

# A BASIC SCHEME FOR PRIESTLY TRAINING (Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis)

## PART THREE

### IX

#### INTELLECTUAL FORMATION IN GENERAL

59. The purpose of the intellectual formation is to enable the students to acquire, along with a general culture which is relevant to present-day needs, an extensive and solid learning in the sacred sciences such as can give a firm foundation to their faith, enable it to mature, and can equip them to proclaim the teaching of the Gospel effectively and make it part and parcel of the culture of modern man<sup>137</sup>.

This information includes:

- a) after finishing the curriculum of studies mentioned in no. 16, the completion, where necessary, of their education in the Arts and Sciences;
- b) philosophical formation;
- c) theological formation.

60. There are three main ways of providing this:

- a) in three distinct and successive periods of time: the Arts and Sciences where necessary — the study of Philosophy — the study of Theology.
- b) Arts and Sciences along with Philosophy (*cf. American College*), then Theology.
- c) The Arts and Sciences followed by a combined course of Philosophy and Theology. If this is done, care must be

---

<sup>137</sup> *cf.* Vat. Coun. II. Dec. *Optatum totius*, nos. 13, — 17; Past. Const. *Gaudium et spes*, nn. 58, 62; Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, no. 16; Pius XII. Apost. Const. *Sedes Sapientiae*, 31 May 1956: A.A.S. 48 (1956), pp. 361 s.; Paul VI, *Motu proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae*, 6 Aug. 1966: A.A.S. 58 (1966), p. 786; III, n. 2.

taken to present Philosophy as a separate entity having its own special method, and not reduce it to a fragmentary consideration of problems arising from questions in Theology.

These are to be taken merely as examples, and do not exclude other methods of arranging the studies. In their scheme for Priestly training, the Episcopal Conference should indicate what systems they choose to approve, and, in doing so, they should take into account their local conditions.

61. Whatever study arrangement be adopted, the following principles should be carefully observed:

- a) it should always commence with an introductory course in the Mystery of Christ, such as will be found described in the following section<sup>138</sup>;
- b) If Philosophy and Theology are taught at separate times, an attempt should be made to coordinate subjects in Philosophy with those of Theology, particularly Natural Theology with those of Theology, particularly Natural Theology with the Tract in Dogma concerning God, Ethics with Moral Theology, the History of Philosophy with Church History and the History of Dogmatic Theology, etc.<sup>139</sup>;
- c) the time devoted to studies of a particularly philosophical nature should be equivalent to at least two years (or, where certain countries use a system of computing the length of studies by hours per term, the equivalent number of such hours); the time devoted to theological studies should equal at least four years (or, the equivalent number of hours per term), so that the study of Philosophy and Theology should take no less than six years (or, the equivalent number of hours normally requiring six years to cover)<sup>140</sup>.

<sup>138</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 14.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> C.I.C. can. 1365; Paul VI, *Motu proprio De Episcoporum muneribus*, 15 May 1966: A.A.S. 58 (1966), p. 470.

62. The Introduction into the Mystery of Christ and Salvation History which is to inaugurate the course of Philosophy and Theology is designed to enable the students to appreciate the idea which lies behind ecclesiastical studies, their general plan and connection with the apostolate. At the same time it should help to give roots to their own faith, to understand at greater depth their priestly vocation, and consequently to commit themselves with greater awareness.

The programme and length of this course should be regulated for in the Scheme for Priestly Training. Before doing so, account should be taken of the experiments which have already taken place in the country concerned and in the Church abroad and care is needed to link the course properly with the rest of the theological studies. It should also continue afterwards especially by means of Scripture Reading under the direction of professors<sup>141</sup>.

63. The professors, as a body, when teaching their own subject, must be concerned for the internal unity and harmony of the whole corpus of doctrine about the Faith which is being taught (cf. n. 90). This they can do by emphasizing the salvation aspect of their particular subject. But to really do the job properly, as the course of studies comes to an end—or, if the Bishops' Conference prefer, after a few years of pastoral experience—time might be set aside, even a fairly lengthy period, when the students can be directed in a methodical way and in the light of what they have already learned, to examine the Word of God, contemplate it as it were and experience it, simply from the point of view of the unity of its message of salvation in the way it is to be put over to the faithful, and thus mould together into one the main points of each subject which have been taught as separate entities. This time set aside for a final round-up is to be highly recommended. It can prevent acquired pieces of knowledge from remaining out on a limb and isolated from each other. It enables the priest to see everything wedded to one aim: the spiritual development of his people. It creates that harmony which is necessary for his own spiritual maturing, and enables him to see the use of the knowledge he has acquired and thus give him a greater love of theological training.

<sup>141</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, no. 14; cf. Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 16; Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, no. 16.

If individual Bishops, or their Conferences as a whole, should decide to restore the exercise of the Diaconate for a year or so after the completion of studies (cf. no. 42 c), this general unification, or knitting together, of different branches of Theology would be more usefully transferred to the time when the deacons return to the Seminary to prepare themselves for the Priesthood. But the period will have to be sufficiently long to make it a really effective and immediate preparation.

