and those required by the seminary community (PPF 109, 110).

#### **Threshold 2:**

485. Pre-Theologians will make progress in active and appropriate participation in Eucharist, Morning and Evening Prayer, and Compline to a level that befits a man about to enter the first year of the School of Theology (PPF 280b dashes 4, 5, 6).

### **2) New Methods of Prayer**

486. Pre-Theologians will experience several methods of prayer or spiritual experience that are quite new to them (PPF 121, 125 280b.8).

#### **Threshold 1:**

487. Pre-Theologians will be able to reflect accurately and realistically on their personal experience of prayer and spirituality (PPF 128, 129).

#### **Threshold 2:**

488. Pre-Theologians will experience several new devotions or forms of spiritual experience they have not encountered before (PPF 110.8, 125, 280b.8).

#### **Threshold 3:**

489. Pre-Theologians will begin to develop the skills of faith-sharing in a group setting by participating actively and appropriately in regular *Lectio Divina* or faith sharing gatherings, including Formation Conferences (PPF 108).

### **3) Intimacy with Jesus Christ**

490. Before completing pre-theology, the seminarian must have developed a truly intimate relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **Threshold 1: Public Prayer**

- 491. Commitment to Daily Mass
- Commitment to the Liturgy of the Hours
- Understanding the Sacristy and Liturgy

#### **Threshold 2: Private Prayer**

- 492. Conviction for Faith
- Familiarity with Spiritual Tradition of the Church
- Observance to the Liturgical *Horarium*
- Lectio Divina*
- Personal Meditation/Reflection

#### **Threshold 3: Devotion**

- 493. Devotion to the Holy Eucharist
- Devotion to the Blessed Mother
- Devotion to the Saints
- Evidence of Popular Piety

#### **Threshold 4: Discipline for Continued Growth**

- 494. Cultivation of Diocesan Priestly Spirituality/Consecrated Life
- Commitment to Sacrament of Penance
- Commitment to Spiritual Direction
- Personal Discipline/Rule of Life

### **C. Intellectual Formation Thresholds**

495. Intellectual Formation in the Discipleship Stage is founded on the fact that the fullness of truth can be reached only by integrating both faith and reason. Therefore, it aims to inculcate into the seminarian the virtue of wisdom, the habit of contemplating the principles of truth through a disciplined study of philosophy and theology. By integrating these sources of truth, seminarians will also develop the ability to communicate Christian truth clearly and persuasively.

496. The Discipleship Stage seeks to intellectually prepare seminarians for candidacy to ordination through a rigorous philosophical analysis of nature which discovers the first principles which guide our understanding of creation: being, truth, goodness, and beauty. These philosophical studies are coupled with an introduction to the foundational elements of theological studies (including studies in the Latin language), which introduce seminarians to the principles of the faith life in which one forms a relationship with Christ. Together, these will prepare seminarians for



ministry by enabling them to clearly articulate the revealed faith as well as providing them with the intellectual skills to understand and engage the philosophical assumptions behind the great social and cultural debates of our era.

497. Intellectual formation reflects an incremental approach to attaining these ends. Accordingly, the first year of the Discipleship Stage is largely concerned with an introduction to the foundational elements of philosophy and theology, while the second year develops those foundational principles in light of specific questions directly pertinent to the life of a mature Christian.

498. In particular, the first year lays the groundwork with foundational courses in each area. In Philosophy, these include a courses on the basic skills of philosophy (research, writing, and logical argumentation), and survey courses in Ancient and Modern philosophy in which the vocabulary and principles of philosophy are discovered. These principles are then applied to natural world and human nature, establishing the context for more focused investigations the second year. The theology courses consider the sources of theological wisdom in Scripture, with course in both Old and New Testaments, and Tradition, as articulated in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Collectively, these courses provide an appreciation of the unity of the Catholic vision of the world, and contextualizes human existence in terms of both faith and reason.

499. The second year then applies these principles in diverse areas. Philosophically, this entails studies of metaphysics, ethics, and the philosophy of God. Theologically, the seminarian scrutinizes the spiritual traditions of the Church and is given the opportunity to develop his capacity to intelligently interpret and persuasively articulate the faith in homiletics. The final semester is composed of capstone courses which fully integrate faith and reason. The polemical and imaginative possibilities of the unity of the Catholic worldview are investigated through considerations of controversial issues and the Catholic tradition in art and literature. Finally, a capstone seminar, or M.A. thesis, provides the seminarian the opportunity to become an expert on a topic of his own interest.

500. Through this incremental approach to faith and reason, the seminarian becomes engrossed in the objective principles of creation and the Church's teaching concerning those principles. Through expanding his intellect, strengthening his faith, and awakening his imagination, the seminarian comes to know himself and his place in the world more completely. He also comes to possess the wisdom that grasps the work of God in nature and especially in the person of Jesus Christ. He is now in a position to commit himself to his vocation as he enters the Configuration Stage.

### **1) Solid Foundations for Future Theological Studies**

501. Pre-Theologians will acquire an intellectual foundation for subsequent priestly formation such that they begin to understand the "intimate bond" between philosophy and theology, the relationship between faith and reason, the relation of philosophy to all four dimensions of priestly formation (PPF 164), to the history of philosophy and to the evangelization of culture. The seminarians will have a knowledge of the fundamentals of philosophical reasoning and a comprehension of how philosophical reasoning has developed in the Western tradition; a

knowledge of the content of the faith as presented in Scripture and Tradition; a comprehension of the elements of spirituality as the lived manifestation of the faith (PPF 153-155).

### **Threshold 1: The life of wisdom**

502. The seminarian will gain the habit of approaching issues from the perspective of the first principles: being, truth, and goodness. The task of the philosopher is to put all things in their right place; this is possible only if he assimilates the principles by which reality is ordered.

### **Threshold 2: The life of faith**

503. The life of wisdom is perfected only with the gift of revelation, by which man is able to attain a personal relationship with God as the True, Good Being. Therefore, the seminarian will appreciate how grace perfects nature: the truths of revealed faith are in continuity with, and fulfill, the knowledge attainable by reason.

### **Threshold 3: Wisdom for life**

504. The seminarian will appreciate that the intellectual formation in wisdom is not only of academic interest, but is crucial for the Christian life. To know the principles of reality allows the seminarian to live the truth, and to model the life of truth to those to whom he ministers.

## **2) A Thomistic Foundation for Study**

505. Pre-Theologians will acquire a basic understanding of the philosophical thought of St. Thomas Aquinas, and understand how the Church sees this thought as a reflection of “the perennially valid philosophical heritage” while also “taking into account philosophical investigations over the course of time.” The seminarians will have an understanding of how these philosophical principles are applied to various aspects of the human condition, especially knowledge of self and world and the proper way to act in it, and an ability to analyze and critique various theories for their cogency and correctness (PPF 157, 180-1, 186, 188).

### **Threshold 1: Metaphysical Realism**

506. The seminarian will understand the basic structure of reality as articulated in the perennial tradition. This includes appreciating the ability of reason to transcend the limitations of sensation in order to discern the universal causes that are evident in abstractive judgments.

### **Threshold 2: Ethical Realism**

507. The seminarian will learn the precepts of the natural law as the only way to avoid relativism and skepticism of the moral life. These precepts include both the universal precepts evident to all men, as well as prudential applications that enable the seminarian to advise others in light of the exigencies of their own lives.

### **Threshold 3: The Perennial Tradition**

508. The seminarian will appreciate that the perennial tradition is a living engagement with an infinitely complex reality, and so it is able to provide complementary perspectives to

augment the life of wisdom. The seminarian will therefore appreciate the contributions of the pre-Christian thinkers, especially Plato and Aristotle; as well as appreciating other important approaches in the Christian tradition, especially the Platonism of St. Augustine and St. Bonaventure, and the personalism of St. John Paul II.

### **3) Philosophical Systems of Thought**

509. Pre-Theologians will acquire a basic understanding of the history of philosophy, logic, epistemology, philosophy of nature, metaphysics, natural theology, anthropology and ethics. Seminarians will have an ability to synthesize these principles into a coherent worldview in which the intelligibility of all reality is properly ordered, utilizing both faith and reason as means to truth, while being able to properly discriminate the appropriate realms of faith and reason (PPF 186).

#### **Threshold 1: Skills of Argumentation**

510. In order to be a persuasive minister, the seminarian has to obtain the capacity to articulate convincing arguments. Thus, the seminarian will master the principles of logic, as well as the tools of rhetoric, to construct clear arguments and present them in clearly and concise essays.

#### **Threshold 2: Speculative Reason**

511. The seminarian will understand how diverse philosophies have tried to grasp the truth of the world. Both the philosophy of nature's investigation of the immanent principles and metaphysics' speculation of ultimate principles are crucial to a complete understanding of truth. This includes both the ancient Greeks, with whom philosophy originated, as well as modern schools who, by inadequate method, introduce widespread skepticism. They will also understand how the perennial tradition can answer that skepticism through a correct use of the gift of reason, which concludes with an understanding of God as the source of being and truth.

#### **Threshold 3: Practical Reason**

512. The seminarian will grasp why philosophers have given a variety of answers to Socrates' demand that they discover the principles of the good life. They will see that modern approaches to ethics are inadequate due to a failure to understand the good as a property of creation. The perfection of nature is attained only by a life of virtue, which leads one to the one true end of human life, happiness in union with God.

### **4) Initial Studies into Theology**

513. Pre-Theologians will acquire an initial solid foundation in Catholic doctrine, Scripture, and spiritual theology that prepares them for future graduate level theological studies. Seminarians will have an assimilation of the skills needed to discern and evaluate unspoken philosophical assumptions, and to articulate arguments in favor of and critiques of those assumptions insofar as they are relevant for defending the doctrines of the Church (PPF 187).

#### **Threshold 1: The Deposit of Faith**

514. The seminarian will become familiar with the Catholic faith as presented in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. This includes not only the *lex orandi*, as lived in prayer

and public liturgy, but also the *lex credenda*, as presented in the dogmas of the creed, and finally the *lex vivendi*, in the moral teachings of Church.

### **Threshold 2: The Revelation of the Word**

515. The seminarian will understand the revelation of the Word of God in the covenant with the Jewish people and as perfected by Christ's new Covenant. This includes both knowledge of the structure and content of the Scriptures, as well as the basic principles of the Catholic hermeneutical tradition about how to read the Scripture to grasp the fullness of its truth.

### **Threshold 3: Living the Faith**

516. A faith that is not lived out is dead. Thus, the seminarian will turn the knowledge into an habitual relation with Christ by appreciating the various traditions of spirituality and prayer that have grown in the Church. In order to minister to the people of God, this spirituality must be publically proclaimed; thus, the seminarian will learn the foundational principles of homiletic preaching, so that he is able to share the Word with believers.

### **5) The Sacred Language of the Church**

517. Pre-Theologians will acquire a sufficient knowledge of Latin to make limited use of sources, and will be encouraged to study Spanish. Seminarians will have an ability to read and understand Church documents written in Latin, including the ability to participate in liturgical celebrations conducted in Latin (PPF 189).

### **Threshold 1: Understanding**

518. The seminarian will be able to read and correctly interpret crucial terms and documents from the Church's traditional Latin patrimony.

### **Threshold 2: Articulation**

519. The seminarian will be able to correctly pronounce and communicate in writing those aspects of the patrimony when beneficial for ministerial purposes.

### **D. Pastoral Formation Thresholds**

520. Because ministry is not just a matter of communicating knowledge, the Discipleship Stage also requires pastoral field experience so that the seminarian can grow in self-knowledge and develop those virtuous skills that are necessary for public ministry. In their second year, Discipleship Stage seminarians are given pastoral assignments in both semesters which are graded as one-unit classes. Here we have the concrete manifestation of virtue in the active care for souls in the public ministry of the Church. Additionally, most seminarians will have the opportunity for pastoral experience in their home diocese between the first and second year of the Discipleship Stage.

