

CHAPTER THREE

THEOLOGATE

ARTICLE ONE

MISSION AND MODELS

249. The mission of the theologate is the proximate preparation of candidates for the priesthood. Seminarians presented for ordination should be converted to the service of Christ, understand the tradition of the Church, and possess the attitudes and skills necessary to begin priestly ministry. They should also desire to grow in the spiritual life, in theological knowledge, and in ministerial expertise after ordination. In the pursuit of this mission, the theologate unites human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation into an integral program of priestly formation.

250. For this reason, every seminary and study center should incorporate as an essential part of its mission statement a brief summary of the Church's doctrinal understanding of the ministerial priesthood, keeping before its eyes its fundamental purpose. Such a statement should indicate that the ministerial priesthood differs in essence from the priesthood of all the baptized. "Priests by the anointing of the Holy Spirit are signed with a special character and so are configured to Christ the priest in such a way that they are able to act in the person of Christ the head."¹³² "In the person of Christ" the priest "effects the eucharistic sacrifice and offers it to God in the name of all the people."¹³³ The configuration to Christ in the sacrament of orders confers a special participation in the Lord's mission to teach, sanctify, and lead.

251. In accord with its ecclesial mission, the theologate also functions within the context of American higher education as a center of theological scholarship at the graduate level. It intends to prepare priests who are learned teachers for pastoral ministry. Theologates and study centers are encouraged to offer at least the bachelor's degree in theology (S.T.B.) either by affiliating with an existing ecclesiastical faculty or university, or by special arrangement with the Congregation for Catholic Education.

252. The theologate has specific responsibilities to the dioceses and religious institutes or societies that sponsor it and to those which it serves. These relationships are a source of mutual enrichment. The dioceses and religious institutes or societies share in the responsibility for priestly formation programs. In turn, the theologate serves as an important theological resource.

253. Many seminaries and study centers prepare not only candidates for the priesthood but also assist in the preparation for other ministries in the Church. If such programs are offered, the seminary must maintain the integrity and specialized nature of the program of priestly formation for both religious and diocesan candidates.

254. In developing and implementing programs and services beyond priestly formation, a theologate should not overextend its resources, in particular, its faculty. Such overextension can result in an overworked faculty and an inadequate formation for priesthood candidates, weakening the central focus of the institution.

255. Currently, seminaries may be classified canonically as:

Diocesan, established by a single diocese, a province, a region, or a larger grouping;

Religious, established by a single religious institute or society or a number of religious institutes or societies.

256. Various models and structures of theologates have developed in the United States. Each maintains within itself or together with other institutions the essential human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral components of priestly formation.

257. The **freestanding** structure provides within one institution an entire and integral program of human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation. Distinct houses of formation may relate to freestanding institutions, for example, by sending their seminarians to them for their academic program.

258. The **university-related** model provides one or more parts of the program from its own resources as a seminary or house of formation while other parts, such as the academic, are provided by a college or university. In some situations, each component remains completely distinct. In others a variety of styles of integration or affiliation obtains.

259. In the **collaborative** model, several specific groups, such as religious institutes, societies, or dioceses, choose to unite their resources. They may join administrative and academic structures with houses of formation clustered around a central study center. In such collaborative models, individual institutions may retain varying degrees of autonomy.

260. When seminaries, universities, and houses of formation are interrelated, care should be taken that the various components of the program are integrated in a careful and comprehensive manner so that each institution has a clear understanding of its specific responsibilities. It is essential that all parties in such collaborative efforts understand the specialized and pastoral nature of priestly formation.

261. In the development or revision of the governing documents of university-related or collaborative models, care should be taken to maintain the legitimate rights of diocesan bishops and religious ordinaries, who have the responsibility of ecclesiastical supervision. The statutes of all seminaries should be in accord with canon law and all particular legislation governing seminary training.

262. Houses of formation that have too few students or which lack the necessary resources and personnel to conduct a systematic formation program in accord with the *Program of Priestly Formation* should be discontinued.

263. Seminaries or study centers sponsoring courses of priestly formation that abbreviate the requirements of canon 250 need the explicit permission of the Congregation for Catholic Education to offer such programs.¹³⁴

ARTICLE TWO

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

I. PROGRAM OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION

264. Every seminary must provide a milieu of human and spiritual formation in which seminarians are encouraged to grow continuously and progressively in their personal relationship with Christ and in their commitment to the Church and to their vocation.¹³⁵ A well-rounded and effective program of spiritual formation presumes and builds upon continuing theological and personal growth and character development consistent with a priestly vocation.

265. The seminary and the local church represent the matrix for the formation of diocesan candidates. Religious candidates for orders will find the locus of their spiritual formation in the religious institute's or society's house of formation. What follows, then, must be interpreted in accord with the constitutions, statutes, and other ecclesiastical laws governing houses of study and houses of formation of religious institutes or societies.

266. The final goal of spiritual formation in the seminary is the establishment of attitudes, habits, and practices in the spiritual life that will continue after ordination. Spiritual formation in the seminary is meant to set the foundation for a lifetime of priestly ministry.

267. Wholesome priestly spirituality embraces prayer, simplicity of life, obedience, pastoral service, and celibate chastity. Its most eloquent guide and teacher is the witness of mature and dedicated priests. It is important therefore for seminaries to have a sufficient number of exemplary priest faculty members to serve as models for seminarians, helping them establish a strong and balanced priestly identity.

268. The seminary is a formational community responding to a call to continuing conversion of mind and heart. Its life must center on the paschal mystery, reflected in the liturgy, tradition, and life of the Church. This mystery must shape the nature and rhythm of the seminary community. Consequently, the seminary community must be a community of prayer. "The high point of Christian prayer is the Eucharist, which in turn is to be seen as the 'summit and source' of the sacraments and the Liturgy of the Hours."¹³⁶ The Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Hours, the sacrament of penance, and other prayer opportunities form the seminary community into a concrete instance of the Church at prayer. As such, it becomes the proper setting for conversion and priestly formation.

269. Within this community of prayer, the essential work of the seminary takes place. Personal growth and character development should progress together harmoniously within a deepening spiritual life. The seminary is a school of human virtue, of growth in honesty, integrity, intellectual rigor, hard work, tolerance, and discipline, leavened by humor and healthy enjoyment. The seminary must also be a school of spiritual growth in which seminarians are formed into men of prayer, imbued with those virtues that only grace can bring: faith, hope, and charity.

270. The seminary is also the locus of a long and complex program of academic and pastoral formation, which is essential to the seminarians'

progress toward ordained ministry. A strong spiritual life and a realistic commitment to serve people in community express the overall goal of priestly formation. They also establish most clearly that point at which all efforts converge: the conversion of mind and heart of seminarians and future priests.

