

CHAPTER TWO

PATHS TO THE THEOLOGATE

ARTICLE ONE

HIGH SCHOOL SEMINARY AND RELATED PROGRAMS

I. MISSION AND MODELS

94. "As long experience shows, a priestly vocation tends to show itself in the preadolescent years or in the earliest years of youth."¹⁰⁴ This initial awakening is a gift from God that asks a young man to recognize in a general way that the priesthood is a realistic possibility for him in the future. Accordingly, he places himself at the disposal of God's grace and enters a program of priestly formation provided by the local church. Such a decision deserves the support of family and friends, of priests and religious. The early support of a priestly calling is especially important in order to foster vocations in the multicultural context of the Church in the United States.

95. This initial awakening of a vocation requires organized programs of assistance and support. Diocesan bishops and religious ordinaries should make every effort to encourage young men of high school age to study for the priesthood. This is especially true of students of Catholic high schools. Once encouraged, the seed of a vocation must be appropriately nourished by programs of spiritual and academic formation attuned to the needs of the adolescent. These programs provide an opportunity to the seminarians for mutual peer support, which is particularly important for adolescents. The goal is a realistic vocational decision and, it is hoped, eventual readiness for theological study and seminary formation.

96. Because of the diversity of local churches and religious institutes or societies and their resources, different types of programs are available to aid and support a priestly vocation in its initial stages: the freestanding boarding school, the freestanding day school, the collaborative high school, an associate program, and vocation clubs. Such programs share a common goal. In collaboration with the family, they aim to help a young man make an informed decision about the next stage of his vocational development.

II. HIGH SCHOOL SEMINARY PROGRAMS

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

97. The heart of a high school seminary program is its program of spiritual formation and day-to-day contact with dedicated priests.¹⁰⁵ Such a program introduces the student to concrete ways of following Christ. In doing so, it presents the essence of a priestly vocation. A clear perception of discipleship guarantees right vocational discernment and appropriate commitment on the part of the high school student. By setting the right tone and perspective, this spiritual focus should permeate all phases of the high-school-level seminary program.

98. A well-designed high-school-level program based on sound principles of spirituality and psychology will introduce young men in a deeper way to the person of Jesus Christ through the Word of God, the sacramental life of the Church and prayer. The program will assist them to grow in the life of faith. Fundamental to this growth is a realization of the call and commitment contained in the sacraments of baptism and confirmation.

99. A program of spiritual formation should focus on the community of candidates and on the individual and should support the first stages of a vocation by teaching young men the most authentic way to follow Christ. A competent counselor and spiritual director should aid students to integrate the various components of their high school experience.

100. The high school seminary continues the process of mature personality development appropriate to the young men's age level. At the same time, in a unique way it helps them to grow in an understanding of vocation and priesthood by study and by seeing good priestly role models. Through conferences and workshops, the high school seminary should make explicit the Church's doctrinal understanding of the ministerial priesthood on which its programs are based.¹⁰⁶

101. A program of spiritual formation on the high school level centers on the liturgy, above all the Eucharist. It focuses on programs directed to the community of candidates as well as the individual student. Such programs should help a young man in the first stages of vocational discernment to learn what it means to follow Christ.

NORMS

102. Only students who express a sincere desire to explore their interest in the priesthood should be invited to join high school seminary programs.

103. The Eucharist should be the primary focus of every high school seminary program. Students should attend the Eucharist daily.

104. Religion teachers and religion classes must be of high quality, providing an academic foundation for the life of faith.

105. The sacrament of penance must represent a high priority and an essential part of the spiritual life program.

106. The value of chaste living should be presented to students in a positive light as an important element in an authentic Christian way of life.

107. Spiritual direction, appropriate to the maturity of high school students, is essential.

108. Well-prepared retreats and periods of recollection should be provided.

109. 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.

110. Programs for parents, primary teachers, and supporters of a priestly vocation should be provided.

111. Qualified priests under the direction of the rector or director should coordinate the program of spiritual formation. In addition to a sound theological understanding, these priests should have a grasp of adolescent development.

INTELLECTUAL FORMATION

112. A good high school education is a value in itself and an important step in the development of a priestly vocation. The goal of a high-school-level seminary program should be a well-rounded secondary education as a preparation for college. Such formation must present the best available academic program, taking into consideration the needs of the student and the multicultural character of today's Church. It should combine creativity, sound pedagogy, and a concern for academic standards.