521. In order for seminarians to understand adequately how they are called to serve as a pastoral minister, they will focus their initial pastoral ministry on building up the community at Notre Dame Seminary. This will help the seminarian recognize he is called to be a member of the community of disciples that follows the Lord at Notre Dame Seminary. In his second year, the seminarian will

continue his pastoral ministry development by participating in a supervised introduction to pastoral ministry. These courses provide seminarians the opportunity to experience the pastoral care of souls in parish and non-parish settings. Students assist in caring for the homeless, feeding the hungry, visiting the sick in hospital/shut-ins and imprisoned and other acts of pastoral ministry

522. The goal of this pastoral ministry experience is to help the seminarian to realize how he is called to serve as a representative of Christ and his Church to those needs. In developing the skills and virtues to act *in persona Christi*, the seminarian legitimizes his desire to be a candidate for the priesthood.

**1) Identify With Christ**

523. Seminarians will manifest fundamental characteristics of one who identifies with Christ as a loving shepherd who brings life to others as a proclaimer of the Word of the Kingdom.

**2) Concern for the Community**

524. Seminarians will demonstrate concern for the community as a man who hungers and thirsts for justice, especially for the poor and the marginalized.

**3) Ability to Pastorally Reflect**

525. Seminarians will demonstrate attention to and success in achieving a level of personal reflection on their pastoral work appropriate to their level of formation.

**4) Basic Pastoral Skills**

526. Seminarians will acclimate to the community and pastoral situations in which they begin to demonstrate basic pastoral and leadership skills and an ability to reflect on ministry theologically (PPF 255, 248).

**Threshold 1: Serving the Church**

- 527. Embracing the ecclesial dimension of the priesthood
  - Fidelity to the Teachings of the Church
  - Fidelity to the Magisterium (Holy Father and Bishop)
  - Ability to teach the Gospel
  - Ability to witness with conviction and charity
  - Missionary Spirit
  - Capacity for Pastoral Leadership Skills
  - Aptitude for General Parish-Based Ministry
  - Hospital, Nursing Home, Healthcare

**Threshold 2: Serving the People of God**

- 528. Ability to Discern the Pastoral Needs of People
  - Collaborative/Collegiality Skills with Laity and Clergy
  - Attitude towards laity, especially women
  - Compassion for the marginalized, poor and suffering

## THE CONFIGURATION STAGE OF FORMATION

528. The Configuration Stage of Formation for seminarians involves the years of Theology One through Theology Three which *"concentrates on the configuration of the seminarian to Christ, Shepherd and Servant, so that, united to Him, he can make his life a gift of self to others"* (RF 68). Having arrived in the previous stage at becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ, and having arrived (through discernment and formation) at the realization that God is calling him to become a priest, the seminarian now turns his focus to being like Jesus Christ, that is, to configuring his life to that of Jesus Christ.

530. *This configuration demands that the seminarian enter profoundly into the contemplation of the person of Jesus Christ, the beloved Son of the Father, sent as Shepherd of the People of God. It will make the relationship with Christ more intimate and personal and, at the same time, will lead to an awareness and an assumption of priestly identity* (RF 68).

531. During this stage the seminarian attempts to imitate the life of Jesus Christ the Shepherd and Servant of God's people. As they gradually acquire and live out a priestly identity and priestly spirituality, the seminarians will be instituted into the ministries of lector and acolyte during this configuration stage.

532. *They will then be able to exercise these ministries for a suitable period of time, and prepare themselves better for their future service of Word and Altar. Lectorate 'challenges' the seminarian to allow himself to be transformed by the Word of God, the object of his prayer and study. The conferral of the ministry of acolyte implies a deeper participation in the mystery of Christ, who gives Himself and is present in the Eucharist, in the assembly and in His brothers and sisters* (RF 72).

533. The configuration stage is geared towards preparing the seminarians for ordination. Therefore:

534. *At the conclusion of this stage, or during the following one, if he has been judged suitable by the Bishop, after having heard the formators, the seminarian will petition to receive diaconal ordination. With diaconal ordination he will enter the clerical state, with its associated rights and duties, and will be incardinated "either in a particular Church or personal prelature, or in an institute of consecrated life or society" or in an Association or Ordinariate with the faculty to incardinate* (RF 73).

535. At the same time, however, the formation process in this period may lead a discernment that results in a seminarian leaving formation.

536. *In any case, the right kind of accompaniment may reveal that the call which the young man believed that he had received, although recognized during the first stage, was not truly a vocation to the ministerial priesthood. Alternatively, it may not have been cultivated sufficiently. In either case, the seminarian should interrupt the journey of formation towards priestly ordination, either*

*on his own initiative or following an authoritative intervention on the part of the formators (RF 72).*

537. During this stage the seminarian will attempt to achieve the following goals in the various dimensions of formation.

### **A. Human Formation Thresholds**

#### **1) Growth in Personal Development**

538. Seminarians will manifest levels of personal development and integrity appropriate for men about to serve God and the people of God as priests. (PPF5-83-86)

#### **Threshold 1: Personal Responsibility**

539. Seminarians will give clear indications that they have taken personal responsibility for their formation, with appropriate self-knowledge and self-awareness, and a manifest ability to receive guidance and help from formation faculty (PPF 86, 87).

#### **Threshold 2: Integrative Personal Health**

540. Seminarians will be in a state of physical and emotional health such that they can balance the pressing demands of priestly life and continue to grow in the full array of virtues essential for effective priestly ministry (PPF 85, 86, 88, 92, 280a:1, 4, 5).

#### **Threshold 3: Affective Maturity**

541. Seminarians will demonstrate a level of affective maturity that manifests that they are sufficiently free from the effects of past hurts and from controlling appetites, and that they can deal effectively with negative and positive emotional expression. (PPF 83, 92, 93, 280a:3, 6).

#### **Threshold 4: Appropriation of Priestly Identity**

542. Seminarians will live in a way that reveals a healthy and balanced sense of priestly identity: strong in the authority and grace of their calling but not prone to entitlement, clericalism, or ambition (PPF 84, 86, 89, 102, 239).

#### **2) Cultivation of Relational Qualities**

543. Seminarians will manifest the relational qualities of a “man of communion,” as required by the social realities of diocesan priestly ministry (PPF 83).

#### **Threshold 1: A Christian Gentleman**

544. In relating to others the seminarian will show himself a person of genuine warmth, compassion, humility, and good manners, such that most people do not hesitate to approach him (PPF 83, 84, 85, 280a:1-2).

#### **Threshold 2: Healthy/Holy Friendships**

Seminarians will have demonstrated that they understand the different types and appropriate boundaries of friendship and have formed and maintained healthy friendships, including some close friendships (PPF 89, 92, 280a:6, 11).

### **Threshold 3: Charity for Others**

546. In their fraternal relationships with others, seminarians will be sufficiently self-possessed to offer appropriate fraternal correction when necessary, and receive it well from others (PPF 89, 280a:2, 8).

### **Threshold 4: The Servant-Leader**

547. In their opportunities for leadership, seminarians will show that they understand the difficult dynamic of servant leadership, the paternal qualities proper to a priest, and the ability to relate well with women both at the seminary and in field education assignments. (PPF 84, 85, 94, 280a-7).

## **3) A Man of Freedom**

548. Seminarians will live in a way that they are free for the service of the Gospel and free from all those human faults that will be obstacles to their authentic human growth (PPF 97, 98, 99).

### **Threshold 1: Simplicity of Life**

549. Seminarians will indicate that they have reflected sufficiently on the value and the serious challenge of living more simply in this day and age, free from the pursuits or possessions limit their freedom and ability to serve (PPF 97, 98, 280a-9).

### **Threshold 2: A Life for Others**

550. Seminarians will live a simpler life truly ordered to their primary goals of charity, availability for attentiveness to others, and spiritual fatherhood (PPF 92, 99, 280a-3, 5).

## **4) Healthy Chaste Living**

551. Seminarians will show that they possess a highly developed understanding of chaste celibacy and that they are able to live well both with the difficulties and the opportunities that such a commitment entails (PPF 90-96, 280a-6).

### **Threshold 1: Knowing and Observing Boundaries**

552. Seminarians will manifest a realistic understanding of the full array of behaviors and ways of relating that compromise a chaste celibate commitment (PPF 90, 91). Seminarians will show that they have made important practical discoveries on how to live well with loneliness, what sort of situations of social interaction must be avoided, and what steps they can take for finding support from others committed to chaste celibacy (PPF 92).

### **Threshold 2: Ecclesial Views of Chastity**

553. Seminarians will be able to articulate how the chaste celibate commitment of a priest is related to the chaste commitments of other members of the Church, both single and married, and how those different forms of chastity can be understood in a complimentary relationship (PPF 90).



### **Threshold 3: Spiritual Fatherhood/Nuptial Love**

554. Seminarians will be able to demonstrate that they have begun to experience how the priest, as a chaste celibate, participates in a form of life which is truly spousal, paternal, and generative (PPF 93, 94).

### **5) Priestly Obedience**

555. Seminarians demonstrate in word and deed a proper commitment to priestly obedience (PPF 100-102, 280a-10).

### **Threshold 1: Knowing What is Required**

556. Seminarians can articulate a realistic understanding of what specific demands are involved in obedience to his bishop and obedient service even to people who do not appreciate it (PPF 100).

### **Threshold 2: Man of Integrity**

557. Seminarians will have reflected in depth and be able to articulate the relationship between and among obedience, freedom, and integrity (PPF 101, 102).

### **Threshold 3: Unconditional Service to Christ**

558. Seminarians' course work, engagement in formation, seminary activities, and pastoral service will manifest a life of one committed to obedience—a profound form of *imitatio Christi* (PPF 89, 102, 237, 280a-10).

## **B. Spiritual Formation Thresholds**

### **1) Deepening the Experience of Prayer**

559. Theologians will manifest an understanding and experience of the life of prayer and the work of spiritual direction toward a deeper knowledge and experience of meditation and contemplative dimensions of prayer and clear signs that their life of prayer affects all aspects of priestly formation and priestly life (PPF 121, 123-125, 127-135).

### **Threshold 1: Men of Solitude**

560. Seminarians will achieve what it means to be “alone with God” moving the candidate from being alone or lonely to entering a holy solitude in communion with God and the Church. Therefore, the external forum will need to determine how the seminarians uses his time at the seminary, how he structures his rule of life, and how he uses leisure time. The seminarian will also need to discuss how he uses his time at home, in the parish, during vacation, etc., that includes moments of solitude. Before ordination, the seminarian will prove he has developed a lifestyle rooted in prayer (PPF 110.16; 121).

### **Threshold 2: Asceticism and Detachment**

561. In order to be a man of prayer, candidates will discern with their spiritual director how to embrace a life of asceticism and detachment that is healthy, balanced, and directed for ministry in the Church. This begins at the seminary. The seminarian will demonstrate that his life is not overly dependent of material goods so that he is free to pray, to be a man of prayer, and to cultivate a lifestyle of service to God's people (PPF 110.10).

### **Threshold 3: Habits of Prayer**

562. In consultation with his spiritual director, the seminarian will achieve multiple methods of prayer in his personal life that prepares him for the priestly, to be shepherd of the flock, to allow his day to be regulated with prayer. Before ordination, the seminarian will be able to discuss with his formation advisor how the habits of prayer have disposed him to embrace the parochial life of a priest (PPF 123).

### **2) Immersed in the Liturgy of the Hours, Eucharist, and Penance**

563. Theologians will manifest understanding of and consistent participation in the Liturgy of the Hours and the Sacraments of Eucharist and Penance from understanding the historical development, practice, and meaning of these components of Catholic life to deeper awareness of their communal dimension to clear signs that worship, thanksgiving, and forgiveness affect the other aspects of their practical life (PPF 116-120).

### **Threshold 1: Liturgy of the Hours in Entirety**

564. The seminarian will achieve from year-to-year an established discipline of praying the Liturgy of the Hours on his own apart from the seminary *horarium* accountable to the external forum. Seminarians entering into first theology should already have achieved a knowledge of how to pray all the hours. By the end of first theology, candidates will be praying daily Morning and Evening Prayer. By the end of Summer going into second theology, candidates are expected to be praying Night Prayer. By the start of third theology, one year prior to ordination to the diaconate, all candidates are expected to be praying the Liturgy of the Hours in its entirety (PPF 119).