271. To achieve this goal, the program of spiritual formation must form a unified and coherent whole with the academic and pastoral programs. Unity and coordination are essential to effectiveness.

A. COMMUNAL AND PERSONAL DIMENSIONS OF SPIRITUAL FORMATION

272. While daily Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours establish the fundamental rhythm of seminary life, seminary programs of spiritual formation have two focal points: the seminary community and its public life as a matrix for growth and development (involving relationships with many different groups and persons) and individual seminarians as they strive to interiorize the values of the spiritual life and integrate the lessons of intellectual and pastoral formation. The interplay between individual and community lies at the heart of spiritual formation.

Communal Dimension

273. Daily celebration of the Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Hours, and frequent celebration of the sacrament of penance represent essential moments in the Church's life of prayer and conversion. They themselves require catechesis before they can effectively become central moments of the seminary's life. Accordingly, liturgical celebrations of the seminary should be planned and conducted with the greatest of care. Instruction should be given to the seminary community about the role of the Eucharist as it nourishes the life of all Christian communities. Instruction on the history and nature of the Liturgy of the Hours is also essential.

274. Regular opportunities for eucharistic devotion should be provided. Seminaries should assist students to develop lifelong habits of daily meditation on the Scriptures. "An essential element of spiritual formation is the prayerful and meditated reading of the Word of God (*lectio divina*)."¹³⁷

275. Opportunities for devotional prayer, for example the rosary and the stations of the cross, should be provided. The practices of various ethnic traditions should be taken into careful account in the prayer life of the community when the seminary itself or the dioceses or religious institutes

or societies being served possess a multicultural dimension. Catechesis should be given on the proper role of devotion to the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, and the saints. Opportunities should also be provided for faith sharing in an atmosphere of trust and openness among seminarians and faculty.

276. Particular attention should be given to the meaning and practice of the sacrament of penance as a means of conversion. Public celebrations of the sacrament are important moments in the seminary's life. Individual celebration of the sacrament should be available and always encouraged. Seminarians will not be formed into effective ministers of the sacrament unless they themselves have discovered its value in their own spiritual life.

277. The essential rhythm of the Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Hours, and sacramental reconciliation finds its proper continuation in other elements of the program of spiritual formation. Rector's conferences, conferences of the spiritual director, days of recollection, retreats, special workshops on topic of spiritual growth and human development make important contributions to the spiritual formation of seminarians. All these elements together and in coordination build up the life of the seminary community, contributing to the personal development of seminarians.

Personal Dimension

278. The seminary community, the rhythm of its prayer life, and its programs of formation set the context for the continuing conversion of individual seminarians. Seminarians should be challenged to a life of integral human growth and development, as well as a life of supernatural virtue. The theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity and the moral virtues are viewed as concrete gifts of grace, which the Holy Spirit bestows on those who sincerely strive for them. As always, grace builds upon nature and on the basis of wholesome human development.

279. Candidates for the priesthood should be taught the importance and the necessity of sustained personal prayer. A necessary precondition in our society "is an education in the deep human meaning and religious value of silence as the spiritual atmosphere vital for perceiving God's presence."¹³⁸ By discovering in quiet the Lord who sustains their lives and their commitment to serve, members of the seminary community also discover in a special way their own deepest source of unity.

280. Because every spiritual journey is personal and individual, it requires personal guidance. Accordingly, every seminarian should have a priest

spiritual director whose task is to guide him in his path of personal conversion and his growth to the priesthood.

281. Spiritual direction represents a relationship in the internal forum which enjoys confidentiality. Seminarians should avail themselves of this unique opportunity for growth by being as honest and transparent as possible with their spiritual directors. Seminarians should share their life history as well as their journey of faith with their spiritual directors and should be trustful and responsive to their counsel.

282. A first task of spiritual direction is to help seminarians establish sound habits of personal prayer. Through courses and instruction on prayer and spiritual direction, seminarians should become aware of the different forms of prayer that nurture the life of faith.

283. Although individual spiritual formation cannot embody the same unified approach as the public programs of spiritual formation, it possesses its own coherence and needs coordination as well. Consequently, spiritual directors should meet on a regular basis to speak about their methods, which ought to be complementary. Advice given in the internal forum and the public policies of the seminary should complement each other, thereby fostering more effectively the personal and spiritual growth of seminarians.

284. The training of spiritual directors for the work of seminary formation, especially in the theologate, is a critical component for seminary spiritual renewal. The goal of every theologate is that all priests engaged in spiritual direction should have advanced training in spirituality.

285. Priesthood candidates should be introduced formally to the skills of spiritual direction in order to act in that capacity later as priests.

B. FORMATION FOR A PRIESTLY WAY OF LIFE

286. The identity of the priesthood is rooted in the life of faith. Celibacy, obedience, pastoral service, and simplicity of life are qualities that comprise a priestly way of life in imitation of Jesus Christ.¹³⁹ As such, instruction in their value, practice, and cultivation is a special goal of seminary formation. Through a course in the curriculum, as well as through workshops and rector's conferences, the seminary should make explicit the Church's doctrinal understanding of the ministerial priesthood on which a priestly way of life is based.

Celibacy

287. "The spiritual formation of one who is called to live celibacy should pay particular attention to preparing the future priest so that he may **know, appreciate, love, and live celibacy according to its true nature** and according to its real purpose, that is for evangelical, spiritual, and pastoral motives."¹⁴⁰ Nothing less than a coordinated and multifaceted program of instruction, dialogue, and encouragement will aid seminarians to understand the nature and purpose of celibate chastity and to embrace it wholeheartedly in their lives. Sexuality finds its authentic meaning in relation to mature love. Seminarians should understand the connection between mature love and celibacy. In doing so, the insights of modern psychology can be a considerable aid. The goal of psychosexual, social, and spiritual development should be to form seminarians into chaste celibate men who are loving pastors of the people they serve.¹⁴¹

The Value of Celibacy

288. Seminarians should understand clearly and realistically the **value** of celibate chastity and its connection to priestly ministry. A cogent, "positive and specific" presentation of the celibate way of life as gift and challenge should appeal to seminarians' highest motivation.¹⁴² To be lived fruitfully, the value of celibacy must be interiorized. A careful, thoughtful presentation of the Church's teaching on this topic is essential in helping seminarians to appropriate this value. "Therefore, seminarians should have a good knowledge of the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, of the encyclical *Sacerdotalis Caelibatus* and the 'Instruction for Formation in Priestly Celibacy,' published by the Congregation for Catholic Education in 1974."¹⁴³ In this way a lifelong commitment can be initiated and sustained. A life of prayer and a commitment to serve others are equally indispensable for a healthy and lasting celibate commitment. Priestly support groups also can contribute to celibate living.

289. Such a presentation of the value of celibacy in the priesthood should be undertaken through rector's conferences, workshops, special programs, and courses.