113. A good high school education should meet the educational requirements of local and state accreditation agencies. In addition, a high school seminary program should strive for excellence and take the necessary steps for students to achieve it. Good teachers; well-prepared courses; a coherent, well-planned curriculum, which provides remedial courses when necessary, are all elements that comprise a good high school education.

114. The academic program of a high school seminary should be sensitive to the multicultural character of its student body.

NORMS

115. A well-organized and comprehensive academic curriculum, staffed by competent teachers, is essential.

116. Proper resources and adequate facilities for students and faculty to achieve the ends of sound secondary education should be provided.

117. The linguistic and cultural situation of the students must be considered in planning and executing the curriculum.

118. The program should provide for the special needs of students of varied racial and ethnic heritages.

119. The study of Latin and Greek represents a valuable component in a serious high school education and is recommended. The study of modern languages, especially Spanish, is also recommended.

120. Academic counseling should be provided in light of college seminary requirements and entrance prerequisites.

PASTORAL FORMATION

121. The high school seminary program provides the environment which helps candidates to develop the natural virtues needed by people to work well with others; it should also foster a disposition to service. The goal is good human interaction and the beginnings of Christian dedication.

122. This goal is achieved in a general way when students involve themselves in athletics and extracurricular activities. More specifically, it is achieved by providing opportunities for Christian service. Such experiences help to develop confidence, communications skills, leadership potential, and the ability to interact better with peers and adults. Appropriate to the maturity of students, a sensitivity to issues of peace, justice, and respect for life should be fostered in apostolic formation.

NORMS

123. Christian service projects should be provided according to a student's level of maturity in order to develop a capacity for generous self-giving.

124. Student government, yearbook, newspaper, drama, speech and debate, intramural and interscholastic sports should be encouraged.

COMMUNITY LIFE

125. A vocation is always vitally connected to the life of a community. The high school experience provides an important introduction to the meaning of community, entailing individual growth through group interaction. High school represents a significant moment in the development of young men's personalities. Give-and-take with fellow students teaches social skills and collaboration, helping students become more mature persons. Sound interpersonal relations are connected to a secure sense of identity and healthy personal development. Well-rounded adolescent development also includes wholesome, appropriate, and chaste relationships with women, including young women their own age. All are crucial at this stage in young men's lives.

126. High school candidates for the priesthood benefit from interaction with a wide range of people. They need good priest and seminarian role models. They also need the support of family, teachers, and peers. A breadth of experience helps students to increase their capacity to relate to others. It can also help them gauge their ability to love others without becoming exclusive and so appraise their capacity for a priestly lifestyle. In turn, such experiences enable them to make a better choice about the priesthood as a vocation to which God may be calling them. High school seminary formation should be aware of the distinctive ways in which such interaction may affect students of diverse racial and ethnic heritages.

NORMS

127. High-school-level students should participate in parish activities and volunteer for service on a regular basis.

128. High-school-level students are encouraged to participate in parochial, deanery, and diocesan youth programs and activities, for example, Teens Encounter Christ (T.E.C.), Catholic Youth Council (C.Y.C.) and Catholic Youth Organization (C.Y.O.) programs.

129. Working with younger children at the parish level should be seen as a way of service and a way to foster vocations among the next generation.

130. Participation in civic and cultural activities is important for the student's development.

ARTICLE TWO

COLLEGE SEMINARY AND RELATED PROGRAMS

I. MISSION AND MODELS

131. The primary mission of college seminary formation is "to protect and develop the seeds of a priestly vocation, so that the students may more easily recognize it and be in a better position to respond to it. The educational goal of (college) seminaries tends to favor in a timely and gradual way the human, cultural, and spiritual formation which will lead the young person to embark on the path of the major seminary with an adequate and solid foundation."¹⁰⁷

132. Candidates entering college seminaries and related programs are increasingly diverse in age, experience, and religious training. Because candidates come from a variety of backgrounds and have mixed talents and abilities, college programs should strive for flexibility in order to meet students' needs, particularly in the areas of Catholic tradition and personal growth. Programs also should strive to be thorough and comprehensive in the education they provide.

133. The college formation program not only prepares students in philosophy and the liberal arts, but also brings to maturity their understanding of the faith, assisting them to develop a spirituality consistent with a priestly vocation. Accordingly, daily Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Hours, sacramental reconciliation, community and personal prayer, rector's conferences, days of recollection and retreats, intellectual and pastoral formation, and community life are essential components of college seminary formation. Catholic devotions based upon the liturgical calendar should be integrated in the regular calendar.