### **Threshold 2: Daily Mass as Central to the Day**

565. Seminarians in the configurative stage of formation should already have achieved the practice of attending daily Mass, the essential moment of the day, beyond the expectations of the seminary *horarium*. At this stage of formation, candidates will have integrated the ecclesial and spiritual aspects of the Mass into their own spiritual life. Before ordination, seminarians will be able to articulate the meaning of Mass in their own life and the centrality of the Mass in the life of any ecclesial community.

### **Threshold 3: Eucharistic Devotion/Holy Hours**

566. The Eucharist is the sources of pastoral charity, the love that animates and directs those who walk in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd, who gives his life for his sheep so that they may live. The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. The candidate for priesthood therefore must have a deep, authentic love of the Holy Eucharist, central to his spiritual life (PPF 110.1). Being directed by their spiritual director, candidates for priesthood will pray an entire holy hour each day before the Eucharist (i.e. the reserved or exposed Sacrament) one year prior to ordination.

### **Threshold 4: Frequency of the Sacrament of Penance**

567. The sacrament of penance fosters the mature recognition of sin, fosters continuous conversion of heart, fosters growth in the virtues, and conformity to the mind of Christ.

The frequent celebration of the sacrament prepares the future priest to be merciful, compassionate, and just. The priest cannot be an authentic minister of the sacrament unless he himself receives the graces of the sacrament as a penitent. The external forum will therefore require the seminarian to confirm that he frequents the sacrament accordingly without violating any internal forum matters such as how often, etc.

### **3) Diocesan Priestly Spirituality/The Charisms of the Community**

568. Theologians will manifest levels of understanding and actualization of priestly identity and the mystery of the priesthood in their life from a basic understanding of priesthood to a deep appreciation of priestly identity in relation to other future priests and non-priest members of the seminary community to the ability to know and experience the benefits of clerical fraternity while avoiding the harms of *clericalism* (PPF 237-239).

#### **Threshold 1: Appropriating Priestly Identity**

569. The spirituality cultivated in the seminary is specifically priestly (PPF 109). Seminarians in the configurative stage of formation already have a spirituality enhanced from the college or pre-theology formation therefore seminarians are to conform their spiritual lives to Christ as Head and Shepherd of the Church reflecting on how their own identity as a Christian is being cultivated for priestly life and ministry. The seminarian, while not a priest, is to conduct himself accordingly and appropriately with a lifestyle conducive for one anticipating ordination. His identity - publicly, socially, professionally - should intuitively be recognized by the all faithful as one being prepared for ministry as a priest.

#### **Threshold 2: Complementarity of the Priesthood of the Baptized**

570. Through the sacraments of initiation, seminarians already share in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ with other members of the Church. The seminarian should therefore measure in his spiritual development a healthy spirituality ordered to the lay faithful from which he belongs but also habits which are now calling him to a distinct life of service directed to the lay faithful. For a diocesan seminarian, he sees his spirituality as being formed to bring him back to the lay faithful as servant and shepherd. For the seminarian preparing for consecrated life, he understands his spiritual development around charisms to be lived for the People of God. In either case, the seminarian will be able to articulate and manifest a spiritual life that is distinct from the lay faithful but ordered for ministry to the lay faithful (PPF 109).

#### **Threshold 3: Spousal, Nuptial, Generative Love**

571. Jesus is the Bridegroom who loves his Bride, the Church, and handed himself over to her. The candidate for the priesthood must see his life configured to Christ in this manner as he discerns the ontological reality of Holy Orders. The seminarian sees in himself the natural call to marriage in the natural order of things, while discerning how the Holy Spirit is blessing him with charisms for a spiritual nuptial love. The seminarian therefore must possess, express, and freely state his commitment to configurative demands of conforming spiritual life to the spousal love of the Church (PPF 109).

#### **Threshold 4: Spiritual Fatherhood and Distinct Spirituality of the Priest**

572. The spirituality of the seminarian is being drawn into the priestly, self-sacrificial path of Jesus. This path of Jesus results in Jesus giving his life as a ransom for many, as the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep. Building on a firm foundation of human formation, the seminarian cultivates the natural tendencies of fatherhood towards a spiritual fatherhood that is generative, fruitful, masculine, and efficacious. The candidate for priesthood must demonstrate in his formation and lifestyle as one who is capable and free to live as a spiritual father for the People of God (PPF 109, 237-238).

### **C. Intellectual Formation Thresholds**

#### **1) A Solid Theological Training**

573. As a foundation for lifelong education, theologians will acquire a sound understanding of the basic elements of the Church's Tradition including Scripture, patristics, dogmatics, sacraments, morals, spirituality, Church history, canon law, practica, pastoral theology, etc. (PPF 197-218).

#### **Threshold 1: Mining the Soul of Theology**

574. The theologian will engage in the disciplined exploration of Divine Revelation, above all as they study Sacred Scripture, the study of which is the soul of Sacred Theology, by utilizing a broad range of ancient and contemporary exegetical and hermeneutical methods. In service to the fuller sense of Scripture, he will also explore the writings of the Fathers of the Church, the works of some of the greatest theologians of the Catholic tradition, and be aware of Magisterial teaching relevant to biblical interpretation. (PPF 198-200).

#### **Threshold 2: Learning to think with the Church**

575. The theologian will be engaged in a sustained exposure to the rich sources of Catholic doctrinal, moral, and spiritual thought in service to an integrated personal conversion and pastoral excellence. He will be challenged to cultivate a habit of thinking with the Church by internalizing a distinctively Catholic method of doing theology, and by becoming familiar with the sources and content of Magisterial teaching. He will be made aware that thinking with the Church requires a broad knowledge of the historical evolution and contemporary teachings of the Magisterium, as well as develop a flair for rightly interpreting ecclesial texts and applying them in various contexts with pastoral wisdom -- especially in preaching and teaching.

#### **Threshold 3: An Integrated Theological Vision**

576. The theologian will be formed in the various disciplines of theology in an integrated fashion that allows the analogy of faith to reveal itself. In particular, the foundational theology course will enable him to see the manner in which these disciplines interrelate and form a coherent unity. In addition, the entire theological curriculum will be informed by pastoral considerations that enable the theologian to appreciate the relevance of theological study to pastoral practice.

#### **2) Development of Doctrine in the Modern Context**

577. Theologians will demonstrate a respect for traditional and Magisterially defined Catholic doctrine, while also reflecting an understanding of the difference between revealed truths and their mode of expression (PPF 201-203, 220-222, 225).

### **Threshold 1: Authentic Doctrinal Development**

578. The theologian will develop a theologically nuanced Catholic understanding of the manner by which doctrine develops within Sacred Tradition, and criteria by which to distinguish authentic and inauthentic development.

### **Threshold 2: The Contexts of Doctrinal Development**

579. The theologian will examine the ways historical context (e.g. language, philosophy, culture) has given distinctive shape to the Church's expression of the Deposit of Faith in any given age, coming to appreciate each era's strengths and weaknesses. He will learn to distinguish between revealed truth and the mode of expression, and the importance of inculcating the faith as part of the Church's mission to all nations.

### **Threshold 3: The Role of the Magisterium in Doctrinal Development**

580. The theologian will explore the role of the Magisterium in guiding and discerning the authentic development of doctrine, looking at specific examples in various disciplines of theology, with special attention given to the importance of historical continuity in authentic development.

### **3) *Evangelization and the Moral Life***

581. Theologians will demonstrate knowledge of and respect for teachings in moral theology including those concerning respect for life, chastity and absolute moral norms (PPF 204-208, 218).

### **Threshold 1: Grasping Methods and Principles**

582. The theologian will demonstrate a robust understanding of the methods and principles that govern moral theology, with special consideration given to the role of Sacred Scripture as the animating principle of Catholic moral teaching. In addition, he will come to see the exemplary moral teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas as a touchstone for a Catholic moral theology.

### **Threshold 2: Persuasive Moral Reasoning**

583. The theologian will learn the ground and nature of absolute moral norms and learn how to explain, defend and apply them in various moral cases. Special attention will be given to the moral questions surrounding respect for life and chastity, responses to common cultural objections to Church teaching, and presenting the beauty and "splendor" of moral truth

### **Threshold 3: Theological Anthropology and Morality**

584. The theologian will be empowered to grasp and persuasively articulate a sound theological anthropology that forms the basis of all moral theological reflection and teaching, especially in relation to questions regarding sexuality and gender. Special attention will be given to Conciliar and post-Conciliar developments.

#### **4) *The Sacramental Life of the Church***

585. Theologians will demonstrate reverence by celebrating the sacraments in accordance with the mind of the Church and how the theology, history, and development of the sacraments and the sacred liturgy contribute to the evangelizing mission of the Church (PPF 214).

#### **Threshold 1: Celebrating Liturgy According to the Mind of the Church**

586. The theologian will learn to celebrate all of the Church's sacred rites according to the mind of the Church, including mastery of the *ars celebrandi*.

#### **Threshold 2: History, Theology, Spirituality of the Liturgy and Sacraments**

587. The theologian will be formed in a robust theological, historical and spiritual vision of liturgy and sacraments that grounds right practice in a broad and pastorally rich context.

#### **Threshold 3: Liturgical Training**

588. The theologian will be trained in liturgical practica for the celebration of the Eucharist and the other sacraments, with particular attention given to the practicum for the Sacrament of Penance. He will be introduced to the official liturgical books and to the Church's directives for music, art, and architecture (PPF 213-214).

#### **5) *Thomistic Foundations for Teaching Ministry***

589. Theologians will demonstrate a basic understanding of the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas in various areas, and an understanding of how his work can be seen as a theological "model and guide" for their studies (PPF 219).

#### **Threshold 1: Thomas as Model and Guide in Theology**

590. The theologian will be exposed to the speculative and pastoral genius of St. Thomas Aquinas, the "common doctor" of the Church, in each of their theological courses. Though Thomism will not be seen as the only theological system, its role as "model and guide" in the Catholic Tradition will be clearly demonstrated.

#### **Threshold 2: Thomas and the Dialogue of Faith and Reason**

591. The theologian will understand and apply St. Thomas Aquinas' approach to faith and reason as an exemplary model for engaging in charitable, reasoned and persuasive dialogue that is open to insights from all dialogue partners.

#### **Threshold 3: Balancing Theological Creativity and Fidelity**

592. The theologian will appreciate St. Thomas Aquinas' ability to balance theological speculation responsive to the demands of the times with fidelity to the Church's authoritative teaching. In this light, he will understand Thomas as a model of the development of doctrine.

#### **6) *Dialogue with Culture: The Art of Encounter***

593. Theologians will demonstrate the ability to communicate (explain and defend) what they have learned (PPF 215, 280) and to dialogue with the broader society (PPF 216).

#### **Threshold 1: Dialogue and Mission**

594. The theologian will be able to articulate the Church's teaching to non-Catholics rightly, clearly, respectfully and intelligibly, and will actively seek to correctly understand the position of the other so as to engage in a common quest for truth. And he will see this dialogue as an essentially "catholic" activity that belongs side by side with the Church's evangelizing mission.

### **Threshold 2: Reasoned Defense of Faith**

595. The theologian will demonstrate the ability to persuasively respond, drawing on faith and reason, to objections posed to Catholic teaching, and to empower the Faithful to do the same. Special consideration will be given to the "dialogue of cultures," the dignity of life, sexual ethics, atheism, social doctrine

### **Threshold 3 "Ecumenism, Inter-Religious Dialogue and Mission"**

596. The theologian will explore the Catholic principles of ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue, and learn ways to engage in dialogue locally in service to the mission of the Church. He will reflect on how living in the tension between dialogue and mission can bear great fruit in service to the Church as a universal sacrament of the unity of the human race.

#### **7) Ongoing Formation of the Intellectual Life**

597. Theologians will cultivate a love for truth (PPF 280) and demonstrate a commitment to make study a lifelong endeavor (PPF 227) for effective ministry in a modern and multicultural society (PPF 228).