64. An overriding consideration to be borne in mind is that the whole of the intellectual formation of students must take into account their differing backgrounds. They have to be capable of understanding and expressing Christ's message in a form which has meaning for them. They are products of a certain culture, and they have to translate the Christian life into terms which will be relevant to their own cultural ethos.

Therefore, professors of Philosophy and Theology should always draw comparisons between Christian teaching and the particular ideas about God, the world, and man which are enshrined in popular traditions that are held as sacred by the people concerned, and as far as possible, use these notions to enrich the wisdom of the philosophers and the understanding of the faith<sup>142</sup>.

## X

### STUDIES IN THE ARTS AND SCIENCES

65. Before the students embark on their specific studies for the Priesthood they must have completed the schooling which is required in their own country as a necessary qualification for commencing Univer-

---

<sup>142</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, nn. 16, 19, 22; Past. Const. *Guadium et spes*, nn. 44, 58, 62; Dec. *Unitatis redintegratio*, nn. 4, 17; Dec. *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, nn. 4, 5, 6; cf. Pius XII, Ency. *Evangelii Praecones*, 2 June 1951: A.A.S. 43 (1951), pp. 521 ss.; John XXIII, Enc. *Princeps Pastorum*, 28 Nov. 1959: A.A.S. 51 (1959), pp. 843 ss.; Paul VI, Homily *Hi amicti sunt*, delivered on the occasion of the canonization of the Uganda martyrs, 18 Oct. 1964: *Insegnamenti*, II, pp. 588-589; *Motu proprio Ecclesiae Sanctae*, 6 Aug. 1966: A.A.S. 58 (1966), p. 786, II, n. 2.



sity studies, and, if possible, have obtained a State-recognized diploma of proficiency<sup>143</sup>.

66. On the completion of these studies, any deficiency in knowledge which is required in a priest must be made good either before or during the study of Philosophy, as n. 60 indicates. An example would be that reasonable proficiency in Latin which the Church continually and insistently demands<sup>144</sup>. A list and programme of these studies should be included in the Scheme for Priestly Training.

67. Students should learn, apart from their own language, whatever languages are deemed necessary or useful for their future pastoral ministry. In this matter the civil programme of education should also be observed. But in addition, they should be taught how to express themselves in an idiom acceptable to modern people, how to communicate in the spoken and the written word, and how to get to the heart of the meaning of a question, an art which is necessary for the priest. A training in the appreciation of art and music, whether sacred or profane, would also be an advantage for them<sup>145</sup>.

68. Nowadays, people receive their information and convictions, not only from books and teachers, but more and more through audio-visual aids. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that priests should be versed in these methods. They should, however, have the right attitude towards them; be ready to use them critically, not be merely passive spectators or listeners. This demands that they be used, with moderation and with prudence, for experimental teaching purposes in the Seminary under expert guidance. Their controlled use should enable

<sup>143</sup> Vat Coun. II, Dec. *Optatum totius*, no. 13; cf. no. 3; Pius XII, Apost. Exhort. *Menti Nostrae*, 23 Sept. 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950), p. 687; Apost. Const. *Sedes sapientiae*, 31 May 1956: A.A.S. 48 (1956), pp. 361-362.

<sup>144</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatum totius*, no. 13; Paul VI, Apost. Letter *Summi Dei Verbum*, 4 Nov. 1963: A.A.S. 55 (1963), p. 993; Apost. Letter *Studia Latinitatis*, 22 Feb. 1964: A.A.S. 56 (1964), pp. 225 ss.

<sup>145</sup> On harmonizing human and civic culture with Christian teaching, cf. Vat. Coun. II, Past. Const. *Gaudium et spes*, nn. 59, 62; On art and sacred music: Vat Coun. II, Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, nn. 115, 129; S.C. of Rites, Instr. *Musicae Sacram*, concerning music in the Liturgy, 5 March 1967: A.A.S. 59 (1967), pp. 300 ss.; cf. n. 52.

the students to exercise restraint for themselves and teach others the same, while availing themselves of their usefulness for the apostolate<sup>146</sup>.

69. Right from their first Seminary years, and increasingly as they grow older and more mature, the students should be introduced to the social problems of their own country in particular. Their studies, their contact with the people and the world around them, and the events of daily life should make them acquainted with questions and disputes of a social order, and they should come to grips with them, with their real significance, the pros and cons, problems and consequences inherent in them and learn to see where, in the light of the natural law and the precepts of the Gospel, just and equitable solutions are to be found.<sup>147</sup>

<sup>146</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Inter mirifica*, n. 16; Past. Const. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 61; Dec. *Christus Dominus*, no. 13; cf. Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 20; Paul VI, Radio Message *Ci rivolgiamo*, on the occasion of the First World Day for the promotion of the right use of the means of social communications, 2 May 1967: *Insegnamenti*, V, pp. 203-206.

<sup>147</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 20; cf. Pius XII, Apost. Exhort. *Menti Nostrae*, 23 Sept. 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950), pp. 687, 696-697; John XXIII, Enc. *Mater et Magistra*, 15 May 1961: A.A.S. 53 (1961), p. 453; Paul VI, Address *The visit of so many*, to young Catholics from Britain, 30 July 1963: *Insegnamenti*: I, p. 94.