134. Each program is under the direction of a rector and has a spiritual director.¹⁰⁸ Each program should have a sufficient quorum of students to guarantee effective educational programs and a balanced formational community.

135. College seminaries are either freestanding or collaborative institutions. Sponsored by a diocese or religious institute or society, the freestanding model provides within one institution an entire and integral college-level program of human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation in a community setting with a sufficient number of students and appropriately trained staff. Within higher education in the United States, the freestanding seminary functions as an undergraduate institution.

136. The collaborative model provides one or more parts of the seminary program from its own resources while other dimensions, such as the academic, are provided by other institutions. There are many forms of affiliation and a variety of collaborative models.

137. In all collaborative models, it is the responsibility of the seminary to ensure the integration of the various components of the program. The goals of the seminary in the areas of philosophy and undergraduate theology should also be closely monitored, and the legitimate rights of diocesan bishops and religious ordinaries should be recognized.

138. College programs may also be classified canonically as diocesan (established by a single diocese, a province, or a larger grouping) or religious (established by a single institute or a group of institutes).

139. There are also college-level programs at houses of formation, houses of discernment, or residences led by qualified and competent priests. Such programs offer priestly formation and are sometimes linked to institutions that offer academic courses. They are considered to be college seminaries when they fulfill the requirements of the *Code of Canon Law* and the *Program of Priestly Formation*.

II. THE COLLEGE SEMINARY PROGRAM

A. SPIRITUAL FORMATION

140. The program of spiritual formation should be specifically adapted to the needs and aspirations of college-level candidates for the priesthood. Building on an understanding of the implications of the sacraments of baptism and confirmation, such programs should prepare men to accept the call to priesthood as mature persons.

141. Formed by the Word of God, all seminarians must endeavor to enter more deeply into the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection.¹⁰⁹ With a sense of genuine penance, they should learn the meaning of

discipleship from Mary, the mother of Jesus.¹¹⁰ In this way, college seminarians will begin to understand and experience their vocation to serve God as priests.

142. The spiritual life of the community should center on the daily celebration of the Eucharist carefully prepared according to the liturgical year. Daily community Morning and Evening Prayer complement the Eucharist and lead seminarians to an appreciation of the Liturgy of the Hours. The sacrament of penance as a source of continual conversion should be celebrated frequently, and opportunities for individual celebration of the sacrament should be available and appropriately encouraged by spiritual directors. A rhythm of public and private prayer is the single most important element in establishing a college seminary program as a formative environment.

143. A college-level program of spiritual formation should provide instruction, especially for entering students, on the meaning and value of moments of public liturgical prayer. Special instruction on the sacrament of penance is particularly important.

144. With prayer as its center, spiritual formation on the college level includes regular rector's conferences, frequent days of recollection, yearly retreats, and workshops adapted to the students' needs and capacities. Such activities are important to the life of the seminary community and the personal growth of individual seminarians. Rector's conferences are especially helpful in aiding students to interpret rightly their life in common, their vocation as seminarians, and the human and spiritual values they strive to appropriate. All programs of spiritual formation seek to promote balanced human and spiritual growth. They should neither overtax nor underestimate the abilities of college students.

145. Spiritual direction is especially important for college-level seminarians, providing personal guidance in their growth in the faith. Spiritual directors should be trained for the work of spiritual direction and be priests of piety and sound judgment.

146. In a particular way, college-level students should grow in their capacity for personal prayer. College seminary students should be introduced to the forms and methods of personal prayer that have developed over the centuries. They should also be led to appreciate the value of silence and recollection appropriate for prayer, study, and thoughtful personal

growth. In all these matters, those new to the seminary deserve particular attention and instruction.

147. A clear focus on ordained priestly ministry assists the process of discernment proper to college students. The priesthood should be proposed as a vocation which can bring candidates to full human and spiritual potential through love of God and service to others. Through courses, workshops, and rector's conferences, the college seminary should make explicit the Church's doctrinal understanding of the ministerial priesthood on which its programs are based.¹¹¹

148. The program of spiritual formation should carefully present the topic of celibacy in the context of the evangelical counsels. It is important that programs of formation help students to appropriate a positive understanding of celibacy. Advice given in spiritual direction should accord with public presentations on the topic. Above all, the positive value of celibate living must be presented to college-level students in ways that make sense and are cogent to men of their age and situation. Priests involved in students' formation should be models of chaste celibacy.