### **Threshold 1: Falling in Love with Theology**

598. The theologian will be taught theology in a manner that serves to ignite passionate commitment to study, precisely because he will "taste and see" how theology leads to a deepened communion with God and excellence in the pastoral care of God's people (PPF 280)

### **Threshold 2: Forming Independent Researchers**

599. The theologian will be empowered to carry out independent research on topics related to each course of study, equipping him with the skills required for a lifelong commitment to theological and pastoral education (PPF 280)

### **Threshold 3: Learning to Meet Diverse Pastoral Needs**

600. The theologian will be exposed to the many pastoral needs of God's people in our diverse and rapidly changing society, and be encouraged and equipped to engage in ongoing professional development in service to effective pastoral ministry (PPF 228)

## **D. Pastoral Formation Thresholds**

### **1) Proper and Mature Attitude for Service**

601. The seminary is intended to prepare seminarians to be shepherds in the image of Christ therefore the candidate must be permeated by a pastoral spirit at this stage of formation. He should demonstrate compassion, generosity, love for the poor and marginalized, zeal for the Kingdom, and a desire for public ministry (RF 119).

### **Threshold 1: Motivation for Ministry**

602. The candidate must demonstrate an honest desire to serve others free of any form of clericalism including self-seeking ministry, lack of initiative, and lack of zeal. This will be confirmed by evaluating the seminarian in his apostolates and summer assignments.

### **Threshold 2: Ministry to the Peripheries**

603. The candidate will be evaluated in how he prioritizes his desire for ministry and service with a viewpoint of how he expresses love for the poor, interacts with those on the margins, and demonstrates pastoral discernment capabilities to minister in the peripheries. This will be measured during the mission trip and pastoral assignments.

#### **1) A Pastoral Preaching**

604. Theologians will develop and demonstrate their communication skills to effectively fulfill the teaching and preaching ministry of priesthood at the service of the universal call to holiness and the new evangelization (PPF 280).

### **Threshold 1: Homiletic Training**

605. Candidates will demonstrate their capability for a preaching influenced by the new evangelization in which he integrates his theological formation with the art of preaching the Gospel with the aim of salvation, conversion, and catechesis.

### **Threshold 2: Faithfully and Competently**

606. Candidates will demonstrate that their preaching is faithful to the Magisterium, Sacred Scripture, and Tradition. Preaching therefore must demonstrate a competence in both skill and content.

#### **2) Ministry in a Diverse Flock**

607. Theologians will develop and demonstrate the ability to effectively minister to the needs of a today's diverse congregations, and strive to make Christ present as true spiritual fathers.

### **Threshold 1: Pastoral Aptitude within the Flock**

608. While priests are not experts in the social sciences or the array of the social conditions people live, candidates will demonstrate a fluency and aptitude to minister faithfully and generously in the midst of a diverse flock that includes ministry to those in healthcare institutes, prison and detention centers, racial-cultural-ethnic communities, youth and aged ministry, etc.

### **Threshold 2: Pastoral Aptitude within Wider Community**

609. Candidates will be expected to have a pastoral aptitude to engage people of no faith, those who lack faith, ecumenical and interfaith communities, ministry to divorced, co-habitation situations, ministry to those struggling with sexual orientation, ministry to migrants, refugees, and immigrants, etc.



### **3) From Seminary Community to Parish Community**

610. Theologians will demonstrate sufficient level of awareness of the realities of parish life (and the potential variety) that render it quite different from life within the seminary and the role of the priest in the parish, such that they can enter effectively into priestly ministry when ordained.

#### **Threshold 1: Readiness to Serve as Deacons**

611. Candidates preparing for diaconate ordination and ministry will demonstrate their readiness to minister in a parish setting which will no doubt differ from the seminary community with a self-sufficiency to engage, cooperate, collaborate, and possess a spirit of learning, humility, and generosity. He therefore will demonstrate these qualities in seminary apostolates prior to ordination.

#### **Threshold 2: Interior Freedom/External Self-Possession**

612. Candidates will have cultivated a spiritual, liturgical rule of life that has given him the freedom to engage diverse communities within the parish whereby his self-possession enables him enter into the uneven and imprecise aspects of pastoral activity with maturity and respect. This will require seminarians to display these thresholds prior to ordination.

## **PASTORAL SYNTHESIS STAGE**

### **A. Human Formation Thresholds**

613. During the Pastoral Synthesis stage of formation, the transitional deacon will focus his human development on learning to accompany those he serves in ministry as an ordained minister. He will strive for appropriate transparency, strengthening his self-knowledge, self-possession, and understanding of his life as self-gift. Such a perspective will bring the transitional deacon to a balanced sense of self-respect for himself and others, leading him to greater awareness of each person's talents and ability to coordinate these gifts at the service of the Church and mission or the Father (RF 94).

614. In his human development, the transitional deacon will focus on strengthening his personal rule of life to ensure he maintains a balanced life with time for prayer, rest, study, exercise, and faithful stewardship. The transitional deacon will focus on strengthening his missionary zeal by exercising humility and pastoral authority in his pastoral responsibilities so that he can fulfill his call to fruitful ministry and spiritual fatherhood (RF 33).

615. Additionally, the transitional deacon will strive to develop and maintain the virtues that are necessary for fulltime priestly ministry including the virtues of hope, faith, charity, prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude (RF 93). Thus, during the Pastoral Synthesis stage, the transitional deacon will strengthen his ability to live as a man for others in his vocation as an ordained minister. In this way, the transitional deacon will strive to develop wholesome, healthy, professional, and appropriate relationships with all those he will encounter (RF 100).

#### **1) Living Out an Integrated Rule of Life**

616. A transitional deacon will demonstrate that he has taken responsibility for his formation, with accurate self-awareness, and a disciplined plan to live out the gifts and responsibilities of

ordained ministry. He returns to his final year of formation having lived the demands of both seminary formation and diaconate ministry with a balanced human formation synthesis (PPF 85, 87, 275).

## **2) *Proven Virtuous Living***

617. A transitional deacon will understand and manifest the theological and cardinal virtues of hope, faith, love, temperance, fortitude, prudence, and justice in the parish assignment and then back in the seminary. He will be a model for other seminarians of how integrated formation results in virtuous living (RF 93).

## **3) *Personal Health for Ministerial Living***

618. A transitional deacon maintains a balanced life with time for prayer, rest, study, exercise, and faithful stewardship of the Church's goods. Caring for oneself disposes the deacon for a priestly life and ministry that offers the People of God a joyful, healthy minister.

## **4) *A Bridge for Others***

619. A transitional deacon will demonstrate that he can relate to others as a bridge rather than obstacles in their relationship with Christ and that his leadership will serve the People of God and the greater good (PPF 76, 92, 260, 261, and 280).

## **5) *Accepting His New Role***

620. A transitional deacon will manifest a high level of understanding of what it means to be a spiritual father and pastoral leader while respecting the rights and roles of the lay faithful, embracing a collaborative style of ministry, and exercising pastoral authority appropriate to his role as a priest (PPF-280).

## **Threshold 1:**

621. Completing seminary formation, the candidate for priesthood will have developed self-mastery, personal virtue, self-knowledge, and the ability to offer his life as self-gift in ordained ministry.

## **Threshold 2:**

622. Completing seminary formation, the candidate for priesthood will have developed a personal rule of life suited for ordained ministry.

## **Threshold 3:**

623. Completing seminary formation, the candidate for priesthood will have cultivated his human development to embrace the identity of spiritual fatherhood.

## **Threshold 4:**

624. Completing seminary formation, the candidate for priesthood will have developed pastoral leadership skills appropriate for a newly ordained priest to exercise in order that he is a bridge to Jesus Christ and not an obstacle.

## **Threshold 5:**

625. Completing seminary formation, the candidate for priesthood will have developed competent liturgical leadership skills (*ars celebrandi*).

### **Threshold 6:**

626. Completing seminary formation, the candidate for priesthood will have developed and synthesized all of his human character to strengthen his service as a pastoral theologian and pastoral minister.

### **Threshold 7:**

627. Completing seminary formation, the candidate for priesthood will have developed the capacity for ongoing human formation having established a basic plan and resources to pursue formation after priestly ordination.

## **B. Spiritual Formation Thresholds**

628. During the Pastoral Synthesis stage of formation, the transitional deacon will focus his spiritual development on strengthening his personal relationship with Christ and strengthen his ability to help others to do the same (RF 102). In this way, the transitional deacon will strive to live out his commitment to lifelong daily prayer and ongoing conversion. He will ensure his prayer includes participation in public and private prayer, in actions such as praying the Divine Office, adoration, *Lectio Divina*, and the rosary (RF 105). Moreover, the transitional deacon will ensure his prayer is grounded in the Word of God and expressed in the participation in the sacraments, especially in the Eucharist - the source and summit of our worship (RF 103-104).

629. During this stage of formation, the transitional deacon will reflect on the gifts and responsibilities he received at diaconate ordination and those given at priestly ordination. The transitional deacon will also reflect on the liturgical actions of the ordained deacon and work to better fulfill this role as a liturgical leader. The transitional deacon will also demonstrate his obedient heart and capacity for happily living out this promise. He will strengthen his commitment to the virtue of chastity and his commitment to celibacy by guarding against unhealthy relationship and strengthening his capacity for fruitful solitude. During this stage of formation, the transitional deacon will strengthen his commitment to the theological and cardinal virtues and strive for simplicity of life and to become more like the Good Shepherd who leads the flock home to the Father.

### **1) Helping Others in the Spiritual Life**

630. A transitional deacon will focus his spiritual development on strengthening his personal relationship with Christ and strengthening his ability to help others to grow in their relationship with Christ. He should be able to assist younger seminarians at the seminary as well as discern how as a priest he will assist the lay faithful in their spiritual development (RF 102).

### **2) A Public Man of Prayer**

631. A transitional deacon will strengthen his leadership for public and private prayer, and he will ensure his personal prayer is grounded in the Word of God and expressed in the participation in the sacraments, especially in the Eucharist. His spirituality will have developed so that his prayer is oriented to and on behalf of the People of God. (RF 103-104).

### **3) An Integrated Life of Obedience**

632. A transitional deacon will demonstrate the capacity for happily living out the promise or obedience both in the seminary community and his readiness for priestly ministry (PPF 90-102).

#### **4) *A Lifestyle of Freedom for Ministry***

633. A transitional deacon will demonstrate the capacity for living out the promise of simplicity of life in the management of his person affairs, detachment from material goods, and a general disposition of cheerful readiness to serve the People of God without the hindrances of “things” (PPF 90-102).

#### **5) *Love of God and Neighbor***

634. A transitional deacon will strengthen his commitment to the virtue of chastity and his commitment to celibacy having cultivated a deep spiritual life of charity thirsting for the love of God in his ministry to the Church living out faithfully and generously the theological and cardinal virtues (PPF 90-102).

#### **Threshold 1:**

635. The transitional deacon will have developed the ability to live out his personal relationship Jesus and the capacity to lead others to Christ evident in the way he interacts with seminarians, the leadership he provides in the seminary, and the zeal of his preaching. He will have been faithful to the promise of the recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours.

#### **Threshold 2:**

636. The transitional deacon will have developed fidelity to the rubrics, rites, and rituals of the Church that enable his commitment to public and private prayer. He will have demonstrated initial presidential styles appropriate to leading the faithful in prayer.

#### **Threshold 3:**

637. The transitional deacon will have cultivated a diocesan or religious life spirituality that enables him to have an appropriate spiritual identity supporting his ministry to serve the People of God.

#### **Threshold 4:**

638. The deacon will have appropriated the maturity, boundaries, and motivation to love unconditionally, as a celibate minister, the faithful with generosity.

#### **Threshold 5:**

639. The deacon, prior to priesthood ordination, will have designed an initial plan for ongoing spiritual formation including the preliminary selection of a spiritual director/confessor and identification of resources for spiritual development.