The Practice of Celibacy

290. The rector should hold periodic conferences on this topic, at least on a yearly basis, in which basic behavioral expectations about the practice of celibacy for priests and candidates for the priesthood are detailed. He should

clearly delineate the kinds of behavior that are acceptable and praiseworthy and the kinds that are not. He should address the responsibilities of individual seminarians, now and later, for themselves and for the common reputation of the community and the priesthood. Unless there is clarity in concrete terms about the actual meaning of the celibate commitment in the seminary community, and later in priestly ministry, presentations about the value of celibacy will not be persuasive or taken seriously.

Celibacy and Spiritual Direction

291. Personal relationships, sexuality, celibate chastity, commitment, and interiorization are essential topics for spiritual direction. In this setting, seminarians should be encouraged to speak in detail about their own personal struggles and review their success and failure in living a chaste, celibate life.

292. Seminarians must judge if they themselves have the gift of celibacy and before ordination give assurance to the Church that they can live the permanent commitment to celibacy with authenticity and integrity. Chaste celibacy is only for "those to whom it is given."¹⁴⁴ The celibate's personal relationship with Christ through prayer and the sacraments will provide the strength to meet the challenges of celibate living.

293. It is especially important that all spiritual directors share the same understanding of an integral celibate commitment and the kinds of behaviors that are counterindicators of growth. It is also essential that advice given in spiritual direction accord with the public presentation of this value, its importance for the priesthood and the common understanding of its practice in the seminary community and the Church.

Celibacy and Admission and Evaluation

294. Seminaries should only admit candidates who give testimony of a sustained habit of celibate chastity prior to admission. Candidates should also give evidence of mature psychological and psychosexual development. These considerations must be thoroughly treated in the admission process and in the continuing evaluation of seminarians. The rector, faculty, or those charged with formation must be able to testify to seminarians' positive capacity to live a celibate life relating with others in a mature fashion or to testify to counterindicators as the case may be. In this matter, as in other important areas of evaluation, the benefit of the doubt must be given to the Church.

295. The seminary must have written guidelines for admission, evaluation, and community life that spell out its expectations in regard to those attitudes, behaviors, and levels of psychosexual maturity which indicate a right mentality, proper motivation, and a commitment to celibate chastity. These guidelines should also specify unacceptable attitudes and behaviors that militate against such a commitment.

Other Elements of a Priestly Way of Life

296. Celibacy cannot be understood or discussed, much less lived, in isolation. Together with simplicity of life, a spirit of obedience, and pastoral service, celibacy is an integral element in a priestly way of life.

Simplicity of Life

297. Simplicity of life is incumbent upon all Christians but especially those who follow Jesus in the ministerial priesthood. "In reality, only the person who contemplates and lives the mystery of God as the one and supreme good, as the true and definitive treasure, can understand and practice poverty, which is certainly not a matter of despising or rejecting material goods but of a loving and responsible use of these goods and at the same time an ability to renounce them with great interior freedom, that is, with reference to God and his plan."¹⁴⁵

298. Through the program of spiritual formation in both the internal and external fora, seminarians should see the value of simplicity of life and come to appreciate its essential connection to an authentic understanding of and witness to the Gospel. The seminarian should be encouraged to develop the virtue of penance, which includes mortification, self-sacrifice, and generosity toward others. Spiritual directors and advisers must be sensitive to seminarians' stewardship of their own, the seminary's, and the Church's material resources.

Obedience

299. Spiritual formation helps seminarians realize that they are entering a tradition of service in the Church, and they will not be free to follow a path of their own choosing without heeding the Gospel, Church tradition, and those in authority. They are called to a mature relationship with those in authority, which includes trust, dialogue, participation in decision making, and obedience. Obedience itself flows "from the responsible freedom of the priest who accepts not only the demands of an organized and organic

ecclesial life, but also that grace of discernment and responsibility in ecclesial decisions which was assured by Jesus to his apostles and their successors for the sake of faithfully safeguarding the mystery of the Church and serving the structure of the Christian community along its common path toward salvation."¹⁴⁶

300. Therefore, candidates for orders should approach the practice of obedience in a spirit of trust. This basic trust should be present even in the face of the human limitations that will always be present in persons who exercise authority. Candidates need to learn that obedience strives to serve the unity of the Church and the needs of all its members. A spirit of service to others is finally an imitation of Christ himself who came not to do his own will but the will of the Father who sent him.

301. Seminary formation should give instruction in the meaning of authentic obedience. Advisers and spiritual directors should help seminarians appreciate this value and practice it in their lives. They should also teach seminarians that the way they respond to authority often mirrors the way they will exercise it.

Justice and Pastoral Service

302. Seminarians must be knowledgeable about issues of social justice, peace, and respect for life. During formation, seminarians not only should study such issues on a formal basis, they should also engage in works of justice and peace and issues of life insofar as the program of the seminary permits. Spiritual formation also should treat these topics and their intrinsic connection to Christian piety and priestly living.

303. Seminarians should reflect on the intimate connection between their credible witness as priests and the quality of their personal lives. They also need to see that prayer, celibacy, simplicity of life, and a commitment to the poor add credibility to their capacity to teach and preach effectively as priests.

C. COMMUNITY LIFE OF THE SEMINARY

304. The seminary community plays a significant role in the growth of seminarians toward the priesthood. The give-and-take between those who share the same vocational goal provides mutual support and promotes increased tolerance while allowing fraternal correction to take place. Community life affords the opportunity for the development of leadership

skills and individual talents. It can also motivate seminarians to develop a sense of self-sacrifice and a spirit of collaboration. The seminarians and the faculty form the center of the seminary community. This center needs careful cultivation so that the distinctive aims of seminary formation can be achieved.

305. Seminarians and the seminary community interact with many other individuals and communities as well. Men and women, some engaged in theological education and others in pastoral work, mingle with seminarians in a variety of settings. Some of these contacts are pastoral and ecumenical in nature. Some are personal. Seminarians' continuing contact with their own family and home community should continue to form a significant dimension of their life. All contribute to the overall development of seminarians.

306. The presence of seminarians from African American, Hispanic, Pacific Asian, Native American, and other ethnic or racial groups provides a mutually enriching dimension to a seminary community and reflects the realities of pastoral life that await seminarians. The same is true of those seminarians who have come from a renewal movement. These dimensions should be taken into consideration in every phase of seminary life. The challenge for the seminary community and individual seminarians is to profit from this diversity while preserving the specific and distinctive focus of seminary life, which is priestly formation.

307. It is important to keep a balance between freedom and responsibility, between respect for the individual and concern for the community. Because theological education demands mental and psychic energy, seminarians need opportunities to restore their body and spirit. Sufficient time for physical exercise and for leisure should be built into the schedule.