149. It is equally important that the rector make clear to the seminary community the concrete expectations of celibate living and the kinds of behaviors which are wrong and inappropriate for college seminarians.

150. The formation of college students should include a healthy balance of physical exercise, study, and leisure; college students should develop discerning habits in regard to reading, television viewing, movie going, and other forms of entertainment.¹¹²

NORMS

151. Each institution should have a rule of life approved by the diocesan bishop or religious ordinary in which the expectations of the program of spiritual formation are clearly stated.

152. There should be a daily celebration of the Eucharist in which every member of the community ordinarily participates. The laws and prescriptions of approved liturgical books are normative.

153. The Liturgy of the Hours, especially Morning and Evening Prayer, should be celebrated daily.

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

155. Catechesis should be given concerning the meaning and proper celebration of the Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Hours, and especially the sacrament of penance.

156. Communal celebration of the sacrament of penance should be scheduled at least seasonally. Frequent opportunities for individual celebration of the sacrament should be provided and encouraged.

157. Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and the word of God should be especially fostered in the life of the seminary because it is essential to the life of seminarians and of future priests.

158. Devotion to Mary, the Mother of God, and to the saints should be encouraged.

159. The spiritual formation program should be sensitive to and encouraging of the legitimate and valuable cultural and ethnic devotions of students.

160. The Christian practices of fasting, almsgiving, and self-sacrifice should be encouraged in a manner appropriate for college students.

161. Each seminarian must meet regularly with a priest spiritual director who is 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.¹¹³

B. INTELLECTUAL FORMATION

Liberal Arts

162. A sound liberal arts education for candidates preparing for the priesthood possesses multiple benefits. The study of the natural world and of humanity in all its historical and cultural diversity represents a significant value in its own right. Such an education encourages intellectual curiosity, promotes critical thought, and fosters disciplined habits of study. A liberal arts education also teaches students to communicate with others in a clear and articulate way.

163. A liberal arts education gives students some introduction into the wider range of human learning. Accordingly, studies in mathematics and natural science; in the social and behavioral sciences; in history, literature, communication skills; and the fine arts should be included in the curriculum.

164. A liberal education also has a special value as a preparation for the study of theology. The liberal arts have traditionally provided college-level candidates with an understanding of the cultural roots of their faith. By understanding the human sciences, they can better comprehend the world in which God's spirit acts. By grasping how faith and culture have interacted in the past, they gain some insight into the working of God's plan in larger historical events.

165. The curriculum should also strive to take into consideration contemporary issues of the day in intellectual, cultural, social, and political life as they pertain to moral and religious topics. Such an approach stimulates students to deeper study by building on current knowledge and present interests. The authentic teaching of the Church on such issues should be clearly and cogently presented. The curriculum should introduce students to the basic teachings of the faith as well as to the richness and diversity of the Catholic intellectual tradition.

166. A liberal arts education normally involves a field of concentrated study. Philosophy has been considered the most appropriate area of concentration for college seminarians. Every seminary should offer philosophy as a major field of study. Other liberal arts may be appropriate fields of concentration for some students. The choice of another major should be evaluated on an individual basis.

Philosophy

167. Catholic education for the priesthood has traditionally placed a strong emphasis on a sound grasp of philosophy.¹¹⁴ "A proper philosophical training is vital, not only because of the links between the great philosophical questions and the mysteries of salvation which are studied in theology under the guidance of the light of faith, but also vis-à-vis an extremely widespread cultural situation which emphasizes subjectivism as a criterion and measure of truth: Only a sound philosophy can help candidates for the priesthood to develop a reflective awareness of the fundamental relationship that exists between the human spirit and truth, that truth which is revealed to us fully in Jesus Christ."¹¹⁵

168. Methodologically, the study of philosophy aids students in developing their own powers of clear critical thought and analysis. Substantively, students should be confronted with the epistemological and ontological presuppositions of faith and human knowledge. Positively, they should be brought to a coherent vision of reality, recognizing "human reason's ability to attain truth . . . as well as its metaphysical capacity to come to a knowledge of God from creation."¹¹⁶ Negatively, they should become critically aware of those philosophical tenets that limit or deny the role of revelation. Philosophy also has a value as an interdisciplinary and integrative discipline, helping students to grasp their entire course of studies synoptically, relating those studies to a deeper understanding of themselves and human culture.