### **C. Intellectual Formation Thresholds**

640. During the Pastoral Synthesis stage, intellectual formation moves towards synthesis. Thus, intellectual formation moves from a silo approach to a more integrated approach; from mastering segmented areas of philosophy and theology to a more integrated, applied, and articulated approach directed towards pastoral ministry. Wherein the prior stages of formation emphasized a

developing solid competency in the individual areas of philosophy and theology, the focus here is on a synthesis of intellectual formation towards ministry.

641. The goal of intellectual synthesis is that the transitional deacon strengthens his ability to make use of the fullness of Divine Revelation formed in Scripture and Tradition that impacts his preaching, teaching, and ministry. Thus, intellectual formation at this stage guides the transitional deacon to become more proficient as a pastoral theologian and pastoral minister. The curriculum during this stage includes pastoral ministry, theological course work, sacramental practicum classes, pastoral seminars, and theological reflection.

642. The methodology of theological reflection guides the transitional deacon to improve pastoral listening skills, pastoral discernment, and improve his ability to proclaim the appropriate aspects of revelation and tradition to those he serves at a level they can understand. His pastoral experiences along with theological reflection will help the transitional deacon to teach, preach, and minister persuasively; with clarity and charity.

### **1) *Theological Synthesis for Pastoral Ministry***

643. Prior to priesthood ordination, the deacon will complete his theological studies demonstrating a synthesis of his learning that impacts his preaching and teaching with fidelity to Sacred Scripture and the Tradition of the Church. The transitional deacon will become more proficient as a pastoral theologian and pastoral minister.

### **2) *Theological Reflection for Pastoral Discernment***

644. The deacon will demonstrate his ability to bring a theological reflection in all pastoral experiences so that his ministry will be exercised in fidelity to the Gospel with a true pastoral charity thus avoiding relativism, syncretism, and poor pastoral practices that do not reflect the teachings of the Church.

### **Threshold 1:**

645. The deacon will have developed the capacity to teach, preach and minister in fidelity to the richness of Divine Revelation. Evaluations and assessments will measure the outcome of this threshold.

### **Threshold 2:**

646. The deacon will have developed the capacity to speak persuasively, with clarity, and with charity as a pastoral theologian and pastoral minister. Evaluations and assessments will measure the outcome of this threshold.

### **Threshold 3:**

647. The deacon will have developed the skills of pastoral listening, pastoral discernment, ability to hear others as they speak of their pastoral concern, and to guide others in their life conversion, teaching at a level that others can understand. Evaluations and assessments will measure the outcome of this threshold.

### **Threshold 4:**

648. The deacon will have developed the capacity for ongoing intellectual formation having identified the primary resources he will practically use for his homiletic preparations, for theological consultation, and frequent reference responding to complex pastoral situations.

#### **D. Pastoral Formation Thresholds**

649. During the Pastoral Synthesis stage of formation, the overarching pastoral goal is that the transitional deacon learns to synthesize all that he has received during formation and be able to listen to others, help them name their pastoral concern, and then be able to articulate relevant aspects of faith, persuasively and with pastoral charity. Thus, the goal of pastoral synthesis is to assist the transitional deacon to make a gift of his life and to help him become more capable of living that same compassion, generosity, love for all, especially the poor, and zeal for the Kingdom that is characterized in the public ministry of the Son of God (RF 119).

##### **1) *Alter Christus***

650. A transitional deacon will manifest fundamental characteristics of one who identifies himself with Christ as a loving shepherd who brings life to others as a proclaimer of the Word, celebrant of the sacraments, and pastoral leader among the People of God.

##### **2) *A Shepherd to the Peripheries***

651. A transitional deacon will demonstrate concern for the community as a man who hungers and thirsts for justice, especially for the poor and the marginalized. His formation will have equipped him for the new evangelization.

##### **3) *Amoris Officium***

652. A transitional deacon will demonstrate pastoral charity and pastoral leadership. The exercise of pastoral authority is an expression of charity. The deacon will be prepared to exercise authority for the sake of charity and justice in preparation for priestly ministry.

#### **Threshold 1:**

653. The transitional deacon will have developed the capacity to serve the Church and the People of God *in persona Christi* with the appropriate skill set for administration, basic understanding of parish operations and organizations, and the collaborative skills necessary in which he can live his priestly ministry for others.

#### **Threshold 2:**

654. The transitional deacon will have developed the capacity to integrate, synthesize, apply, and articulate the four dimensions of formation, embrace and live out the evangelical counsels, understand and synthesize the ministerial priestly identities of priest, prophet, and king, and more successfully guide others in their life with Christ – all for the purpose of the new evangelization in reaching people in whatever condition they find themselves. The newly ordained priest will understand how to respect boundaries while also reaching out generously and pastorally, equipped with his own gifts, to those seeking God.

#### **Threshold 3:**

655. The transitional deacon will have developed the capacity to collaborate with others in ministry and work effectively with his Ordinary, presbyterate, and local Church since all ministry

is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ, and not in the name of the individual ministry. The newly ordained priest will have synthesized his formation into a freely, lived out ministry which is attuned to the Body of Christ.

#### **Threshold 4:**

656. The transitional deacon will have developed the capacity for ongoing pastoral formation identifying the resources that will continue to equip him with temporal, administrative, and specialized pastoral skills for priestly ministry.

## **THE ART OF PRIESTLY FORMATION**

### **A. Discernment and Formation**

657. The priestly formation program for theologians presumes an already developed sense of discernment on the part of the seminarian. He has already completed a college or pre-theology formation program; therefore, he enters the school of theology with a purpose and outlook towards ordained ministry.

658. The priestly formation program for pre-theologians presumes a level of pre-discernment on the part of the seminarian. The seminarian is to have considered, before his entrance into the seminary, basic elements regarding his standing or status in the Church, what it means to practice faith, how to form a good prayer life, and possesses some grasp of basic Church teachings. The application and interview process will surely establish how much discernment has taken place before the seminarian begins his formation.

659. The faculty of the seminary also presumes that the seminarian takes full and personal accountability for the work of discernment and formation. The instruments the seminary provides are available to assist the seminarian in confirming his vocation in the Church. Therefore the responsibility to meet the standards of the priestly formation program rests with each seminarian.

660. In the wisdom of the Church, the formation of candidates takes place in the context of community. Moreover, the discernment process is rooted in the work of formation. Thus a seminary is not a retreat house or a house of meditation. Priestly formation, by its design, is a process and activity of work, responsibility, and engagement. In fact, the seminary is a Christian community structured and organized on the principle that each member contributes to building of the Kingdom of God within that community.

661. The relationship a seminarian has to the Church is through the seminary community. His past involvement in parish life or in other ecclesial communities has supported and brought the seminarian to a new relationship with Christ and the Church. Indeed, while priestly formation requires the seminarian to maintain his bonds and ties with his home parish, his status within the Church is as a seminarian.

662. "To live in the seminary, which is a school of the Gospel, means to follow Christ as the Apostles did. You are led by Christ into the service of God the Father and of all people, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Thus you become more like Christ the

Good Shepherd in order better to serve the Church and the world as a priest” (PDV 42).

663. Like any faith community, the seminary is organic and dynamic. Each seminarian is to fully participate in the life of the community fulfilling responsibilities and completing assignments which impact on how the seminary functions. The faculty provides the leadership, instruction, and supervision for the seminary but each seminarian contributes to building up the community by the fact of his membership in that community.

664. “The history of every priestly vocation, as indeed of every Christian vocation, is the history of an inexpressible dialogue between God and human beings, between love of God who calls and the freedom of individuals who respond lovingly to him” (PDV 36).

665. The mediation of one’s discernment of a priestly vocation occurs through, with, and in the Church. The individual discernment of a candidate for seminary formation is brought to the Church for confirmation, affirmation, and very importantly, for formation.

666. Thus, discernment of a priestly vocation involves a dialogue with the Church. The diocesan bishop has ultimate responsibility in discerning with the seminarian if God is calling that individual to ministry as a priest. The diocesan bishop has entrusted the work of discernment and formation to the seminary where the seeds of this vocation can grow and blossom. It is critically important, therefore, that each seminarian understands the importance of entering into the formation program with honesty and trust. He must use all the instruments the Church places at his disposal for ongoing discernment and formation.

667. Notre Dame Seminary exists to assist the seminarian in determining if God is calling him to the diocesan priesthood. This discernment, as it has been stated herein, occurs within a formation process. Discernment and formation go hand-in-hand, for such complementarity achieves a well-balanced and practical approach. This approach meets the standards of the Church and the People of God who expect competent and well-qualified priests. The seminarian quickly learns the reality of what it means to be a servant of the Lord.

668. A seminarian approaching seminary formation with trust and honesty will result in a successful discernment process. The priestly formation program seeks to avoid at every stage in the discernment process a “submarine formation” approach by which a student submerges into patterns or behaviors which externally meet the standards of priestly formation but only to emerge after ordination with ideologies, behavioral attitudes, or with agendas inconsistent with the expectations of ordained ministry. The seminarian is expected to be genuine, authentic and transparent in his approach to priestly formation and with those charged in the administration of the program.



669. Two primary components of the priestly formation program are formation advising and spiritual direction. The dialogical nature of discernment and formation requires the mediation of the Church in determining the overall progress of one's discernment and in addressing the particular elements that affect one's formation. The incarnational paradigm of Christ truly present in and with the Church is indeed mirrored in the life of a seminary that school of the Gospel in which the Lord forms his men to be priests.

## **B. Formation Advising**

670. Notre Dame Seminary assists seminarians in their priestly formation principally by providing each seminarian with a formation advisor. The formation advisor is a faculty member assigned by the Rector-President to assist the seminarian in addressing issues which may arise from the seminarian's perspective as well as issues presented by the seminary faculty personnel.

671. Every attempt will be made to assist the seminarian in formulating responsible approaches to these issues and charting productive advancement. By means of growth plans that are to be completed at the beginning of each academic semester, the seminarian, his Formation Advisor, and his Spiritual Director, will agree upon the issues and the approaches to accomplish the set goals. The formation advisor will also establish the means to assess the growth that has taken place and determine all that is still to be accomplished.

672. Throughout the year, the seminarian receives feedback on his pursuit of these goals from his formation advisor. The formation advisor serves to focus all of the diverse elements that contribute to the process of personal formation for the seminarian.

673. Because of the significance of this process and the importance of consistency, it is expected that each seminarian meet with his formation advisor every two to three weeks. It is the responsibility of the seminarian to schedule these regular meetings with the formation advisor. The length of the meeting will depend upon the seminarian and the advisor, but a scheduled time for this meeting will provide both the seminarian and the advisor with an opportunity to address important issues.

674. The context of the relationship between the seminarian and the formation advisor must be one of mutual respect and trust. The formation advisor's role falls outside the internal forum, precisely in that forum where a priest is expected to lead his life and exercise his ministry. Because the priest is expected to be a public person, the seminarian's activity, reputation, and conduct are all part of the process of formation and therefore the arena in which he and his formation advisor must work. Information conveyed by the seminarian to the formation advisor will be shared with other faculty members or others associated with the formation program.

675. This implies there may be some information disclosed by the seminarian that would be to his benefit if it were shared with others who might assist in the process of growth. There may be other times when the faculty should be aware that a seminarian is dealing with a particular incident or issue in his life particularly if this affects his performance in other areas of academic or communal life.

676. The seminarian may request the assignment of a new formation advisor if there appears to be a conflict. Final discretion in the assignment of a formation advisor rests with the Vice Rector and Rector-President.

### **C. Counseling Services**

677. As a resource to seminarians, the seminary employs a counselor. Counseling services enable the seminarian to address issues regarding human formation. Solid human formation is a prerequisite to effective spiritual and intellectual formation, and priestly ministry.

678. Seminarians are encouraged to consult a counselor if there are personal or family issues, matters related to inter-personal relationship skills, affective maturity, and sexual maturity.

679. The counselor also offers occasional workshops and conferences on appropriate formation topics.

680. The administration considers the counselor's conversations with seminarians as internal forum when seminarians have sought out the counselor on their own accord.

681. On occasion, the Rector-President may direct a seminarian to meet with the counselor or other counseling services concerning a specific issue. In these circumstances, the Rector-President has the right to inquire if the seminarian has met with the counselor and if he has adequately dealt with the issue at hand. The counselor will not discuss any issue in depth with the Rector-President or any other formation faculty member unless the seminarian has previously signed a release of confidential information.