308. Therefore, each seminary and formational community should have a written rule of life, which sets forth guidelines to govern the balance and rhythm of community life. Such a rule of life should be approved by the appropriate ordinary and regularly updated. Student handbooks also should be periodically reviewed and updated.

D. EVALUATION AND GROWTH

309. The purpose of accountability in seminary formation is never simply obedience to the letter of the law but a deeper conversion of mind and heart.

310. While programs of evaluation take place in the external forum, it is important to relate this experience to seminarians' spiritual development. The experience of evaluation should be generally positive in nature and should foster growth. Hence, evaluations can be viewed as significant moments in the spiritual growth of seminarians.

311. The distinction between internal and external fora must clearly be maintained. Evaluation programs function in the external forum. At the same time, the process of external assessment has as an essential goal the internal appropriation of priestly values by the seminarians. (Further details on the evaluation of seminarians are contained in Chapter Five, paragraphs 529-541.)

II. NORMS

PRAYER

312. There should be a daily celebration of the Eucharist in which every member of the community ordinarily participates.

313. The seminary community should celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours, especially Morning and Evening Prayer, on a daily basis.

314. The careful preparation and execution of liturgical celebrations should be supervised by the seminary director of liturgy. Because the liturgical life of the seminary shapes the sensitivities and attitudes of seminarians for future ministry, a sense of mystery should be carefully preserved in all liturgical celebrations. The laws and prescriptions of approved liturgical books are normative.

315. Catechesis should be given concerning the meaning and proper celebration of the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours and their benefits for spiritual growth in the seminary and for the communities which seminarians later will serve.

316. Catechesis should be given concerning the sacrament of penance and its importance for priestly life and ministry. Communal celebration of the sacrament of penance should be scheduled regularly. Frequent opportunities for individual celebration of sacramental reconciliation should also be provided and encouraged. The seminary should ensure that other ministers of the sacrament of penance (external confessors) are available on a regular basis.¹⁴⁷

317. Conferences, days of recollection, workshops, and retreats should be well organized and together form a whole and coherent program of spiritual formation.

318. Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and the Word of God should be especially encouraged in the life of the seminary.

319. Devotion to the Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, and to the saints should be encouraged. Opportunities for devotional prayer should be made available and encouraged.

320. Each academic year, there should be regular days of recollection and an annual retreat of one week.

321. The seminary program and spiritual direction should teach seminarians to value solitude and personal prayer as a necessary part of priestly spirituality. Occasions for silence and properly directed solitude should be provided during retreats and days of recollection.

322. According to the guidelines set forth in *The Ecumenical Directory*, the seminary should sponsor, on appropriate occasions, ecumenical and interfaith prayer services with other Christian churches and other religions.¹⁴⁸

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

323. Seminarians should meet regularly, no less than once a month, with a priest spiritual director. Spiritual directors must be chosen from a list prepared by the director of spiritual formation. These priests must be approved by the rector and appointed by the diocesan bishop.¹⁴⁹

324. Seminarians should confide their personal history, personal relationships, prayer experiences, and other significant topics to their spiritual director. If, for serious reason, there should be a change of director, attention should be given to continuity in seminarians' spiritual development.

325. The spiritual director must see that an integration of spiritual formation, personal growth, and character development consistent with priestly formation occurs in the life of seminarians. The spiritual director plays a key part in vocational discernment. The spiritual director must distinguish between the signs of a priestly vocation and those which indicate another mission in the Church.

COMMUNITY LIFE

326. A rule of life, approved by appropriate ecclesiastical authority, should govern the rhythm of community life by balancing participation in community activities and solitude.

327. The rule of life should provide a reasonable schedule with community prayer at its center, allowing time for physical exercise, study, and leisure; theologians should develop discerning habits in regard to reading, television viewing, movie going, and other forms of entertainment.¹⁵⁰

328. The rule of life should be included as part of a student handbook, which clearly presents the seminary's expectations for community life along with its academic, pastoral, and formational policies.

329. The principles in the rule of life and student handbook should form the basis of an annual evaluation. Seminarians are accountable for all aspects of priestly formation within the parameters of the external forum. This includes participation in spiritual exercises, the spiritual direction program, liturgical activities, community life as well as the academic and pastoral dimensions of priestly formation.

PRIESTLY WAY OF LIFE

330. Matters pertaining to celibate and chaste living should be included in the seminary rule of life. The rector of the seminary has the responsibility clearly to delineate behavioral expectations that are appropriate to a life of celibate chastity.

331. The rule of life and student handbook should foster the value of simplicity, encouraging seminarians to live a frugal life, including a measure of fasting and almsgiving. The seminary environment itself should foster a simple way of life and a spirit of forthright detachment. Seminarians should be made aware that they are accountable for the proper stewardship of material goods.

332. The rule of life and student handbook should encourage appropriate, adult relations with others, respect for those in authority, and a mature sense of obedience.

ARTICLE THREE

INTELLECTUAL FORMATION

I. THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM OF THE SEMINARY

A. FOUNDATION: THE TEACHING ROLE OF PRIESTS

333. A priest is ordained to serve as a teacher representing the person of Christ, head and pastor of the Church.¹⁵¹ Proclaiming and teaching the Word of God are fundamental priestly activities required for the life of the Church. Consequently, academic studies represent a critical component in the pastoral preparation of candidates for priestly ministry. As seminarians study divine revelation in the light of faith and under the guidance of the Church's magisterium, they should grow personally into ever more committed disciples by virtue of what they learn. Only in this way will they be able to proclaim, expound, and guard the faith persuasively for the welfare of the faithful. Ultimately, intellectual formation should teach seminarians to regard themselves as part of the tradition of authorized teachers and living witnesses by which the Gospel of Jesus Christ is handed down from one generation to the next.¹⁵²

334. The theological formation of candidates for the ministerial priesthood is based on faith, animated by the Holy Spirit, guided by the Word of God and faithful to tradition and the magisterium of the Church. In a significant way, intellectual formation for priesthood means a theological education in which a thorough and comprehensive grounding in the Catholic faith is conveyed.

335. "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."¹⁵³ The goal of intellectual formation is the conversion of mind and heart, which is the only sure foundation for a lifetime of teaching and preaching. Academic formation can achieve this objective only by imparting a sure knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the words and deeds, indeed the person, of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the revelation of God to all men and women.

336. Basic instruction in the theological disciplines is provided in the years of academic preparation in the seminary theologatē. Such a

foundation is irreplaceable. For most seminarians, the years of theology represent the single most sustained, concentrated period they will devote to study in their lives.