169. Therefore, a philosophy program should be balanced, comprehensive, integrated, and coherent. It should include studies in metaphysics, anthropology, natural theology, epistemology, ethics, and logic. It should also include substantial studies in the history of philosophy treating ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary philosophy. Some treatment of American philosophy or social thought is also helpful for seminarians in understanding the dynamics of contemporary society in the United States. The philosophy of St. Thomas should be given the recognition that Church teaching accords it.¹¹⁷

Undergraduate Theology

170. College-level seminarians also should begin the study of theology. Undergraduate courses in theology should focus on the fundamental beliefs and practices of the Catholic faith. In particular, they should concentrate on those elements of the faith which may have been overlooked or neglected in the students' religious education and which stand as a presupposition for all forms of graduate theological study. From the start, students should relate theology to the larger mission of the Church in the public sphere. College-level theology courses are intended as a preparation for studies in the theologate, not as a replacement for them.

171. The undergraduate theology program should include introductions to biblical revelation, doctrine, church history, liturgy, spirituality, and Christian ethics. An appreciation of the role of religion in literature and in the arts as well as an understanding of world religions may be helpful. Students should also begin their study of the Church's teaching on ecumenism and interfaith relations.

NORMS

172. College seminarians should normally achieve a bachelor of arts degree from an accredited college.

173. Educational standards should not be so rigid or restrictive as to close the door to candidates who are lacking in some dimension of the required educational background because of cultural background or social class. Remedial help should be provided such students so that their academic deficiencies gradually may be overcome.

174. A college seminary program must offer courses in philosophy and undergraduate theology or provide for them at a Catholic college or university which possesses a complete curriculum of philosophical and theological studies.

175. Sound philosophical formation requires 24 semester credit hours.¹¹⁸ A minimum of 12 semester credit hours should be required in appropriate courses of undergraduate theology.

176. Programs which utilize colleges and universities for philosophy and theological studies should carefully and consistently monitor the content and quality of those courses.

177. College seminaries are encouraged to offer the bachelor of philosophy degree (Ph.B.) either by affiliating with an ecclesiastical faculty or university or by special arrangement with the Congregation for Catholic Education.

178. The curriculum of studies of college seminarians should include a grounding in the liberal arts and sciences, with special attention to classical and foreign languages. The study of Latin and the biblical languages is foundational and should be given the emphasis that church teaching accords it.¹¹⁹ The study of the Spanish language and Hispanic culture, as well as other pastorally appropriate languages and cultures, is recommended. In some cases, English as a Second Language (ESL) may form an important part of the program.

179. Excellence in education at the college level demands access to a strong library, as required by accrediting agencies.

C. PASTORAL FORMATION

180. Pastoral formation, normally termed apostolic formation on the college level, comprises, together with spiritual and academic formation, a necessary component of a college seminary program.¹²⁰

181. The apostolic program should provide students with experiences of service that will promote their growth as mature persons and as active Catholics. It achieves this goal in a particular way by exposing college students to authentic experiences of Gospel living. At the college level, apostolic experience is in its initial stages. Sacramentally it flows from baptism, confirmation, and the Eucharist. Therefore its emphasis is on Christian service as basic preparation for priestly ministry.

182. College apostolic experience should acquaint seminarians with the challenges of ordinary life which, in turn, call them to Christian service. In achieving this goal, the seminary may want to provide a broad introduction to varied situations in society, especially the condition of minorities, the underprivileged, and the homeless. Education, family, health, and youth opportunities present additional apostolates for college students.

183. An acquaintance with the rich diversity of the Church's ethnic and racial life is also very important. The structure of apostolic programs may also take into consideration the social and geographic situation of the particular seminary with an eye to the apostolic needs of the region.

184. While beginning apostolic experience should involve an element of choice by students, a variety of service experiences often proves more helpful than an intense introduction to any one apostolic activity. In general, apostolic placements should progress from simpler experience with limited objectives for beginners to more complex involvements for experienced students. There should always be on-site supervision and evaluation.

185. Apostolic programs should help students gain an increased, practical sensitivity to Judaism, other Christian churches, and other religions, especially those which play a prominent role in the life of the local church.

NORMS

186. Students should be expected to participate in supervised apostolic activities during college seminary formation.

187. The apostolic program should be entrusted to a director with faculty status who has the responsibility for developing the program and evaluating the performance of the students.