682. It is the seminarian's responsibility to schedule the meeting with the counselor and to be faithful to the meetings. If he knows that he will be unable to keep an appointment or, for some reason, misses a meeting, the seminarian should contact the counselor as soon as possible to explain his absence and reschedule the meeting.

683. The counselor is a member of the priestly formation board and a member of the faculty council. Neither of these bodies discuss individual seminarians rather deal with the program of priestly formation.

### **D. Spiritual Direction**

684. The Rector-President appoints a Director of Spiritual Formation to coordinate the various efforts related to spiritual direction and spiritual formation.

685. The Director of Spiritual Formation serves in the internal forum assisting with spiritual direction and celebrating the sacrament of penance.

686. The Director of Spiritual Formation is responsible for offering recommendations to the Rector-President of priests who can serve as adjunct Spiritual Directors at the seminary.

The diocesan bishop of priest candidates will approve all Spiritual Directors with the recommendation of the Rector-President.

687. The Director of Spiritual Formation meets with the Spiritual Directors periodically to review the standards of spiritual formation and to assure all appointments between seminarians and directors are maintained.

688. The Director of Spiritual Formation will confirm the assignment of a Spiritual Director to each seminarian.

689. Each seminarian is expected to spend quality time with his Spiritual Director. A seminarian meets with his Spiritual Director twice a month for the first two months of a new direction; and thereafter once every three weeks, if possible, but never less than four times a semester. Seminarians are responsible for contacting their directors and arranging for spiritual direction meetings.

690. Within his first month at Notre Dame Seminary, a seminarian may meet with a number of the approved Spiritual Directors before he makes his final choice with the Director of Spiritual Formation.

691. In the early fall, the seminarian and the Spiritual Director are to sign and complete the spiritual direction agreement form and submit it to the Director of Spiritual Formation. The Spiritual Director files a form at the end of each semester regarding the faithfulness of each seminarians to spiritual direction.

692. The Spiritual Director and the seminarian relate to one another within what is termed the “internal forum.” This forum clearly demands absolute confidentiality. Thus, a seminarian’s individual Spiritual Director will never be asked for an evaluation, much less any information regarding what a seminarian may confide.

693. The content of spiritual direction is mutually agreed upon by the seminarian and Spiritual Director. It is assumed this content will be directed toward the spiritual and formational issues at the heart of a seminary program. The formation for regular meetings should include the seminarian’s own agenda that discusses matters related to spiritual development, spiritual reading, faithfulness to prayer, his personal journey, progress with the four dimensions of formation, relationships with members of the community and personal friends, vocation discernment, priestly lifestyle, celibacy and obedience, and preparation for the annual evaluation.

694. The Spiritual Director may also serve as a confessor to the seminarian since this relationship is in the internal forum.

695. A seminarian may only have one Spiritual Director at a given time during his formation experience in the seminary. Outside relationships with other priests or people are obviously important support systems for a seminarian however those relationships must never jeopardize or be in conflict with the ideals of the priestly formation program.

696. The Rector-President and Vice Rector of the seminary may never serve as a Spiritual Director or confessor to a seminarian. If such matters occurred with a seminarian prior to his entrance into the seminary program, the faculty member must recuse himself from both the application process and formation aspects regarding this seminarian.

697. Seminarians who wish to change Spiritual Directors must discuss this with his current Spiritual Director as well as with the Spiritual Director of the community. Any seminarian asking for a new director after second theology must grant permission for his outgoing director and incoming directors to speak. These conversations remain in the internal forum.

698. Likewise, a Spiritual Director may announce the need to terminate his relationship with the seminarian because of irreconcilable aspects of the arrangement however he may not disclose any information that is associated with the internal forum.

## **E. The Dynamism of Internal and External Fora**

### **The Internal Forum**

699. Concerning the internal forum, there is a distinction between matter spoken within the sacrament of penance and matter spoken between Spiritual Director and seminarian outside of the seal.

700. Matter spoken between priest and penitent is considered absolutely inviolable (C. 983.1). Priests are bound never to reveal such matter, directly or indirectly. In addition, priests are bound never to act upon the matter he hears within Confession (C. 984.2). Penalties up to excommunication can be imposed upon a priest who violates the seal of the confessional (C. 1388.1). Penitents are not bound by this seal and may speak with others about the advice they have received in Confession however they should do so only prudently and constructively.

701. Spiritual Directors make it known to the directee that they are available to celebrate the sacrament of penance without any semblance of the presumption or demand that this takes place. Matters spoken between the Spiritual Director and the seminarian (outside of confession) are ordinarily considered part of the internal forum and therefore confidential (PPF 134).

702. While the confessor/Spiritual Director is bound to confidentiality concerning matter in the internal forum, the penitent/directee is not bound beyond the dictates of charity and justice.

### **The External Forum**

703. In the external forum the seminarian is appropriately self-revelatory to his formators, especially his formation advisor. This is an expression of the accountability he owes to the Church for his progress toward the priesthood.

704. The knowledge about the seminarian gained in the formation program is privileged and personal, given in trust, used in charity and reserved in justice. It is confidential but not in the sense of the seal of the sacrament of penance or never-to-be-used knowledge. This confidentiality in the external forum means that the information regarding the seminarian is shared only with those who have been given the responsibility by the Church to assist him in being formed as a priest and ultimately to make a recommendation regarding his readiness for Holy Orders.

705. The external forum refers to matter discussed between a seminarian and formation personnel (other than his Spiritual Director). It may also refer to the external observations of formation personnel concerning the seminarian's human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral development.

706. External forum matter that is discussed among formators is considered "confidential" in the sense that it is not disseminated beyond this group of personnel. The Spiritual Director, of course, exercises prudence in order to protect matter within the internal forum.

707. Information concerning the seminarian's progress in his human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral growth should be freely communicated with external forum formators.

708. It must also be clear that in the context of his formational relationships, both internal and external, the seminarian learns to become a man of the Church, who learns how to handle issues appropriately within the Church.

709. Serious issues that arise which impact the seminarian from outside the seminary should be taken to the Rector-President by the formation advisor for action.

### **Communication of Internal Forum Matter to the External Forum**

710. As the sacramental seal remains inviolable, a priest may never reveal matters learned through Confession to anyone, even if this involves criminal conduct.

711. However, a Spiritual Director must communicate internal forum matters (outside of the seal) to appropriate formation personnel in the following cases involving real or potential harm to self or others regarding criminal misconduct concerning minors.

712. If a Spiritual Director learns (outside of the seal) that a directee has been involved with sexual misconduct with minors, he is obligated to report such conduct to law enforcement officials. Such conduct includes sexual activity with a minor and the accessing of child pornography.

713. In addition, if a Director discovers (outside of the seal) that a directee has been or is currently being molested by a priest, deacon or Church employee/volunteer, he is obligated to report such conduct. The manner in which such a report is made must be in conformity with the laws of the State of Louisiana and the Decree Establishing Policies

Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests, Deacons or other Church Personnel unless protected by the Seal of Confession.

714. A Spiritual Director must communicate internal forum matters (outside of the seal) to appropriate formation personnel in the following cases involving real or potential harm to self or others regarding attempted suicide and homicide:

715. If a Spiritual Director learns (outside of the seal) that a directee has attempted suicide or is planning to commit suicide, then he should inform formation personnel and seek appropriate medical assistance.

716. Similarly, if a director learns (outside of the seal) that a directee has committed homicide or is actively planning a homicide, then he should speak to formation personnel and inform law enforcement officials.

717. A Spiritual Director must communicate internal forum matters (outside of the seal) to appropriate formation personnel in the following cases involving real or potential harm to self or others regarding use of illegal drugs.

718. If a Spiritual Director learns (outside of the seal) that a directee is currently using illegal drugs or has become addicted to prescription drugs, then he should inform formation personnel and seek appropriate medical assistance. If civil laws have been violated, then formation personnel should inform law enforcement officials.

### **Communication between Spiritual Directors and Formation Committees**

719. In order to assist with the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral development of the seminarian, Spiritual Directors and formation personnel should be of one mind concerning the seminarian's goals and objectives for each year.

720. Spiritual Directors do not attend formation advisors meeting in order to avoid any appearance that internal forum is being violated. The Director of Spiritual Formation attends the monthly priestly formation board since individual seminarians are not discussed at these meetings; only the programs of formation are discussed at these meetings.

### **Communication between Formation Advisors and Spiritual Directors**

721. If a formation advisor has a concern about a seminarian, then he should discuss the matter during a formation meeting with the seminarian rather than informing the Spiritual Director in a separate meeting or conversation.

722. A formation advisor may inform a Spiritual Director about certain matters simply to provide information but never to solicit information from the Spiritual Director. When such communication is anticipated, the seminarian should be notified that the Spiritual Director will be informed.

723. When a formation advisor needs to speak with a Spiritual Director, such communication must be in the form of observable, factual information rather than

subjective analyses or therapeutic interventions. Formation personnel should not attempt to give Spiritual Directors advice concerning the spiritual life of their directees, whether in private or during a formation meeting. Formation personnel should never view Spiritual Directors as sources of information in the evaluative process.

### **Communication between Spiritual Directors and Formation Advisors**

724. Under most circumstances, a Spiritual Director must not communicate his observations (internal or external forum matter) of a seminarian to other formation personnel, except the cases mentioned above.

725. The bond of trust between a Spiritual Director and seminarian would be seriously jeopardized if information (internal or external forum) habitually or even periodically flowed from Spiritual Director to formator.

726. There should never be a one-on-one discussion about a seminarian between his formators and his personal Spiritual Director. The Spiritual Director, however, is permitted to prudently make known a directee's habitual failure to attend spiritual direction meetings or spiritual conferences with other formation personnel. The Spiritual Director should inform the seminarian in advance that he will notify the formation advisor about failure to attend meetings.

727. The Spiritual Director may not comment at priestly formation meetings about information that might incidentally be raised about a seminarian, although individual seminarians should not be discussed at a priestly formation board meeting.

728. A Spiritual Director should not explain to formators the reasons for discontinuing the direction of a seminarian if such occasion occurs.

729. The Spiritual Director abstains from voting on the advancement of his directee to Holy Orders.

730. Spiritual Directors and other formators work together to assist each seminarian's human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral development. In the work of evaluation, the goal of all formation personnel should be to enable each seminarian's growth in holiness in preparation for Holy Orders. In this collaborative process, the bond of confidentiality between Spiritual Directors and seminarians is preserved even as the work of external forum formators is respected.

## **F. Weekly Formation Conferences**

731. Once a week a member of the faculty will offer a conference to the seminarians that address the particular aspects of priestly formation and provides a clear vision of pastoral ministry according to the expectations of the Church with information and guidance helpful to discernment.

732. The conferences address the areas of diocesan priestly spirituality, priestly celibacy, priestly obedience, and prayer. At the beginning of each year the Rector-President announces to the community the general themes that will be addressed in these conferences.

733. The conferences generally convene once a week for a period of sixty minutes. Each seminarian is expected to take notes and read any materials distributed during the conference.

734. The conferences will use as primary sources the various governing documents on priestly formation but in particular the *Program of Priestly Formation* and *Pastores Dabo Vobis*.

## **FORMATION -- EVALUATION**

### **A. Formation Advising and Spiritual Direction**

735. Formation advisors assist the seminarian in developing goals to be accomplished in the formation program that are beneficial to the overall discernment process.

736. Formation advising is the usual forum to discuss struggles and identify progress regarding the seminarian's formation and discernment. The formation advisor will share with the seminarian both positive and negative perceptions shared by the faculty. The seminarian, in turn, is able to dialogue with the faculty through the formation advising forum.

737. Since formation advising is in the external forum, the formation advisor will share with other faculty members any and all concerns. Likewise, the formation advisor shares with the seminarian concerns the faculty may have regarding performance or issues related to formation.

738. Spiritual direction occurs within the internal forum as explained in the previous section however issues discussed in the internal forum ought to be eventually brought to the external forum as those issues relate to external forum formation.