337. Such learning will not come easily or automatically. Rather it is the result of effort and hard work. But given the depth and breadth of the theological sciences, nothing less than a thorough education will suffice to supply a sure foundation for fruitful leadership for the years ahead.¹⁵⁴ If the foundation is faulty, the exercise of priestly ministry after ordination will lack substance, and effective continuing education seriously will be hampered. Ultimately, academic formation should establish attitudes and habits that will continue after ordination. Such factors underscore "the need for an extremely rigorous intellectual formation."¹⁵⁵

338. The lack of traditional preparation on the part of entering candidates may tempt the seminary to lower its standards. It also may lead students themselves to underestimate the value of intellectual formation.¹⁵⁶ But the higher level of education on the part of Catholics requires more than ever a thorough theological education on the part of the priest. Effective preaching and teaching also require skills in communication, but they first demand a sound and thoughtful theological foundation. Therefore, "it is necessary to oppose firmly the tendency to play down the seriousness of studies and the commitment to them."¹⁵⁷

B. THE BASIC GOAL OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

339. A sure theological foundation is comprised of various elements.¹⁵⁸ Each represents a value in its own right. Together, they comprise a unified whole and possess a single goal: the education of a priest who is theologically informed and solidly grounded in the wisdom of the Church. "It simply is not possible to develop an 'intelligentia fidei' (an understanding of the faith), if the content of the 'fides' is not known."¹⁵⁹ The elements of a complete education might be summarized in these terms: A theological education should be comprehensive and extensive, covering the range of Christian doctrine. It should witness to the unity of the faith — according to tradition and the magisterium — and its authentic diversity of theological expressions. Such an education should be pastorally oriented, ecumenically sensitive, and personally appropriated by the individual seminarian. It should also be relevant to the world in which the Gospel is preached.

340. A theological education should be comprehensive. It should include an in-depth understanding and appreciation of the biblical, historical, and dogmatic origins of the faith, as well as the contemporary relevance of the faith to the individual and to society.

341. A theological education should be extensive. It should include the essential ecclesiastical disciplines: sacred Scripture, dogmatic and moral theology, liturgy, church history, patristics, spirituality, ecumenism, homiletics, and canon law as well as pastoral theology. A foundation that is comprehensive and extensive is necessary so that a priest can be a sure and effective witness to the Church's authentic teaching and able to act as an official teacher and preacher of the Gospel.

342. A sound theological education recognizes the unity intrinsic to the Christian faith and the Word of God whose interpretation "has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone. Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ."¹⁶⁰ A sound theological education also recognizes an authentic diversity of theological expressions through which the one faith of the Church has been articulated.

343. The teaching of theology must always be aware of the future pastoral mission of seminarians. The preparation of seminarians to be teachers, preachers, and evangelists is the major purpose of intellectual formation.¹⁶¹

344. To preach effectively, seminarians must understand the world in which the message of Christ is preached. The academic program should help them develop skill in reading the signs of the time in relation to the Gospel and the teachings of the Church. In this regard, a knowledge of history and the human sciences is invaluable.

345. The academic formation of seminarians should also lead them to study in detail the social teaching of the Church in order to understand from an informed theological perspective the Church's role in the struggle for justice, peace, and the integrity of human life. Such study should mold seminarians into articulate spokesmen for and interpreters of Catholic social teaching in today's circumstances.

346. Academic preparation for contemporary priestly ministry should take place in an atmosphere of ecumenical and interfaith cooperation. Seminarians should learn the teachings of their own Church on ecumenical and interfaith matters and understand as well how to evaluate teachings of other churches and other religions critically and fairly. Seminarians

should learn to understand and appreciate the distinguishing beliefs of other churches and other religions in a positive light. They should be able to perceive God's truth in other Christian churches, ecclesial bodies, in the faith of Judaism, and in other world religions.

347. Theological learning takes place within the life of faith. Through theological and scriptural studies, future priests assent to the Word of God, grow in the spiritual life, and prepare themselves as pastoral ministers.¹⁶² Consequently, a sound theological education is essentially incomplete without personal appropriation by seminarians. With such appropriation, as faith and knowledge penetrate interior understanding, intellectual conversion should follow. The study of theology and growth in the spiritual life should develop together harmoniously.

348. In this way, a secure basis is given to seminarians for teaching and preaching which is both authentic and convincing. Such a theological foundation blends fidelity to the Church with imagination and creativity.

C. COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM

1. Balance

349. The main task of seminary education is the systematic study of the theological sciences. Good academic preparation for priestly ministry is achieved in a balanced program of theological formation. Such a balanced program also requires that seminarians have taken the necessary prerequisite courses before the actual study of theology commences.

350. A balanced program should introduce students in gradual steps to more complex and specialized areas of theology. Hence introductory courses should be followed by more specific or complex areas of concentration. A thoughtful pedagogical strategy for the entire curriculum is especially important given the learning needs of many students.

351. Because of the growth of specialization in the ecclesiastical sciences, the synthetic moment takes on greater importance in the academic formation of future priests, whose task is to preach the Gospel in its integrity to the next generation of Catholics.¹⁶³ For such a mission, theological synthesis is indispensable but cannot depend on the talent and ability of the individual student. Rather, the sacred sciences must themselves be taught as parts of a larger undertaking in which the whole — the Gospel — precedes and encompasses the parts. Such instruction calls for effective unity and a common perspective on the part of the faculty, which must be cultivated by the academic dean and

the rector. Only in this way will courses within a department and between departments be formed into a unified, internally coherent curriculum. The shape of the curriculum as a whole makes a significant statement and is itself a teaching device.¹⁶⁴

352. Curriculum planning should strive for a middle ground between an overly ambitious program and one that does not sufficiently challenge students, especially gifted students. The latter should be encouraged and assisted to enrich their regular coursework through private and directed study, attendance at colloquia, and enrollment in courses at neighboring academic institutions.

353. A complete and balanced academic preparation for priesthood requires eight full academic semesters or the equivalent in trimesters or quarters at the theologate level. It presupposes four previous semesters of philosophy or their equivalent.¹⁶⁵ Seminarians require a sustained period of time not simply to absorb information but to learn and become accustomed to theological methodologies, which are complex and vary within the ecclesiastical disciplines. It is therefore a disservice to students to ask them to absorb, integrate, and appropriate the content and methods of the theological curriculum in a brief period of time.

2. Core and Elective Courses

354. A seminary curriculum is composed of core and elective courses with an eye to coherence and overall unity. The core courses comprise those parts of theology which are necessary for seminarians in order to understand the ecclesial tradition and to function as official teachers of the Church.

355. The elective courses are devoted to those topics which expand, elaborate, or study in greater detail various aspects of theology. A seminary curriculum should seek some balance between core and elective courses although it is clear, given the responsibilities of priestly ministry, that the number of core courses will be substantial. Care should be taken that non-theological courses do not weaken the core curriculum.

3. Methodology

Theological Methodology

356. It is important that the various theological methodologies be explained carefully. Students should be introduced to the approved approaches to

Scripture and theology and be acquainted with the appropriate statements of the magisterium on the role and function of theology in the Church.