<sup>148</sup> On various counts the present situation demands that a real formation in Philosophy be given. For:

a) the very purpose of studying Philosophy and the present-day circumstances which demand exactness in training give sufficient indication that, not only are these studies not alien to, but have a highly assistential value in, the search for faith and the ability to communicate about it. This relationship of reason to faith needs to be increasingly highlighted in the teaching of Philosophy, by *professors of Theology and Philosophy working closely together and by the order in which the tracts of each department are distributed*. Further priests are not to feel, as it were, removed by force from the love and truth of Christ during their study of Philosophy, but rather experience Christ's influence in their studies. The Second Vatican Council itself in many places, but especially in the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, clearly shows how good philosophical principles assist the preservation of true Christian values in present day social and cultural life, and enable mankind to enjoy and further their benefits (cf. nn. 23 ss., 53 ss.)

b) Leaving aside the necessary question of how and what things are to be taught, the *ultimate purpose* of learning Philosophy is a point which has to be clearly understood, and, as proved by the end-product, it has to be

## XI

## STUDIES IN PHILOSOPHY AND KINDRED SUBJECTS

70. Studies in Philosophy and kindred subjects — no matter how they may be distributed over the years (cf. no. 60) — must be equivalent to a two-year course. Their purpose is to form the student as human beings by sharpening their judgement and refining their appreciation of the wisdom of the ancients and moderns with which the human family has been enriched through the course of the centuries. At the same time the method of teaching these subjects should assist the student to a deeper awareness and a more intense living out of his faith. There should also be a preparation for his theological studies and for the ministry which requires him to be properly trained for dialogue with people of this day and age.<sup>140</sup>

---

constantly brought to mind. A sense of what is "being", with which alone a firm and unequivocal "yes" can be given to a statement, is essential for a minister of the faith — the ability to discern the truth, to see it for what it is and accept it, irrespective of its provenance. Equally necessary in the priest is a keen power of judgement with which he can see, and make decisions about, the daily problems of life and situations in their true light. These are acquired qualities which equip the priest to teach, to converse and not to be bowled over by every wind which blows — to the ruination of his work. Hence the Church's anxiety, cautious though it be, to discover and experiment with new ways of improving the teaching of Philosophy in the Seminaries.

c) The post of professor of Philosophy demands *real preparation*. It not infrequently happens that when there is no really skilled philosopher to teach, the subject is simply not learned, and the students fail to discriminate between the different philosophical opinions, which in turn they may also regard as something of a joke.

d) If the teaching of Philosophy is to be genuinely useful and formative, it must be *closely related to problems which the modern age consider problems*. It must, therefore, be involved in, for example, the present-day growing inclination towards atheism and to the attempts to divorce faith from religion; must tackle the philosophical principles which endanger the true interpretation of the Word of God and the importance which psychology, sociology, and the human sciences have for modern man.

<sup>140</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 15; cf. Past. Const. *Gaudium et spes*, nn. 44, 59; Decl. *Gravissimum educationis*, n. 10; Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, n. 16; cf. Paul VI, Enc. *Ecclesiam suam*, 6 Aug. 1964: A.A.S. 56 (1964), pp. 637 ss.

71. Systematic Philosophy and its component parts should be regarded as of particular importance in leading one to the acquisition of a solid and coherent understanding of man, the world, and God.

This training in Philosophy must be based on that always valid philosophical patrimony<sup>150</sup> whose witnesses are the great Christian philosophers. They are the ones who have handed down those first philosophical principles which have a constant value since they are founded in nature itself. Granted such a philosophical basis, the students' attention should be directed towards contemporary Philosophy, and, in particular, to the schools of thought which exercises special influence in their own country, and to recent scientific progress. In this way they will be in a position to view the modern age in its right perspective and be adequately prepared for dialogue with society<sup>151</sup>.

72. The *History of Philosophy* must also be taught to show the origins and development of the great problems which have faced mankind. From an understanding of the different solutions which have been proposed to these problems over the centuries students will be able to discern the truth, detect error, and refute it<sup>152</sup>.

73. *Related sciences* should also be taught; the natural sciences, for instance, and mathematics, insofar as they are related to Philosophy. But a due sense of proportion should also be observed: their purpose is not to produce superficial and encyclopedic minds, but to be of real complementary value to the principle subjects<sup>153</sup>.

74. The matter and manner of presentation in all subjects should take cognizance, not only of the intrinsic importance of each question,

<sup>150</sup> Cf. Pius XII, Enc. *Humani generis*, 12 Aug. 1950: A. A. S. 42 (1950), pp. 571-575; Paul VI, Address *Nous sommes* to delegates at the Sixth International Thomistic Congress, 10 Sept. 1965: *Insegnamenti*: III pp. 445 ss.

<sup>151</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, no. 15.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> Vat Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, no. 15; Past. Const. *Gaudium et spes*, nn. 44, 62; Pius XII, Apost. Const. *Sedes sapientiae*, 31 May 1956: A.A.S. 48 (1956), p. 362; Paul VI, Address *Siate i benvenuti* to delegates at the Thirty-sixth Italian Congress of Stomatologists, 24 Oct. 1963: *Insegnamenti*, I, pp. 256-257.

but also of its relevance to present-day circumstances, whether of the students or local conditions<sup>154</sup>.