739. The seminarian should approach his discernment and formation in a unified manner using the *fora* of formation advising and spiritual direction in a transparent way in which topics are being addressed concomitantly.

### **B. Formation Advisor Meetings**

740. The Rector-President convenes and chairs all formation advisor meetings. The seminary schedule lists the formation advisor meetings which occur in preparation for evaluations.

741. The formators review all pertinent matters related to the external forum particularly those issues being discussed in formation advising. Other formators may share their



perceptions of a seminarian's growth in order that the formation advisor may bring back to the seminarian affirmation and concerns.

742. Spiritual Directors do not participate in formation advisor meetings.

### **C. Formation Plan**

743. The formation plan is distributed by the Rector-President at the beginning of each academic year. Please see the appendix for the template.

744. It serves as an essential structure that supports the dialogue between the seminarian and his formation advisor.

745. The plan provides the seminarian to identify personal goals and specific measurable objectives, directed toward growth in the four areas of priestly formation (human, spiritual, intellectual, pastoral). To each of these goals and accompanying objectives, the seminarian relates his specific strengths and gifts that he perceives he may use to achieve his goals and objectives.

#### **How does the seminarian develop his Formation Plan?**

746. Because the seminarian is ultimately responsible for his own formation, he should prayerfully consider his priorities. He works personally for his own formation in dialogue with others:

- Discerning with the Holy Spirit;
- Considering his relationship with the diocesan bishop/religious superior as well as with the director of vocations;
- Considering the relationships at the seminary with the Rector-President, Formation Advisor, Spiritual Director, Formation Faculty, peers, professors, staff;
- Considering the relationships with family, friends, pastor, other priests

747. Using the formation plan the seminarian sets realistic personal priorities and identifies the concrete means to achieve them. In this way the seminarian establishes a clear reference point for self-evaluation as he monitors his integral formation moving towards full human maturity and maturity of faith. With his formation advisor in the external forum and with his Spiritual Director in the internal forum, the seminarian revisits his formation plan throughout the year.

748. In drawing up his formation plan, the seminarian reviews his previous plan, as well as the end-of-year self-evaluation and formation advisor report. The seminarian takes into account comments from the formation faculty, along with assessments of his apostolic work assignment and summer pastoral placement.

749. In consultation with his Spiritual Director, the seminarian proposes appropriate goals and objectives for his level of formation to his formation advisor. The seminarian will consider his readiness to receive the ministries of lector and acolyte, be admitted to

candidacy, and ordination to the diaconate and priesthood. His goals and objectives therefore ought to be practical, discernible, measureable and achievable.

750. The seminarian is not required to write up a document or write out the goals rather will develop his plan with his formation advisor and Spiritual Director in a way that is most helpful to the seminarian.

#### **D. Self-Evaluation**

751. Self-evaluations are valuable instruments for both the seminarian who reflects on his own growth and for the faculty who has the opportunity to hear from the seminarian where he is at in the discernment process.

752. Seminarians are to approach such evaluations with a candid examination of their concrete behaviors, demonstrate their professional and academic competence, discuss strengths and weaknesses, and identify areas of needed growth in spiritual and moral practice. It is the responsibility of the seminarian to demonstrate positive qualities that recommend his continuance in the program.

753. The completion of the self-evaluation tool should involve both the Spiritual Director and Formation Advisor.

754. The Rector-President will provide each seminarian the instrument they are to use in completing the self-evaluation. After consultation with the Formation Advisor and Spiritual Director the self-evaluation is submitted to the Rector-President's Office for distribution to the vocation director.

#### **E. Faculty Evaluation**

755. "Each seminary must provide a procedure for the evaluation of the seminarians. As part of this procedure, each seminary should ensure that as many faculty as possible are engaged in this process; that the seminarians are apprised of their progress as early as possible in their formation, particularly if there are concerns; that the Formation Advisor/Mentor regularly communicates with the seminarian; that the seminarians have a procedure for responding to matters raised in the evaluation process; that confidentiality, as articulated by the seminary, is observed; and that all doubts are resolved in favor of the Church. The process of evaluation should be conducted in an atmosphere of mutual trust and confidence. It should promote the continued growth of the seminarian in the four dimensions of formation" (PPF 274).

756. Because formation and growth are gradual processes, the continuing evaluation of seminarians is necessary. Seminarians profit most from a system of periodic evaluation in which they receive clear and accurate information about their behavior and attitudes so they can change and correct what is inappropriate and develop those areas of weakness.

757. The evaluation of seminarians is the primary responsibility of the faculty under the direction of the Rector-President. The Rector-President will explain before each evaluation period the process used by the faculty in determining how the evaluation process unfolds.

758. At Notre Dame Seminary, the seminarians participate in the periodic review at the conclusion of the academic year or shortly before Christmas. The periodic review includes both the self-evaluation of the seminarian and observations made by the faculty.

759. The evaluation process should be approached by both seminarians and faculty members in a spirit of mutual trust and confidence. Since information is regularly exchanged between the formation advisor and seminarian, the evaluation is an opportunity for the faculty to offer its unified support and share common concerns.

## **F. Evaluation Conference**

760. The Rector-President will convene a meeting of the formation advisors to discuss the self-evaluations already submitted and then prepare a general review of each seminarian. He will schedule appropriate times for the advisor-seminarian conference.

761. Prior to the conference the formation advisor will share with the seminarian the general thoughts of the faculty so that the seminarian can be prepared to offer insights regarding his formation and discernment.

762. During the advisor-seminarian conference each advisor shares their evaluation of the seminarian in the context of commendations, observations and recommendations. The seminarian is given opportunity to briefly respond to this evaluation or make any comments he feels necessary.

763. The formation advisor compiles a written summary of the faculty evaluation for each seminarian. These written summaries are shared with the seminarian by his formation advisor. The evaluation becomes part of the seminarian's personnel file.

764. Any seminarian can meet with the Vice Rector or Rector-President to receive clarification about any concerns the faculty may have with a seminarian's progress in the priestly formation program.

## **G. Formation Faculty Vote**

765. The formation faculty conducts an annual voting session on each seminarian, and they are obliged to work toward a consensus judgment about the seminarians they are asked to evaluate.

766. The faculty vote assists the seminarian's bishop or religious superior, who must make the final judgment on a seminarian's readiness to advance to the next level of formation, receive the ministries of lector and acolyte, be admitted to candidacy, and eventually to be called to Holy Orders.

767. Since there is a process of growth or a "gradualism" as candidates mature, the votes of the faculty are based on where seminarians ought to be at their particular stage of

formation. Seminarians who consistently meet the benchmarks of a particular stage of formation are to be promoted to the next level. Sometimes seminarians develop difficulties or actually regress in the formation process, and this will naturally be reflected in future faculty votes.

768. The possible votes for advancement in formation, or promotion to Holy Orders are: “yes,” “yes, with reservation,” “no” or “abstain.” When voting on candidates for diaconate and priesthood, one must vote either yes or no. Reasons for the no vote must be clear, objective, and substantive.

769. A “yes” vote means that a seminarian has fulfilled the basic expectations of his level of formation, and is ready to advance to the next stage of formation. There may well be areas where improvement is needed, but they do not pertain to a fundamental quality needed for ordination. In their written observations about a seminarian, such areas for growth are to be pointed out by the formation faculty.

770. There is also the option for the faculty to record a formal reservation with their “yes” votes. A formal reservation is an acknowledgment by one or more faculty members that there is a serious deficiency in the seminarian’s formation that could call into question suitability for ordination. It is an affirmative vote in the sense that the faculty believes that a candidate has the basic qualities to advance to the next level of formation. However, the seminarian needs to address and overcome the stated deficiencies to receive a positive vote for advancement in the future.

771. Because the distinction between an area for improvement for growth and a reservation is not always clear, faculty are to raise their concerns in the discussion with seminarians and then in writing describe the nature of their reservation(s).

772. Faculty members cannot register a “yes with reservation” vote for seminarians being presented as candidates for ordination to the diaconate or priesthood. The vote must be a “yes” or a “no.”

773. A “no” vote means that at this time a seminarian should not advance to the next level of formation because there are serious deficiencies in one or more areas of formation, and it is doubtful that these problems can be remedied within the seminary formation context. Keeping in mind the levels of formation, a “no” vote signifies that a seminarian has not achieved the most basic expectations and should not advance.

774. If there is a majority negative vote by the faculty, the Rector-President reports this to the Director of Vocations. The Bishop and Director of Vocations may want to discuss with the Rector-President and faculty any further course of action, such as the recommendation of a pastoral year, counseling, or leaving the seminary all together. Faculty must state in writing the reasons for their negative vote.

775. “Abstain” means that a faculty member has a serious reason for not voting affirmatively or negatively; such as, a lack of knowledge of the seminarian, or the fact that

he has been the seminarian's Spiritual Director. This vote would be rare since all formators are to know the seminarians and it is the responsibility of the formator to know the seminarian or at least rely on the information/judgement of the seminarian's formation advisor.

776. The vote is to be recorded and documented in the seminarian's formation report by the formation advisor writing the evaluation report.

## **H. Formation Advisor's Report**

777. According to the timetable established by the Rector-President, each formation advisor composes a written end-of-year evaluation of each of his advisees. The advisor's evaluation is prepared using the template provided by the Rector-President (see appendix).

778. In drawing up this evaluation, the advisor takes into account

- individual formation meetings with the advisee
- formation plan
- peer evaluations (informal)
- reports from the Directors of Formation (pastoral, human, intellectual)
- self-evaluation by the seminarian
- formation reviews by other formators
- feedback from professors and staff
- faculty interviews (when applicable)

779. The advisor incorporates into the conclusion of the evaluation the formation faculty vote and a summary of the comments of the faculty. Once the final draft of the evaluation is completed, the Formation Advisor meets with the advisee to discuss the contents of the evaluation. The seminarian signs the evaluation signifying that he has in fact read the evaluation, not that he necessarily agrees with it.

780. The Formation Advisor provides three original and signed copies of the advisee's evaluation to the Rector-President's office. One set of originals is kept on file in the Rector-President's office, the other two are sent to the seminarian's Bishop /religious superior and vocation director.

781. The advisor makes photocopies for his own file and for distribution to the Rector-President and the advisee in an envelope.

## **I. Formational Probation**

782. In addition to the academic probation that is outlined earlier in this resource, the formation faculty reserves the right to declare a seminarian on formational probation.

783. Such probation arises when the conduct of a seminarian causes sufficient concern to the faculty that a declaration of this seriousness is warranted. This states that while the

deportment or activity is not of itself sufficient to warrant dismissal from the priestly formation program, its continuance may result in such dismissal.

784. In all cases of formational probation, the seminarian will be given the specific reasons for this action and the specific changes that are required. The Vocation Director will also be notified.

785. Normally, seminarians are given one semester to correct the condition out of which formational probation has arisen. If after the course of one semester the condition has not been corrected, the seminarian is liable for dismissal from the priestly formation program.

## **J. Withdrawal from the Program**

786. A seminarian who decides to withdraw from the priestly formation program is expected to have thoroughly discussed this decision with his Spiritual Director, Formation Advisor, and the Rector-President.

787. When a final decision has been reached, the seminarian is expected to state this fact in writing and offer appropriate reasons for the decision. This written notice of withdrawal is to be given personally to the Rector-President and will be placed in the seminarian's personnel file.

788. The process of discernment may also include a mutual decision between the seminarian and faculty concluding the seminarian is not called to the diocesan priesthood or at least is not prepared to continue in the formation program. The seminarian will still be asked to state in writing his decision to withdraw from the program.

789. The Rector-President will discuss with the seminarian the best way to communicate this decision to the rest of the seminary community. In such cases, the Rector-President has the final decision regarding the process of communication and how best the seminarian can collect his personal belongings so as not to disrupt the community.

## **K. Dismissal from the Program**

790. The faculty may determine after thorough discussion the dismissal of a seminarian from the priestly formation program.

791. The decision for dismissal will be conveyed to the seminarian by the Rector-President with at least one additional faculty member present. At that meeting the seminarian will be given the specific reasons why this action is taking place.