Teaching Methodology

357. Theological faculties must maintain rigorous academic standards while exploring various methods of teaching. In particular, methods developed for adult learners may prove beneficial for the growing number of older candidates who may encounter difficulties returning to studies. Consideration and attention should be given to the special learning needs of students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

4. Role of the Magisterium

358. The teaching office of the Church is charged with the authentic interpretation of the Word of God "in its written form or in the form of tradition."¹⁶⁶ With and under their bishop, priests are inheritors of the Church's tradition and have a sacred responsibility to live it, teach it, and hand it on in its entirety to the next generation of believers.

359. Therefore sound theological training teaches seminarians to value the special role of the magisterium in Catholic theology as the authoritative teacher, interpreter, and guarantor of the rule of faith for the sake of the Church's unity. Students should correctly understand the magisterium's authority to judge how theological research and opinion, as well as human experience, conform to revelation. A careful presentation of the role of the magisterium, valid for all theological disciplines, should therefore constitute an essential part of the seminary curriculum.

360. Such a presentation will introduce students to the fora, ordinary and extraordinary, in which the magisterium teaches and the various ways in which it can teach in each forum. In learning to distinguish theological opinion from magisterial teaching, students should learn to assess accurately the authoritative character of magisterial statements, "which becomes clear from the nature of the documents, the insistence with which a teaching is repeated and the very way in which it is expressed."¹⁶⁷ An introduction to the function of "theological notes" may prove helpful.

5. Academic Nomenclature

361. Department and course titles should be consistent within the curriculum. They should be clear and connected in a straightforward way to the content of the course. Annually updated academic course syllabuses should be kept on file in the academic office.

6. Library

362. The provision of an adequate library of books and periodicals is an essential part of a sound theological program. A comprehensive library will encourage students to do deeper reading and reflection beyond the bare requirements of class assignments.

7. Tempo of Learning

363. Theology is classically described as faith seeking understanding. In the course of theological studies, students may find their personal faith challenged. Personal faith should become richer and deeper through the struggle to understand. Only faith brought to the level of theological understanding can stand as a sure foundation for the kind of sound and effective preaching and teaching which is necessary in priestly ministry. Such learning requires time and has its own tempo. In planning the overall curriculum, the seminary faculty should consider the tempo of theological learning, that is, the time it takes the average student to learn, absorb, and appropriate the rich treasury of the Church's theological wisdom. The faculty should assist seminarians to integrate theological understanding and personal spirituality.

II. NORMS

364. Graduate theological studies require an appropriate and sound philosophical formation. Those requirements are stated in this document in the section on admissions.

365. The academic curriculum as a whole should have a discernible and coherent unity.

366. The curriculum must reflect the specialized nature of priestly formation and assist seminarians to develop a clear understanding of the ministerial priesthood.

367. Within all parts of the curriculum, clear reference should be made to the pastoral orientation of the seminary.

368. Courses addressing the basic or foundational aspects of the theological disciplines should be required.

369. In Scripture, the core should include Introduction to Old and New Testaments, Johannine Literature and the Synoptic Gospels, Pauline Epistles, Pentateuch, Psalms, Prophets, and Wisdom Literature.

370. In dogmatic theology, the core should include Fundamental Theology,¹⁶⁸ Theology of God, One and Three, Christology, Creation, the Fall and the Nature of Sin, Redemption, Grace and the Human Person, Ecclesiology, Sacraments, Eschatology, Mariology,¹⁶⁹ Missiology,¹⁷⁰ and the Theology of Priesthood.

371. In moral theology, the core should include Fundamental Moral Theology, Medical-Moral Ethics, Sexuality, and Social Ethics. The social teaching of the Church should be presented in its entirety with appropriate principles of reflection, criteria for judgment, and norms for action. The systematic study of the social encyclicals of the popes is especially recommended.¹⁷¹ The sacrament of penance should be treated from the point of view of both moral and systematic theology.

372. In historical studies, the core should include Patristics;¹⁷² Early, Medieval, Modern, and Contemporary Church History; and American Church History. American Church History should be taught in a way that reflects the multicultural origins of the Church in the United States. Among historical studies, the study of patristics is of special importance.

373. In canon law, the core should include a general introduction to canon law and the canon law of individual sacraments, especially marriage.¹⁷³

374. In spirituality, the core should include an Introduction to Spirituality, a selection of classic spiritual writers, and an Introduction to Spiritual Direction.

375. In liturgy, the core should include an Introduction to Liturgy and studies in the historical, spiritual, and juridical aspects of liturgy.¹⁷⁴

376. Liturgical practica should include the celebration of the Eucharist and the sacraments. Particular attention should be given to the sacrament of penance. Seminarians should be introduced to music and its role in liturgical celebration.

377. Homiletics should occupy a prominent place in the core curriculum and be integrated into the entire course of studies. In addition to the principles of biblical interpretation, catechesis, and communications theory, seminarians also should learn those practical skills needed to communicate the Gospel in an effective and appropriate manner.

378. During their study of ecumenism, seminarians should become well acquainted with the ecumenical teachings of the Church, especially *Lumen*

Gentium, Unitatis Redintegratio, Nostra Aetate, as well as *The Ecumenical Directory* and its guidelines. They should also be aware of the ecumenical and interfaith dialogues in which the Church participates, worldwide and in the United States.

379. Pastoral studies should include pastoral counseling and provide an introduction to initiation rites for adults and children.

380. A diversity of theologies is recognized within the Catholic tradition, yet in accord with Church teaching, the significance of St. Thomas Aquinas as the model and guide for study and research in theology should be recognized.¹⁷⁵

381. Throughout the academic curriculum, questions of theological methodology should be emphasized so that students learn to evaluate the strengths and limitations of various theological viewpoints.

382. All methodologies employed should be clear on the distinction and relation between truths revealed by God and contained in the deposit of faith, and their theological mode of expression.¹⁷⁶

383. The normative function of the magisterium should be presented as a vital, integral, and essential component of the theological enterprise.

384. In the various theological disciplines, attention should be given to the ecumenical and interfaith dimension of each area of study. A knowledge of the history and theology of other churches and religious bodies prominent in the region where the seminarians will serve as priests is particularly helpful.

385. Courses in all areas of study, especially in theology, history, and liturgy, should highlight the role and contribution of the Eastern churches.¹⁷⁷

386. Courses in the theology of other churches or religions may be profitably taught by members of those churches or religions.

387. Theological formation in seminaries should clearly respect traditional doctrinal formulations of the faith while exploring contemporary modes of theological expression and explanation. Undue attachments to older theological currents or hasty assimilation of new ones should be avoided.

388. Theological education for the priesthood should resist any tendency to reduce theology to a merely historical, sociological investigation or a study of comparative religions.