75. In the National Schemes for Priestly Training (or, in an Appendix) an outline should be given of all the subjects taught in the Philosophy curriculum and a brief note of the programme, number of years or terms and hours per week given in class to each subject.

If, for one reason or another (e.g. because different systems are employed in a large country) this be too difficult or impossible to do, some examples at least of study-programmes should be included, which could provide a clear indication of what is in progress and be of help to everyone.

## XII THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

76. The whole of four years at least must be devoted to theological studies<sup>155</sup>. Their purpose is to enable the students to make as profound a study as possible of the teaching of Divine Revelation in the light of faith and under the guidance of the authoritative magisterium, nourish their own spiritual lives with what they have learned, guard it in their priestly ministry, and proclaim and expound it for the spiritual good of the faithful<sup>156</sup>.

<sup>154</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 15; cf. John XXIII, Enc. *Princeps Pastorum*, 28 Nov. 1959: A.A.S. 51 (1959), pp. 843 ss.

<sup>155</sup> C.I.C. can. 1365; cf. Paul VI, *Motu Proprio De Episcoporum muneribus*, 15 June 1966: A.A.S. 58 (1966), p. 470.

<sup>156</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 16; cf. Pius XII, Enc. *Humani generis*, 12 Aug. 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950), pp. 567-569; Apost. Const. *Sedes sapientiae*, 31 May 1956: A.A.S. 48 (1956), pp. 361-363; Paul VI, Address *Incessissimo desiderio* to the Academic Senate and students of the Pont. Gregorian University in Rome, 12 March 1964: *Insegnamenti*, II, p. 178 ss.; Address *Libentissimo sane* to delegates at the International Congress of the Theology of the Second Vatican Council, 1 Oct. 1966: *Insegnamenti*, IV, pp. 443 ss.; Address *Gratia Domini*, to the International Theological Commission 6 Oct. 1969: *L'Osservatore Romano*, 6-7 Oct. 1969, p.1.

77. No matter under which aspects (ecumenical, missiological, etc.)<sup>157</sup> theological subjects be treated, they should be so taught as to clearly reveal their interrelation<sup>158</sup> and their proper place in the setting of the mystery of the Church<sup>159</sup>. Moreover, each subject in its own way should be seen to fit in neatly with the overall pattern of explaining the history of salvation as it continues to be worked out, among the ups and downs of the world, in the life of the Church<sup>160</sup>.

78. The whole of Theology finds its soul in *Sacred Scripture* which is to be the inspiration of every part of the Theology<sup>161</sup>. For this reason due importance should be accorded to biblical studies. Students should be introduced into the correct methods of exegesis after a suitable introduction and with the support of auxiliary courses. In accordance with their needs, the professors should explain what the main problems are and their solution, and really help them acquire a vision of the *whole* of Sacred Scripture with a clear insight into the principal chapters of the history of salvation. Moreover, they should give their divinity students a theological synthesis of divine revelation which is so necessary for their spiritual life and future preaching, since these require a firm basis<sup>162</sup>.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Unitatis redintegratio*, nn. 4, 5, 6, 10, 17; Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus* n. 39; Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 16; Dec. *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, nn. 4, 6.

<sup>158</sup> Cf. Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, no. 17; Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 16; Cf. Pius XII, Apost. Const. *Sedes sapientiae*, 31 May 1956: A.A.S. 48 (1956), p. 363.

<sup>159</sup> Vat. Coun. Dec., *Optatam totius*, n. 16; Dogm. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 8 *et passim*; Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 2; Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, n. 16; cf. Paul VI, Address *Salvete, Fratres* at the beginning of the second session of the Second Vatican Council, 29 Sept. 1963: *Insegnamenti*, I, pp. 172 ss.

<sup>160</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, nn. 14, 16; Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 16; Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, n. 16; cf. Paul VI, Address *Nous sommes profondément* to the Observers of the Second Vatican Council, 17 Oct. 1963: *Insegnamenti*, I pp. 232, 235.

<sup>161</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 16; Dogm. Const. *Dei Verbum*, n. 24; cf. Leo XIII, Enc. *Providentissimus Deus*, 18 Nov. 1893: A.A.S. 26 (1893-1894), p. 283.

<sup>162</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 16; Dogm. Const. *Dei Verbum*, 23; cf. Pius XII, Enc. *Divino afflante Spiritu*, 30 Sept. 1943: A.A.S. 35

79. *Sacred Liturgy* is now to be regarded as one of the principal subjects. And it is to be presented, not so much in its juridical aspect, as in a theological and historical context, and, on the spiritual and pastoral plane, it should be linked up with the other subjects in order that the students may realize how the salvation mysteries are rendered present and operative in the liturgical ceremonies. Texts and rites of Oriental and Western liturgies should be explained in order to illustrate the eminent place which, theologically speaking, the Sacred Liturgy occupies in expressing the faith and spiritual life of the Church<sup>163</sup>.

They should have the norms governing the restored liturgy explained for a better understanding of the adaptations and changes which the Church has decided. They also ought to be capable of evaluating what is legitimately optional, and, while we are in the middle of the present heated debate of more serious and thorny problems, they should be able to draw a clear line between what is changeable and what is, by divine institution, liturgically immutable<sup>164</sup>.