188. Regular reports should be given to the faculty on the students' progress in their apostolic experiences.

189. The participation of other faculty members in the apostolic activities of the students is encouraged.

190. Seminarians should be encouraged to see the relationship of apostolic service to prayer, community life, spiritual formation, and the academic program of the seminary.

D. COMMUNITY LIFE

191. The seminary is first a community of prayer whose communion with the Lord calls forth from its members those qualities of openness, self-sacrifice, and charity that are necessary for successful priestly formation on the college level. The source and sign of its unity is the liturgy, especially daily Eucharist. Enlivened by the Eucharist, the seminary community, composed of faculty and students, should reflect those values that characterize a community of faith.

192. Consequently the experience of a seminary community will play a significant role in the personal and spiritual growth of college seminarians. The give-and-take between those who share the priesthood as a common vocation sets the right context for formation. Such interaction provides mutual support, promotes tolerance and fraternal correction, and provides an opportunity for the development of leadership and talent among seminarians.

193. College seminarians are men of varying ages who are seeking to develop a positive sense of personal and vocational identity and, at the same time, to form mature relationships, appropriate to those preparing for a commitment to celibacy, with a variety of other persons both in and outside the seminary community. Bringing together individuals of varied talents, temperaments, and backgrounds, including those whose faith experience has been formed through various renewal movements, the community should not stifle healthy differences but create a climate for mutual respect, communication, and collaboration.

194. The presence of seminarians and faculty members of different ethnic and racial backgrounds provides opportunities for the mutual enrichment of all members of the seminary community, which must be taken into consideration in every dimension of the common life.

195. The priest members of the faculty form an important subgroup within the seminary community. Seminarians need the example of outstanding priests who model a wholesome way of life in the challenging circumstances of contemporary society. Regular meetings, opportunities for prayer, and recreation of priest faculty encourage the growth of fraternity and enable priests to act more effectively as authentic role models.

196. The entire seminary staff, composed of priests, religious, and laity, comprises another significant group. Ways to foster the unity of this larger circle should also be developed.

197. The college seminary community touches and is touched by other larger communities. This is especially true of the academic institutions to which collaborative seminaries are connected. Seminarians should be encouraged to participate in all appropriate ways in their activities.

198. The community is the context in which seminarians develop basic skills in interpersonal relations, especially, in ways to make and keep good friends. Seminary faculty provide the guidance and direction necessary to help seminarians meet the challenge of emotional and psychosexual growth. In the area of emotional and personal development, the best guidance the seminary faculty can give is the wholesome witness of their own lives.

199. A rule of life is necessary to regulate day-to-day living and to articulate the common values that give a community integrity and purpose. A rule of life should address the essentials of community living while avoiding that excess of detail which stifles individual initiative or talent. The rule of life should provide a clear statement of the behavioral expectations of college seminarians pursuing a priestly vocation. It should also seek to strike a balance between freedom, responsibility, and accountability.

200. As seminarians advance in their training they should be given more opportunity to exercise responsibility and freedom. At the same time, they should understand that accountability is always part of the exercise of

freedom. Seminarians should be encouraged to appreciate the necessary role that authority and organization play in achieving and maintaining a community's goals and purposes, and to recognize the spiritual dimension of authority and obedience in the Christian community.

201. In implementing the goals of the seminary, students should be involved according to their maturity and competency. Effective understanding and collaboration in carrying out decisions can best be achieved by appropriate student participation in decision making. Shared responsibility and teamwork are values which the life of the seminary community should model and foster.

NORMS

202. A rule of life based on the *Program of Priestly Formation* and approved by the appropriate ecclesiastical authority should establish the basic patterns and expectations of community living.

203. The rule of life should foster an atmosphere which balances freedom, responsibility, and accountability.

204. Each seminary should publish its rule of life in a student handbook which sets forth all important points of discipline that affect student conduct and behavior.

205. Although the administration and faculty possess ultimate responsibility, students should be consulted in decision-making processes appropriate to their level of maturity and experience.

206. The expectations and procedures of the evaluation process should be set forth in detail in the student handbook and explained clearly to the student body by the rector or his delegate each year.

207. Clear and prudent guidelines are necessary for fostering the personal, emotional, and psychosexual development of seminarians in the context of a wholesome community.