389. The entire academic program should make seminarians aware that they have a responsibility to continue their theological and pastoral education after ordination.

390. The theological curriculum, both in its planning and its execution, should address the unique needs of a multicultural society. The study of the Spanish language and Hispanic culture as well as other pastorally appropriate languages and cultures is essential for many dioceses. Methods of theologizing that reflect a multicultural perspective may be profitably pursued.

391. Throughout the curriculum the biblical, theological, ethical, and historical foundations for the Church's teaching on social justice should be highlighted.

392. Seminaries and study centers are encouraged to offer the bachelor of theology degree (S.T.B.) and the licentiate in theology degree (S.T.L.) either by affiliating with an ecclesiastical faculty or university or by special arrangement with the Congregation for Catholic Education. In some cases, candidates should be encouraged to pursue a licentiate in theology (S.T.L.) as a component of priestly formation.

393. Seminaries should have degree programs certified by appropriate accrediting agencies. Students should not be excused from pursuing such degrees except for very serious reasons.

394. As an essential resource for seminarians' life of study and reflection, the library collection of books and periodicals should be carefully maintained and appropriately expanded.

395. Contemporary techniques of instruction, the use of audiovisual materials, television, and computers, for example, should be encouraged.

396. Diocesan bishops and religious ordinaries should be encouraged to designate students who complete their basic program with honors for further study after sufficient pastoral experience.

ARTICLE FOUR

PASTORAL FORMATION

I. PASTORAL FORMATION PROGRAM

A. THE PASTORAL ORIENTATION OF SEMINARY EDUCATION

397. The Second Vatican Council Decree on the Training of Priests emphasizes the pastoral orientation of seminary education, stating that a pastoral concern "should characterize every feature of the students' training."¹⁷⁸ The goal of seminary formation is to prepare priests with a comprehensive pastoral outlook, ready to assume the pastoral duties which their service to the community requires. Pastoral service extends to all individuals and groups, including all social classes, with special concern for the poor and those alienated from society. "Pastoral formation certainly cannot be reduced to a mere apprenticeship, aiming to make the candidate familiar with some pastoral techniques. The seminary which educates must seek really and truly to initiate the candidate into the sensitivity of being a shepherd, in the conscious and mature assumption of his responsibilities, in the interior habit of evaluating problems and establishing priorities and looking for solutions on the basis of honest motivations of faith and according to the theological demands inherent in pastoral work."¹⁷⁹

B. THE GOALS OF FIELD EDUCATION

398. Within that context, theological field education embodies this general pastoral orientation in specific ways, which might be summarized in these terms: Active pastoral engagement stimulates students to continued learning. It introduces them to the sacramental and spiritual, the specifically priestly dimension of pastoral work, as an essential component of their future role. As seminarians perceive how theology and the tradition of the Church shed light on contemporary pastoral situations, they also acquire important practical skills. Through prayer and theological reflection, pastoral experience is integrated with personal life and academic education. Authentic pastoral formation is ecumenically and multiculturally sensitive, alert to questions of social justice and collaborative in nature. Finally, it helps seminarians appropriate their role as spiritual leaders and public persons in the Church. Theological field education "needs to be studied therefore as the true and genuine theological discipline that it is: pastoral or practical theology."¹⁸⁰

399. Theological field education promotes learning through active engagement in a pastoral situation. Seminary formation is enriched as seminarians learn to relate field education with academic and spiritual formation. Such an exchange does not take place automatically. Field education is an enterprise as complex and educational in nature as the classroom. The latter provides the necessary theoretical background for the priest on mission; the former acts as a laboratory for learning through practice.

400. Theological field education provides an opportunity for seminarians to exercise leadership in the Church and to learn the priestly dimension of pastoral ministry. Good role models are the best teachers, witnessing to ways in which active pastoral ministry can be combined with a life of prayer and Gospel simplicity. Working with priests and others who reflect the spirit of Christ reinforces a priestly vocation. Learning by example and identification, an aspect of education often used in other professions, is of great importance in the pastoral formation of seminarians.

401. Theological field education fosters an aptitude for continued learning and growth. By experientially teaching students not only what they know but what they do not know or understand, pastoral experience can make them more eager to learn and to grow spiritually. "Pastoral study and action direct one to an inner source, which the work of formation will take care to guard and make good use of: This is the **ever deeper communion with the pastoral charity of Jesus.**"¹⁸¹

402. In theological field education, reflection and integration are closely related. Theological reflection is critical for practical learning in a formational context. Students perceive how theology and the tradition of the Church shed light on the pastoral situations they experience. Theology is illumined in the process. Academic work and pastoral ministry come to reinforce one another. This mutual interaction also helps seminarians to sense the presence of God in these experiences and to relate their life in Christ to the service of God's people. Such learning can represent a significant moment of personal integration for seminarians as well.

403. Theological field education helps seminarians gain pastoral skills. Catechizing, counseling, and group skills may depend on native talent, but they also can be taught. The communication of such practical skills represents a significant value in seminary education.

404. Theological field education fosters general integration in the formational process. The field-education program can be an integrating factor in seminary education by forging a close link between ministerial, academic, and spiritual formation. Students begin to grasp more clearly the significance of what they have learned in the classroom and to recognize their need for prayer. This process helps them to come to terms with the meaning of their own faith.

405. Theological field education provides opportunities for ecumenical and interreligious cooperation. Pastoral formation lends itself to such cooperation, which is a significant dimension of all priestly formation. Supervised field experience provides fertile soil for building practical sensitivity to Judaism, other Christian churches, and other world religions.

406. Pastoral assignments of many kinds provide natural, firsthand introductions to the multicultural apostolate of the Church in many parts of the United States and so to the future ministry of many priests.

407. Theological field education can engender a sensitivity for justice, peace, and the integrity of human life. Social ministry offers opportunities for work in disadvantaged areas with marginalized groups: immigrants, migrants, refugees, the sick, the aged, and the poor.¹⁸² The study of social legislation concerning civil rights, health, education, and welfare provides additional opportunities. This aspect of priestly formation should encourage and facilitate seminarians' service of and concern for the poor and vulnerable, an essential dimension of Catholic faith and priestly ministry.

408. Theological field education provides an opportunity for collaboration. The field-education program introduces students to the experience of working with all who share responsibility for ministry in the Church. This helps students develop an understanding and appreciation of the role of all ecclesial ministries. As a result, they come to appreciate their own leadership role in relation to those with whom they will one day collaborate.

C. ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAM

409. Evangelization; Catholic schools; catechetics; religious education; youth ministry; social justice; rural ministry; ecumenism; the care of the sick, elderly, and dying; as well as ministry in varied cultural settings indicate the breadth of experiences to which seminarians may be exposed in the course of their field-education program.