*Dogmatic Theology* should be presented in full and systematically. It should begin with an exposition of its biblical sources, followed by an explanation of the contribution which the Oriental and Latin Fathers

---

(1943), pp. 310 ss.; cf. Pont. Biblical Comm., *Instructio de S. Scriptura recte docenda*, 13 May 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950), pp. 502 sse; John XXIII, Address *La diciassettesima Settimana* to the delegates of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Italian Sodality for the explanation of Sacred Letters held at Rome, 24 Sept. 1962: A.A.S. 54 (1962), pp. 716-719; Paul VI, Address *Noi dobbiamo esprimere* to delegates of the Eleventh Biblical Week of Italian Exegetes, 23 Sept. 1966: *Insegnamenti*, IV, pp. 414 ss.; Address *Nous remercions* to delegates of the Sixth International Congress of Old Testament Exegetes, 19 April 1968: *Insegnamenti*, VI, pp. 138 ss.

<sup>163</sup> Vat. Coun. II, *Optatum totius*, n. 16; cf. Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, nn. 2, 10, 14, 15, 16; Dec. *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, n. 4.

<sup>164</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 23; cf. S. Cong. Rites, Instr. *Inter Oecumenici*, on putting into effect the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 26 Sept. 1964: A.A.S. 56 (1964), pp. 879 ss.; nn. 11, 12; cf. Paul VI, Address *Facile conicere*, to the eleventh Plenary Session of the Consilium for the putting into effect the Const. on the Sacred Liturgy, 14 Oct. 1968: *Insegnamenti*, VI, pp. 535 ss.

have made to the formulation and handing down of the truths of revelation, and how dogma has developed through historical progression. Finally, there should be a full, speculative study, based on St. Thomas, of the mysteries of salvation and their interrelation. Students should be taught to recognize how the mystery of salvation is present and operative in the liturgy. They should learn to look for solutions to human problems, in the light of Revelation, and not only have an insight into the eternal, embodied in the changeable conditions of this world, but also be able to communicate these eternal truths to modern man<sup>165</sup>.

There is no objection to the teaching of dogmatic Theology by the so-called *regressive method*, which begins with conciliar definitions and works backwards through the Fathers to Sacred Scripture, if in this way one can learn to read and understand Scripture in the light of the living tradition of the Church<sup>166</sup>.

Right from the beginning of a theological training it is important that solid doctrine based on theological sources be imparted<sup>167</sup>. And although it now needs to be adapted to this ecumenical age and to the circumstances of the day, one should not neglect what is called *Apologetics* which is concerned with the rational foundations of a living faith in relation to the sociological conditions which influence the Christian life in a particular way<sup>168</sup>.

*Moral Theology* should also be animated by the teaching of Sacred Scripture. It has to demonstrate how the Christian's vocation is founded

---

<sup>165</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 16; cf. Dec. *Gravissimum educationis*, n. 10; cf. Pius XII, Enc. *Humani generis*, 12 Aug. 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950), pp. 568-569; Apost. Const. *Sedes sapientiae*, 31 May 1956; A.A.S. 48 (1956), pp. 362-ss.; John XXIII, Address *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*, at the solemn opening of the Second Vatican Council, 11 Oct. 1962: A.A.S. 54 (1962), pp. 791 ss.; Paul VI, Address *Siamo particolarmente lieti* to delegates attending the Meeting concerning the Mystery of Original Sin, held at Rome, 11 July 1966: *Insegnamenti*, IV pp. 364 ss.; Address *Incensissimo desiderio* to the Academic Senate of the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, 12 March 1964: *Insegnamenti*, II, pp. 178 ss.

<sup>166</sup> Cf. Vat. Coun. II, Dogm. Const. *Dei Verbum*, nn. 8, 9.

<sup>167</sup> Cf. Vat. Coun. II, Dogm. Const. *Dei Verbum*.

<sup>168</sup> Cf. Vat. Coun. II, Past. Const. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 62; Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, n. 22.



on charity and give a scientific explanation of the obligations incumbent on the faithful. It should endeavour to discover the solution to human problems in the light of Revelation and make eternal truths relevant in a changing world. It should seek the assistance of reliable and modern anthropology in its efforts to restore a sense of virtue and of sin to men's consciences<sup>169</sup>. The teaching of morals is completed by a study of *Spiritual Theology* which, apart from anything else, should include a study of the theology and spirituality of the Priesthood and of a life consecrated to God by the following of the evangelical counsels. In order that spiritual direction can be given according to one's state of life<sup>170</sup>.

*Pastoral Theology* has to explain the theological principles of action of the action by which God's salvific will through the various ministries and institutions in the Church of today is actually realized<sup>171</sup>.

However, since a solid training in social questions is of considerable importance in making for a successful pastoral ministry, efforts should be made to reserve a definite number of lectures, as many as are necessary, for the *Social Doctrine of the Church* in order that the students may learn the means of adapting the teaching and the principles of the Gospel to the life of society<sup>172</sup>.

