

Citations – Transition from Propaedeutic to Discipleship

The Goal

“The seminarian is a ‘mystery to himself,’ in which two aspects of his humanity, that need to be integrated, are intertwined and exist side by side”: talents and gifts; limits and frailty.... “The task of formation is to help the person to integrate these aspects, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, in a journey of faith and gradual and harmonious maturity, avoiding fragmentation, polarization, excesses, superficiality or partiality.” (*Ratio* 28; cf., *PPF* 24-27)

Ultimate goal of formation: to “be conformed to Christ by their immersion in the mystery of the Trinity.” (*Ratio* 35)

The seminarian “cannot limit himself simply to demonstrating a ‘vener of virtuous habits,’ a merely external and formalistic obedience to abstract principles. Rather, he is called to act with great interior freedom.” (*Ratio* 41)

Character of Propaedeutic Stage

Special character of Propaedeutic Stage: “Its principal objective is to provide a solid basis for the spiritual life and to nurture a greater self-awareness for personal growth.” (*Ratio* 59)

“Formation is a lifelong journey. It is important to lay a solid foundation for this journey in the propaedeutic stage, especially in the human and spiritual dimensions, such that the seminarian can thrive in the discipleship, configuration, and vocational synthesis stages of formation. Thus “the propaedeutic stage is an indispensable phase of formation with its own specific character.” This stage allows the seminarian to lay a foundation for a new way of life by developing a life of prayer, study, fraternity, and appropriate docility to formation.” (*PPF* 120)

“It must always be a real time of vocational discernment, undertaken within community life, and a ‘start’ to the following stages of *initial formation*.” (*Ratio* 60)

“The propaedeutic stage should conclude with the seminarian’s making a firm resolution to dedicate himself to the work of priestly formation or, alternatively, “to follow a different path in life” as a faithful lay Catholic. A decision to proceed to priestly formation must always be confirmed by the Church.” (*PPF* 122)

Agents of Formations/Accompaniment

“Each seminarian is the protagonist of his own formation.” (*Ratio* 130).

Admissions – “[The applicant’s] level of insight or self-knowledge and their willingness to address important human issues—such as their interpersonal abilities, evidence of sound peer relationships, their manner of dealing with authority, and their psychosexual development—can be important gauges of their readiness to enter a formation program.” (*PPF* 72)

Priestly Accompaniment – “The formator is at the service of the mystery of vocation in the seminarian. He helps to discern whether such a call is present and to foster it to its fullness by relating to the man as a shepherd and a father.” (*PPF* 99)

“When the seminarian experiences that the priest formators live true fatherhood seeking his good, and that the life of the seminary is marked by a spirit of true fraternity, this trust will not be difficult to establish.” (*PPF* 101)