792. The seminarian will also be given a written statement of the decision, a copy of which will also be placed in the seminarian's personnel file.

793. The Vocation Director will be notified immediately when a seminarian is being terminated from the program.

## **L. Advancement in the Program**

794. At the conclusion of each academic year, in the self-evaluation process, the seminarian will be asked to describe his discernment and indicate to the faculty his willingness to continue in the formation program. The formation advisor will already have prepared the seminarian to respond accordingly.

795. The formation faculty will offer a vote recommending if the seminarian should advance to the next year of formation. The vote is to be recorded. The vote is a recommendation since the Rector-President makes the final determination.

796. If the faculty determines the seminarian should be dismissed, the above procedures will be followed. Otherwise, the formation advisor will confirm the faculty's decision to advance the seminarian to the next stage of the formation program when reviewing the report of the evaluation with the seminarian.

### **M. Seminarian Appeals Process**

797. If the seminarian disagrees with a matter of fact or judgment within the written evaluation or any other aspect of the evaluation process he will first seek resolution with his Formation Advisor.

798. If a resolution is not possible between the formation advisor and the seminarian, the seminarian may then appeal to the Rector-President. The Rector-President will handle all appeals of this nature and who makes the final decision on the matter.

799. The final evaluation of the formation advisor will then be revised to incorporate the fact and description of the appeal, and the Rector-President's decision.

### **N. Records and Files**

800. All application materials related to the priestly formation program at Notre Dame Seminary is the property of the seminary.

801. If a seminarian is dismissed from the program the Rector-President has discretion in determining what materials, if any, can be returned to the seminarian. No information, however, can be released to any party outside the seminary without the consent of the Rector-President.

802. All psychological documents and transcripts of seminarians cannot be released without the permission of the seminarian or former seminarian and the Rector-President.

803. All official personnel files are maintained in the Office of the Rector-President. Only the Rector-President along with support staff, have access to personnel files. The Registrar's office maintains the academic files of all seminarians.

#### **Access to Files**

804. For those applying for acceptance to Notre Dame Seminary, access to one's file may be obtained by appointment with the Rector-President.

805. For those currently enrolled as a seminarian access to one's file may be obtained by appointment with the Rector-President.

806. For those who have discontinued as seminarians at Notre Dame Seminary, access to one's file may be obtained by appointment with the Rector-President.

807. In all cases, a seminarian or former seminarian may not remove anything from their file or photocopy any of the materials. The seminarian or former seminarian has the right to attach to any document contained in one's file any explanation or clarification deemed necessary or desirable. Excluded from review are documents (particularly recommendations submitted) given by the faculty with the specific understanding they remain confidential.

## **O. Protection of Information Policy**

808. Notre Dame Seminary has the responsibility for supervising access to and/or release of official data/information about seminarians. Certain items of information about individual seminarians are fundamental to the education process and must be recorded. This recorded information concerning seminarians must be used only for clearly defined purposes, must be safeguarded and controlled to avoid violations of personal privacy, and must be appropriately disposed of when justification for its collection and retention no longer exists.

809. In this regard, Notre Dame Seminary is committed to protecting to the maximum extent possible the right of privacy of all the individuals about whom it holds information, records, and files. Access to and release of such records is restricted to the seminarian concerned, to others with the seminarians' written consent, to officials within the school, to a court of competent jurisdiction, and otherwise pursuant to law.

810. Notre Dame Seminary supports the *Student Right to Know Act* and *Campus Security Act*, and amendments thereof.

## **P. Privacy of Information**

811. Notre Dame Seminary complies fully with the provisions of the *Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)* of 1974 as amended. The act protects the confidentiality of academic files and establishes the right of seminarians to review their educational records. Confidential documents received as part of the admissions process as well as materials related to the seminarian's formation during attendance at Notre Dame Seminary are not available for review by the seminarian nor may they be released to a third party without the permission of the seminarian. All academic records and related documents remain the property of Notre Dame Seminary.

## **Q. Directory Information**

812. Notre Dame Seminary, in accordance with the *FERPA Act*, has designated the following information about seminarians as public (directory) information:

- Name
- Address (local and home)



- E-mail address
- Program of study, class level
- Enrollment status (e.g., acceptance, full-time, part-time, withdrawn)
- Major program of study
- Dates of attendance
- Degree(s) and awards received
- Previous educational agencies or institutions attended
- Diocese of sponsorship or religious community
- Deceased status
- Record hold(s)

813. Directory information may be disclosed by Notre Dame Seminary for any purpose at its discretion without the consent of the seminarian. The seminary restricts such disclosures to those with legitimate ecclesiastical, educational, or legal interest. Directory information is not released to outside parties for commercial use. A seminarian, however, has the right to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information by filing a written notice to this effect with the Registrar's office at the time of registration.

#### **R. Respect for Equality/Non Discrimination Policy**

814. Notre Dame Seminary adheres to the principle of equal educational and employment opportunities without regard to race, sex, color, creed, age, disability, or national origin. This policy extends to all programs and activities supported by the seminary including hiring, training, promoting, salaries, transfers, and working conditions. In addition, Notre Dame Seminary conscientiously seeks to comply with all applicable legislation concerning nondiscrimination in employment practices and in development of personnel. This pertains to the protection of faculty and student rights of privacy and access of information concerning accommodations for the handicapped.

Bearing in mind that language reflects, reinforces and creates social reality, the seminary expects class conversation and written work to employ language that respects the equal dignity and worth of all human beings. Notre Dame Seminary believes in the equality of all people and respects the dignity of people from all races, cultures, religions and ideological preferences.

#### **S. Transcripts**

815. In accordance with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* of 1974, transcripts are issued only at the written and signed request of the seminarian. A transcript request form can be acquired from the Registrar's page on the website or from the Registrar's Office. All requests for transcripts are made to the Registrar and should include the following information:

- full current name and any previous names used;
- dates of attendance at Notre Dame Seminary;
- date of birth;
- social security number;
- complete address and telephone number;

- the number of copies needed;
- detailed mailing instructions (name and address of the person or institution to receive the transcript) including any special handling;
- full signature;
- a fee of \$5.00 per transcript.

816. No transcript will be issued until all outstanding financial obligations have been reconciled.

## **INSTITUTION OF MINISTRIES, ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY, ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE AND PRIESTHOOD**

817. In compliance with the Holy See's Ratio Fundamentalis (2016), seminarians entering first year of theology are to be admitted to candidacy by their bishop or religious superior.

818. For seminarians already enrolled at Notre Dame Seminary advancing from pre-theology to theology, the rector will arrange all administrative processes for the seminarian to receive candidacy. Confirmation regarding the seminarian's readiness for admission to candidacy will be determined by the rector, consultation with the formation faculty and vocation director, and after an interview with the seminarian.

819. Institution into the ministry of lector and acolyte marks a significant step in one's progress toward Holy Orders. Accordingly, before a seminarian can petition to be instituted in either ministry he must discern with his spiritual director and formation advisor his readiness to advance into these ministries.

820. At Notre Dame Seminary, seminarians ordinarily receive the ministry of lector in their first year of theology and ministry of acolyte in the fall of their second year of theology.

821. The conferral of ministries is celebrated at Notre Dame Seminary. The Rector-President arranges for a bishop to celebrate the conferral of the ministries. Admission to Candidacy is celebrated at St. Louis King of France Cathedral, New Orleans, by the Archbishop of New Orleans.

822. Seminarians who are preparing for the conferral of ministries and admission to candidacy petition their diocesan bishop/religious superior according to the prescriptions of canon law (CIC 1052.1, PPF 286).

823. The Rector-President will provide the candidates with the information necessary to petition their diocesan bishop/religious superior and explain the process.

824. The Rector-President will meet with each seminarian to assess the seminarian's readiness to advance. The Rector-President is to ascertain the seminarian's canonical standing to determine any impediments and irregularities.

825. The formation faculty will conduct a review of each seminarian to ascertain the seminarian's readiness to advance into these ministries and candidacy usually in conjunction with the annual evaluation.

826. The seminary community will be alerted about the seminarian's petition for ministries and candidacy asking that if anyone has doubt, they are to inform the Rector-President. A notice will be posted regarding this process.

827. Once the seminarian's petition has been received and all requisite information gathered, the Rector-President will present all information to the diocesan bishop/religious superior who makes the final decision.

828. If the diocesan bishop/religious superior confirms the recommendation for his seminarian to receive the ministry or candidacy, the requisite dimissorial letter is sent to the Rector-President giving permission for another bishop to confer the ministry or admit the seminarian to candidacy.

829. The Director of Liturgy will schedule a rehearsal required by seminarians to attend who will receive ministries and candidacy.

830. For newly instituted lectors and acolytes, training sessions will be provided by the Director of Liturgy of how to fulfill the liturgical functions of these ministries.

### **Ordination As Deacon And Priest**

831. Having been instituted in the ministries of lector and acolyte, and having been admitted to candidacy the seminarian begins final preparation for Holy Orders. With ordination to the diaconate the seminarian enters the clerical state and is incardinated into a particular Church or religious institute.

832. As a deacon he promises obedience to the bishops and takes on the obligation to celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours. The deacon also assumes publicly the obligation to live the celibate life.

833. In order for the formation faculty to give an informed recommendation to the seminarian's bishop/religious superior, governing documents require that the seminarian complete at least one year of formation at Notre Dame Seminary before petitioning for ordination.

834. According to current practice, ordination to the diaconate normally occurs in the second semester on third theology or prior to fourth theology. Canon law requires an interval of at least six months between institution in the ministry of acolyte and ordination to the diaconate as well as between ordination to the diaconate and to the priesthood (CIC 1035.2, PPF 285).

### **Petitioning for Holy Orders**

835. The fruits of his study and prayer regarding one's vocation to the diaconate and priesthood are an integral part of the seminarian's conversation with his Spiritual Director, formation advisor, director of vocations, and diocesan bishop/religious superior.

836. The seminarian will have cultivated a deep prayer life that allows him to discern if the Lord is calling him to Holy Orders. The Church, for her part, must verify the vocational call. Since no one has a canonical right to be ordained, the seminarian and those responsible for priestly formation stand in humility before God assuring that all decisions and actions reflect the work of the Holy Spirit.

837. The Rector-President will provide the candidates with the information necessary to petition their diocesan bishop/religious superior and explain the process.

838. The Rector-President will meet with each candidate for diaconate and priesthood to assess his readiness for ordination. The Rector-President is to ascertain the candidate's canonical standing to determine any impediments and irregularities (PPF 283, 285).

839. The Rector-President is to verify that the candidate accepts the teachings of the Church, prays the complete Liturgy of the Hours, attends daily Mass, receives the sacrament of penance regularly, and is committed to a life of celibacy (CIC 1050.1, PPF 283, 285).

840. The formation faculty will conduct a review of each candidate to ascertain the candidate's readiness for ordination. The Rector-President will report to the faculty the results of the canonical interview. A vote will be taken and recorded.

841. The seminary community will be alerted about the candidate's petition for ordination asking that if anyone has doubt. If so, they are to inform the Rector-President. A notice will be posted regarding this process.

842. When there is no doubt about the candidate's readiness for ordination to the diaconate or priesthood, he takes the Oath of Fidelity and Profession of Faith (CIC 833.6). The Rector-President will schedule a public ceremony for this to occur.

843. Once the seminarian's petition has been received, the formation faculty vote taken, and all requisite information gathered, the Rector-President will present all information to the diocesan bishop/religious superior who issues the Call to Orders (CIC 1050.1).

844. Candidates for ordination to the diaconate and priesthood are to make the canonical retreat prior to ordination (CIC 1039).

845. The Director of Liturgy will provide candidates with resources to assist in planning of liturgies associated with ordination.

### **Ordination**

846. The Rector-President or a representative from Notre Dame Seminary will attempt to attend the ordination liturgy.

847. Following the ordination, the ordaining bishop provides the usual canonical certificate confirming the ordination. A copy is provided to Notre Dame Seminary.

## **Conclusion**

848. This handbook is reviewed regularly and adapted to reflect the organic nature of community life