*Church History* should explain the origins and progress of the People of God as it unfolds itself in time and space. It should be

---

<sup>169</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 16; Past. Const. *Gaudium et spes*, nn. 52, 62; Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, n. 22; cf. Pius XII, Address *Animus Noster* to the Academic Senate and students of the Pont. Gregorian University in Rome, 17 Oct. 1953: A.A.S. 45 (1953), p. 688; Paul VI, Address *Praesentia vestra* to the General Chapter of the Cong. of the Most Holy Redeemer, 22 Sept. 1967: *Insegnamenti*, V, p. 444.

<sup>170</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 19; Dec. *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, nn. 5, 6; Dec. *Christus Dominus*, n. 15.

<sup>171</sup> The question of specialized pastoral expertise will be treated more fully in Chapter XVI.

<sup>172</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 20; cf. John XXIII, Enc. *Mater et Magistra*, 15 May 1961: A.A.S. 53 (1961), p. 543; Pius XII, Address *Animus Noster*, to the Academic Senate and students of the Pont. Gregorian University in Rome, 17 Oct. 1953: *l.c.* pp. 686 s.

scientific in weighing its historical sources. It will be necessary to pay attention, in the course of the treatment of the subject-matter, not only to the development of theological doctrine, but also to social, economic and political factors, their theories and doctrines which have had the greatest influence over the course of Church history, since the evolution of one cannot be explained except through its dependence and connection with the other. The History of the Church is also the story of a wonderful partnership between God and man, and it should inculcate in the students a genuine sense of the Church and Tradition<sup>173</sup>. Due attention should also be paid to the history of their country.

*Canon Law* should be taught in relation to the mystery of the Church as more profoundly understood by the Second Vatican Council. While explaining principles and laws, the point should be made plain, apart from anything else, how the whole system of ecclesiastical government and discipline is in accord with the salvific will of God, and, in all things, has as its scope the salvation of souls<sup>174</sup>.

80. Ancillary subjects and special courses ought also to be determined, and which of them are obligatory or not. Likewise the students should be offered the opportunity of learning Hebrew and Biblical Greek<sup>175</sup>, to enable them to tackle the original biblical texts, and understand and explain them.

But, on the other hand, care must be taken to avoid multiplying the number of courses. Rather insert new questions, or new ways

---

<sup>173</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, nn. 9, 16; Pius XII, Address *Sollemnis conventus*, to Church students studying in Rome, 24 June 1939: A.A.S. 31 (1939), p. 248; Address *Animus Noster*, to the Academic Senate and students of the Pont. Gregorian University in Rome, 17 Oct. 1953: A.A.S. 45 (1953), p. 689.

<sup>174</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 16; Pius XII, Address *Animus Noster*, l.c. p. 688; Paul VI, Address *Singulari cum*, to the Pont. Commission for the reform of the Code of Canon Law, 20 Nov. 1965: *Insegnamenti*, III, pp. 640 ss.; Address *Salvere libenter*, to delegates at the Second International Congress of Canon Law, 25 May 1968: *Insegnamenti*, VI, pp. 205 ss.

<sup>175</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 13.

of looking at things, into the courses which are already provided where this is possible<sup>176</sup>.

Means should be found of leading the students to a fuller understanding of the Churches and ecclesial communities separated from the Apostolic See as a step to the re-establishment of unity<sup>177</sup>, which is provided for in the Decree *De Oecumenismo* and the *Directorium Oecumenicum* published by the Holy See<sup>178</sup>. Facilities should also be provided for them to get to know other religions which may be more prominent in certain areas; to recognize what is good and true in them, what errors are to be refuted, and to communicate the full light of the truth to those who do not possess it<sup>179</sup>.

Equal attention should be paid to questions concerning modern atheism in all its aspects, so that as priests they can be better qualified to tackle the grave pastoral responsibilities which arise therefrom<sup>180</sup>.

81. In the *National Schemes from Priestly Training* (or in an Appendix) an outline should be given of all the subjects taught in the Theology Curriculum with a brief note made of the programme and the number of years or terms and hours per week given in class to each subject.

If, for one reason or another (e.g. because different systems are used in a large country), this be too difficult or impossible to do, there should be included at least some examples of study-programmes as an indication of the general pattern of studies approved by the Episcopal Conferences.

<sup>176</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 17.

<sup>177</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 9; Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, n. 16.

<sup>178</sup> A.A.S. 59 (1967), pp. 574 ss.; the part dealing directly with Seminary students is about to be promulgated.

<sup>179</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 16; Decl. *Nostra aetate*, n. 2; Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, n. 16.

<sup>180</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Past. Const. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 21; Paul VI Enc. *Ecclesiam suam*, 6 Aug. 1964: A.A.S. 56 (1964), pp. 650 ss.; Address *Nous sommes*, to delegates at the Sixth International Thomistic Congress 10 Sept. 1965: *Insegnamenti*, III, pp. 445 ss.; Secretariat for non-Believers, *Documentum de dialogo*, 28 Aug. 1968: A.A.S. 60 (1968), pp. 692-704.

## XIII

## SPECIALIZED STUDIES IN PREPARATION FOR PARTICULAR OFFICES

82. The apostolate of today demands that, besides a general formation which is common to all church students, there should be some special preparation provided with a view to the various tasks to be performed in the future by each priest<sup>181</sup>.