ADMINISTRATION, ADMISSION, AND EVALUATION

208. For administration, admission, and evaluation, see Chapters Four and Five of this document.

ARTICLE THREE

PRE-THEOLOGY FORMATION

I. MISSION AND MODELS

209. "The purpose and specific educational form of the major seminary demand that candidates for the priesthood have a certain prior preparation before entering it."¹²¹ Because candidates for the priesthood are increasingly diverse in age, cultural background, religious heritage and personal experience, they often need additional preparation before beginning theological studies. Such factors require that candidates for pre-theology should follow a careful and thorough admissions process equivalent to the entrance procedure for the theologate as described in Chapter Five.

210. The pre-theologate should provide a coordinated program that supplements the needs of candidates in five principal areas: human and spiritual growth, intellectual and pastoral formation, and community living. While participating in a spiritual formation program, which fosters human growth and sets the basis of personal spirituality, pre-theology candidates complete the academic and pastoral prerequisites for theological studies. The experience of community life with others pursuing a priestly vocation rounds off the complex task of pre-theology formation.

211. All parts of pre-theological formation converge on a common goal: enabling candidates to reach an appropriate level of readiness to participate fruitfully and successfully in priestly formation at the theologate level. Pre-theological preparation must therefore be closely "coordinated with the subsequent years of formation offered by the seminary."¹²²

212. Pre-theology programs are called by a variety of other names: propaedeutic year, spiritual internship, introduction to seminary life, etc. Some are located at theologates or at theological unions, others at free-standing or collaborative college seminaries, still others at houses of formation or residences connected with a college or university. Some provide the entire program within the seminary, others only part. The *Program of Priestly Formation* describes the prerequisites all such programs should possess. Pre-theology is the descriptive term used in this document to refer to these programs.

213. Each program is to be under the direction of a priest appointed by the diocesan bishop, religious ordinary, or the rector of the sponsoring institu-

tion and is to have a sufficient quorum of students to guarantee an adequate formational and educational community. Programs are to be based on a pattern of communal and personal prayer, daily Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Hours, study, apostolic service, recreation, and other community activities.

214. If a person has no previous preparation for priesthood in a formation program, the pre-theology program normally will extend over a two-year period. In determining how this standard applies in individual cases, the seminary should examine carefully the background of individual candidates. Because seminarians come with a variety of academic, cultural, personal, and spiritual backgrounds and abilities, pre-theology programs must be flexibly adapted to meet their needs.

II. PRE-THEOLOGY PROGRAM

A. SPIRITUAL FORMATION

215. The program of spiritual formation should follow a well-ordered pattern of personal and communal prayer.¹²³ The daily celebration of the Eucharist is the center of community life. The celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, especially daily Morning and Evening Prayer, is its complement. Rector's conferences, days of recollection, workshops, and retreats complete the programmatic events of the spiritual formation program. All of these elements together comprise facets of a single, coherent, and well-ordered program.

216. Such a program of spiritual formation establishes a tone and creates an atmosphere which help individual candidates to develop their personal prayer life and their spirituality. The aim is to aid candidates to reach the stage where they can profitably participate in priestly formation at the theologate level. Individual spiritual direction will play an important role in the growth of pre-theology students. Spiritual directors should be trained for the work of spiritual direction and be priests of piety and sound judgment.

217. The spiritual formation program should carefully introduce candidates to the Catholic heritage of prayer, devotion, and spiritual practice. Through focused study and the practice of spiritual exercises, the students will be helped to build on the background they bring to the seminary. To the degree possible, the program of spiritual formation should take into account the differing developmental, cultural, and personal needs of students.

218. The program should help candidates to discern their vocation to the priesthood. Through courses, workshops, and rector's conferences, the pre-theology program should make explicit the Church's doctrinal understanding of the ministerial priesthood on which it is based.¹²⁴

219. Intensified periods of prayer and reflection are recommended to aid students to enter fully into the foundational stages of the spiritual life.

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220. The formation of pre-theology students should include a healthy balance of exercise, study, and leisure; pre-theologians should develop discerning habits in regard to reading, television viewing, movie going, and other forms of entertainment.¹²⁵

221. The program of spiritual formation should be under the supervision of the director of spiritual formation of the sponsoring institution.

222. There should be a daily celebration of the Eucharist in which every member of the community ordinarily participates. The laws and prescriptions of approved liturgical books are normative.

223. The Liturgy of the Hours, especially Morning and Evening Prayer, should be celebrated on a daily basis.

224. Conferences, days of recollection, workshops, and retreats should be well organized and contribute to a whole and coherent program of spiritual formation.