Emphasis on Parish Ministry ●

410. Among the diverse field-education experiences, parish ministry occupies pride of place.¹⁸³ The parish is where many newly ordained priests, certainly most diocesan priests, encounter their first sustained experience of ordained ministry. The parish is also the center of pastoral ministry in a diocese and an important work for many religious. It is natural that parish ministry is a particular focus of attention in field education.

411. Parish ministry will be an important factor in the lives of many religious. It is necessary that a portion of field education for religious include parish ministry. Such field experience should include attention to the relation of the parish and the parish priest to the diocesan bishop.

412. A field-education program systematically introduces candidates for the priesthood into varied pastoral experiences and equips them with the practical skills for ordained ministry.

Education and Supervision

413. To ensure that all pastoral experiences are truly educational, the individual parts of the field-education program must be closely integrated. The program should be carefully coordinated with the academic and formational dimensions of seminary education.

414. The director of field education assists the rector or another priest in the apostolic formation of seminarians. Because of the specifically spiritual and sacramental dimension of priestly ministry, it is important that the rector or a priest who has solid experience of pastoral ministry provide an overall vision for the direction of the field-education program, especially for theological reflection.

415. Within this context, the director of field education administers and coordinates the program of field education of seminarians and thus should be knowledgeable in theology and supervisory techniques. The director must have had parish experience and should be familiar with clinical pastoral education. The director should also be familiar with the value and practice of theological reflection and be capable of explaining its goals, objectives, and methods to faculty and students.

416. An important task of a director of field education is the development of supervisory skills on the part of those who oversee on-site the pastoral

assignments of seminarians. Supervisory skills cannot be presumed, and teaching them is a high priority of a field-education program. Good supervision guarantees that pastoral experience remains systematically educative and formational.

417. The director of field education may invite members of the academic faculty, according to their respective disciplines as well as their personal gifts and interests, to become involved in the pastoral program, for example in theological reflection or in addressing social justice concerns.

Programs of Field Education

418. The field-education program may operate concurrently with the regular academic and formational programs of the seminary, or it may be organized around intensified periods of supervised ministry.

Concurrent Program

419. The concurrent program of field education allows students gradually to move from one level of field education to another while participating in regular theological reflection at the seminary. It also allows them to see the importance of their theological studies as reflected in the experience of the field-education placement. Concurrent models are effective when the academic program and the field-education program are closely linked in the total seminary curriculum.

Pastoral Internship

420. The pastoral internship is a full-time residency internship in a diocesan or religious parish. The seminary may administer the internship, which is directed by an on-site trained pastoral supervisor who has demonstrated competency in parochial ministry, loves the Church, and has an appreciation of and respect for the priesthood.

421. At the same time, the pastoral internship provides those charged with priestly formation the opportunity to observe seminarians' on-site performance in a live-in ministry situation. It also offers a timely opportunity for guidance and formation at a critical learning moment.

422. Because a certain academic, pastoral, and spiritual background is required for an effective pastoral internship, it ordinarily is scheduled around the midpoint of students' preparation for the priesthood.

423. Ministerial experience should be broad based and, insofar as possible, represent the ministry of the priest. The experience of a pastoral internship offers seminarians a valuable opportunity to test their vocation in a context similar to their future ministry. It also manifests the needs and resources of the local church and introduces them to the local presbyterate.

424. In addition to the evaluation by the on-site pastoral supervisor, the observations of those who served alongside interns and those who were served by them, including the laity of the parish, should be sought.

Summer Placements

425. Many dioceses place seminarians in parish or other settings of ministry during the summer months. To realize the full benefit of summer placements as part of the field-education program, the seminary field-education director should collaborate with the appropriate diocesan or religious officials. Guidelines, resource material, evaluations, and general direction may be provided by the seminary to help monitor such experiences. Balanced and accurate diocesan evaluations from supervisors and others in the pastoral placement are important for the seminary.

Transitional Diaconate

426. As the Decree on the Training of Priests has declared, it is the responsibility of the diocesan bishop or religious ordinary to decide whether it is opportune that candidates exercise the ministry of deacon for a fitting period of time before being called to the priesthood.¹⁸⁴

427. During this transitional period, deacons, under the guidance of a pastor, should begin the practice of the ordained ministry. Normally the field-education department will cooperate with the diocesan or religious personnel in the supervision of deacon internships, which should follow the prescriptions of the *Code of Canon Law*.

Clinical Pastoral Experience

428. Many seminaries encourage or require participation in a supervised and accredited clinical pastoral experience, usually in a hospital setting. Such programs are certified by national agencies and are sometimes required for the Master of Divinity degree. Participation in the clinical pastoral program is usually scheduled during the summer. Enrollment in specific programs should have the approval of the diocese or religious

institute or society and the seminary. It is the responsibility of the diocesan bishop, religious ordinary, and the rector to ensure that the Catholic, sacramental dimension of pastoral care is integral to all such programs in which seminarians participate. The focus on preparation for priestly ministry should be clear. Clinical pastoral education should enhance the sacramental, pastoral dimension of ministry, not substitute for it.

II. NORMS

429. Every seminary is required to offer a coordinated program of supervised field education and is responsible for the direction of pastoral education of seminarians.

430. The field-education program should be an integral part of the seminary curriculum and accredited as such.

431. The goals and objectives of the field-education program should be clearly stated and serve as the basis for the evaluation of seminarians in this area.

432. The director or administrator of the field-education program should have faculty rank and possess the requisite parochial experience and professional expertise. The director should model a love for priestly ministry in the Church.

433. The field-education program should provide diocesan seminarians with a broad exposure to supervised pastoral service, with primary emphasis on parish ministry.

434. Determinations about the concurrent or intensive residency program should be made by the seminary in collaboration with the dioceses or religious institutes or societies which it serves.

435. Supervision, theological reflection, and evaluation are necessary components of an effective pastoral program.

436. On-site supervisors should be carefully selected with an eye to their dedication to the Church and respect for the priesthood and should be taught the skills of pastoral supervision and evaluation.

437. In addition to on-site supervisors, others collaborating in the various ministries, as well as those served, should be asked to participate in the evaluation of seminarians in ministry.

438. The field-education program may provide the seminarians with ecumenical and interreligious programs of social action and outreach to the poor.¹⁸⁵

439. The program should include placements in which seminarians will experience the richness and diversity of the various cultural, racial, and ethnic groups that comprise the Church in the United States. Such placements also can provide opportunities to sharpen language skills.

440. The field-education program of whatever model should pay attention to the seminarians' need to root a life of service in personal prayer. Seminarians need supervision in developing the habit of prayer in the context of pastoral activity and in learning to establish a rhythm of life that provides an appropriate balance of service, study, exercise, and leisure. Evaluation of seminarians in ministerial placements should include observations and accountability in these areas.