83. Having established the principle of a general philosophical and theological formation for all, the specialization can take two forms:

A) One useful for priests who will be engaged in pastoral activities and which can be organized in the Seminary, particularly in the final year, without any attendance necessary at a special Institute: for instance, preparation for an apostolate among a certain class (industrial worker, farming communities, etc.);

B) Training for a particular post requiring its own preparation in specialized Institutes; e.g. training to teach sacred or secular subjects.

84. As regards A: the aim should be to provide this special preparation during the six years' course of Philosophy and Theology. This can be done:

a) if special courses are properly organized, particularly in the latter years, within the scholastic year, so long as they are not disproportionate to the principal subjects and fit into the scheme of general formation. Alternatively, such courses might be arranged for the vacation period;

b) by concentrating on giving all, or the majority, or the general course in the first five years, and in the sixth year giving a full and intensive specialised training in a special course of subjects.

---

<sup>181</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, nn. 18, 19, 20; cf. *Ad gentes divinitus*, n. 16; Dec. *Apostolicam actuositatem*, n. 25; Pius XII, Apost. Const. *Sedes sapientiae*, 31 May 1956: A.A.S. 48 (1956), p. 364; Paul VI, Address *Voi avete* to the delegates of the Congress called: "The Thirteenth National Week of Pastoral Guidance", 6 Sept. 1963: *Insegnamenti*, I, pp. 118-119.

Through schemes like these, different groups of students will be able to receive a varied specialized formation according to their aptitude and, in particular, according to what the Bishop decides are the peculiar needs of the diocese. In its Scheme for Priestly Training the Episcopal Conferences should state what it has decided for each region and for each Seminary faculty.

85. As regards B: it is essential that the general formation be first completed and also some pastoral experience be had before sending candidates to higher Institutes or Universities where they can obtain the specialized training along with their degrees or diplomas.

Only those should be chosen for this purpose who are really suitable from the point of view of character, virtue, and intelligence, and it is of the utmost importance that their spiritual and pastoral formation, particularly if they are not yet ordained priests, should be fully completed<sup>182</sup>.

Episcopal Conferences in each country should make suitable provisions in this matter<sup>183</sup>. Moreover, where Major Seminaries have their theological studies organized on a scientific basis, they should see if they cannot have them affiliated to a University faculty of Theology in order to enable a number of Seminary students to gain a first degree (baccalaureate) in Theology within the University system.

Seeing the unique importance of the Roman Colleges<sup>184</sup>, on account of their being able to offer a wide choice of specialized courses, the Episcopal Conference should preserve close links with these, their own Colleges. By their joint effort they can promote their special function, and increase the contribution which they can make to the new needs which face their countries and the Universal Church.

---

<sup>182</sup> Vat. Cun. II, Dec. *Optatum totius*, n. 18; cf. Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, n. 16.

<sup>183</sup> It is very much to be hoped that Religious will also agree to the special provisions established by each Conference in this matter.

<sup>184</sup> Cf. Pius XII, Address *Le centenaire* to the Superiors and students of the Pont. French Seminary in Rome, 16 April 1953: A.A.S. 45 (1953), pp. 287 s.; Paul VI, Address *Du fatti*, given in the Vatican Basilica at a Mass celebrated with Superiors of the Roman Colleges, 6 June 1965: *Insegnamenti*, II, p. 330.

## XIV

## THE TYPE OF TEACHING TO BE GIVEN

86. God's Revelation is the foundation and real scope of the whole formation of a priest, since of this students must become devoted and trustworthy ministers. Therefore, both professors and students must adhere faithfully to the written and unwritten Word of God. They must love it, make it their careful study, and in it find their spiritual nourishment<sup>185</sup>. Tradition and Sacred Scripture form one sacred deposit of God's word and this is committed to the Church's care<sup>186</sup>. Consequently students should have a lively appreciation for this Tradition as it is found in the works of the Fathers, and should pay special attention to the doctrine of the Fathers and of the other Doctors who are renowned in the Church<sup>187</sup>. They should regard St. Thomas one of the Church's greatest teachers while still esteeming authors of more recent times<sup>188</sup>.

87. Professors of the ecclesiastical sciences hold a very honourable position in the Church, but also one which entails great responsibility: they teach, not in their own, but in the Church's name, since it is from the Church that they have received their commission. They should keep before their eyes the special place they occupy in the Body of

<sup>185</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 16; Dogm. Const. *Dei Verbum*, nn. 24-26; cf. Pius XII, Enc. *Divino afflante Spiritu*, 30 Sept. 1943: A.A.S. 35 (1943), p. 321

<sup>186</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dogm. Const. *Dei Verbum*, n. 10.

<sup>187</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 16; Dogm. Const. *Dei Verbum*, nn. 8; 23; Dec. *Unitatis redintegratio*, n. 17; cf. Pius XII, Enc. *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, 30 Sept. 1943: A.A.S. 35 (1943), p. 312.