225. Each seminarian must meet regularly with a priest spiritual director who is 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.¹²⁶

226. Each institution should have a rule of life that clearly states the expectations of the program for seminarians.

227. There should be regular communal celebrations of the sacrament of penance. Frequent, individual celebration of the sacrament should be available and encouraged.

228. The program should introduce students to devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and the Word of God.

229. The program should introduce students to devotion to the Virgin Mary and the saints. It should also acquaint them with Catholic devotional practices.

230. In the course of the pre-theology program, there should be opportunities for days of recollection and a retreat of approximately one week.

231. The program should include conferences and workshops on the spiritual and practical aspects of formation for celibacy.

232. Seminarians in need of long-term therapy should avail themselves of such assistance before entering a pre-theology program.

233. Pre-theology candidates should be well integrated into the life of the sponsoring institution.

B. INTELLECTUAL FORMATION

234. Central to the academic formation of all pre-theology programs is the study of philosophy.¹²⁷ A philosophy program should be balanced, comprehensive, integrated, and coherent. It should include studies in metaphysics, anthropology, natural theology, epistemology, ethics, and logic. It should also include studies in the history of philosophy treating ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary philosophy. Some treatment of American philosophy or social thought is also helpful for seminarians in understanding the underlying dynamics of contemporary society in the United States. The perennial philosophy of St. Thomas should be given the recognition which Church teaching accords it.¹²⁸

235. The study of undergraduate theology is essential for those who lack adequate catechesis in the faith and whose understanding of Catholic doctrine, customs, and culture is not as comprehensive as it ought to be. The courses offered in the basic teachings of the Church should ensure a knowledge of biblical revelation; the history and the doctrine of the Church; spirituality; Christian ethics; Catholic social teaching; liturgy; and the literature, art, and music of Catholic piety and culture. Candidates should also study the Church's teaching on ecumenism and interfaith relations. Undergraduate theology courses are intended as a preparation for studies in the theologate, not as a replacement for them.

236. Education in the liberal arts, especially foundational language skills, may be an important part of the program. Study of the biblical languages and Latin should be given the emphasis that church teaching accords it.¹²⁹

In some cases, English as a Second Language (ESL), Spanish, communications skills, and studies in literature may form an essential part of the program.

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237. Candidates for pre-theology should follow a careful and thorough admissions process equivalent to the entrance procedure for the theologate. This process should include specific recommendations concerning the candidates' program, its length and content.

238. A pre-theology program that does not offer courses in philosophy and/or undergraduate theology should be linked to a Catholic college or university with a complete curriculum of philosophical and undergraduate theology courses.

239. Sound philosophical formation requires 24 semester credit hours.¹³⁰ A minimum of 12 semester credit hours are required in appropriate courses of undergraduate theology.

240. Programs that utilize colleges and universities for philosophy and theological studies should carefully and consistently monitor the content and quality of their students' courses.

241. The study of Latin and the biblical languages is foundational and should be given the emphasis that church teaching accords it.¹³¹ The study of Spanish will also be important for many U.S. dioceses.

C. PASTORAL FORMATION

242. Pastoral formation introduces students to the practical, pastoral life of the Church. The degree and kind of pastoral involvement should be based on the candidates' previous pastoral experience or lack thereof. If at all possible, apostolic activity should be closely matched to the students' individual situation, supplementing their knowledge and experience of the Church's life and mission.

243. The program of apostolic formation should be directed to the formation of future priests. Its focus is pastoral service in light of priestly ministry. It is different from formation at the theologate level, which presupposes a knowledge of theology for purposes of theological reflection. It should include planned programs and well-chosen experiences under qualified supervision.

244. Pastoral experiences with the poor, the disadvantaged, and the alienated can introduce students in a practical way to the Church's teaching on social justice. Supervisors and spiritual directors should point out the close connection between justice, spirituality, and the mission of the Church.

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245. The program should be directed by qualified supervisors who emphasize the specifically priestly dimension of pastoral activity.

246. Students should be aware of the practical guidelines of *The Ecumenical Directory* and their application to pastoral situations.

247. Pastoral assignments that introduce students to the multicultural situations which characterize the Church's apostolate in many parts of the country are recommended.

ADMINISTRATION, ADMISSION, AND EVALUATION

248. For administration, admission, and evaluation, see Chapters Four and Five of this document.