<sup>188</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 16; Decl. *Gravissimum educationis*, n. 10; Pius XII, Address *Sollemnis conventus*, to Church students studying in the Roman Colleges, 24 June 1939: A.A.S. 31 (1939), p. 247; Address *Animus Noster*, to the Academic Senate and students of the Pont. Gregorian University in Rome, 17 Oct. 1953: A.A.S. 45 (1953), pp. 684 ss.; John XXIII, Address *L'incontro odierno*, to the Seminary Rectors of all Italy, 29 July 1961: A.A.S. 53 (1961), pp. 564 ss.; Paul VI, Address, *Incensissimo desiderio*, to the Academic Senate and students of the Pont. Gregorian University in Rome, 12 March 1964: *Insignamente*, II, pp. 178 ss.; Address *Nous sommes* at the Sixth International Thomistic Congress, 10 Sept. 1965: *Insegnamenti*, III, pp. 446 s.

Christ, and ever manifest a spirit of respect and submission to the Church's magisterium. In this way they will play their part in the building up in faith of their students and the faithful<sup>189</sup>.

88. Professors should take into account present trends and state of doctrine. They should use their rightful freedom of inquiry and of speaking their minds, but, as true cooperators of the truth<sup>190</sup>, they should always approach new questions with the prudence and seriousness which the weight of their office, their responsibilities towards the truths of Revelation, demand.

In view of the fact that there exist different degrees of theological certainty, professors should make it clear in their teaching what is proven doctrine of faith and what is so by the consent of theologians. For this to be done properly a basic and reliable text is essential. Only when doctrine which is certain has been fully expounded should they turn their attention to an unemotional exposition of what is only probable or novel or their own personal theories<sup>191</sup>.

89. While candidates for the priesthood are to concentrate on the Church's teaching in their studies, efforts should be made to make them open, in moderation and for the right motives, to modern culture. With this in mind, their teachers should strive to make them into men

---

<sup>189</sup> Pius XII, Apost. Const. *Sedes sapientiae*, 31 May 1956: A.A.S. 48 (1956), p. 262; Paul VI, Address *Libentissimo saue*, to delegates attending the Congress of the Theology of the Second Vatican Council, held in Rome, 1 Oct. 1966: *Insegnamenti*, IV, pp. 443 ss.; Address *Benedicamus Domino*, to the Hierarchies of Latin America before their Second Plenary Meeting at Medellin, 24 Aug. 1968: *Insegnamenti*, VI, pp. 405 s.; Address *Gratia Domini*, to the International Theological Commission, 6 Oct. 1969: *L'Osservatore Romano*, 6-7 Oct. 1969, p. 1.

<sup>190</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n. 8.

<sup>191</sup> Pius XII, Enc. *Humani generis*, 12 Aug. 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950), p. 572; Apost. Const. *Sedes sapientiae*, 31 May 1956: A.A.S. 48 (1956), p. 362; Paul VI, Address *Siamo particolarmente lieti*, to the delegates at the meeting of Theologians concerning the mystery of Original Sin, 11 July 1966: *Insegnamenti*, IV, p. 365; Address *Incensissimo desiderio*, to the Academic Senates and students of the Pont. Gregorian University in Rome, 12 March 1964: *Insegnamenti*, II pp. 177ss.

of balanced mind and mature judgement<sup>102</sup>. Students for the priesthood are to learn to be men of discernment, to read with a critical eye, to know what to approve and what to reject of the culture of today. A very useful method is group-reading of the Press and of books followed by a critical discussion in the company of professors.

## XV

### THE PROGRAMME OF TEACHING

90. The programme of studies should be revised at stated intervals so that obsolete questions can be omitted from the curriculum and the teaching of questions which are still in vogue can be improved and be given more detailed treatment.

New courses — as already mentioned (cf. no. 80) — should not be lightly introduced: rather, new questions should be fitted into the already existing subjects where possible.

Professors should realise that they are, and should be eager to be, a unified teaching body. It is only when this unity is present in the teaching staff that there will be the desired unity in teaching. They must be concerned for the interrelationship and unity of the subjects they teach, so that the students themselves realise they are learning, not many, but the one science of the Faith and the Gospel<sup>104</sup>.

In order to facilitate this unification, someone in the Seminary should be in charge of integrating the course of studies.

91. Teaching methods should also be revised, but, as a premise to this revision, the following should be borne in mind:

- a) Professors must be agreed upon a definite number of lectures for all formal courses which are necessary to cover the presentation and explanation of the main topics to be taught, the

<sup>102</sup> John XXIII, Address *L'incontro odierno*, to the Seminary Rectors of all Italy, 29 July 1961: A.A.S. 53 (1961), p. 564; Paul VI, Address *En vous accueillant*, to the Pont. Academy of Sciences, 23 April 1966: *Insegnamenti*, IV, pp 197 ss.

<sup>103</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 17.

<sup>104</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, nn. 15, 17; cf. Const. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 16.



general direction of the students' private study, and useful reading-lists.

b) There should be a system of *seminars* and practical exercises to encourage the active participation of the students; professors whose task it is to direct these activities should be aware of the seriousness of their work which demands as much of them as do formal lectures.

c) Work in small groups with a master in charge should also be encouraged; likewise, private study under the direction of professors with whom they can have frequent discussions. Ways like these teach the students a personal method of study.

d) Finally, appropriate surveys might be undertaken by candidates for the priesthood to study scientifically the pastoral problems affecting their dioceses<sup>195</sup>. A joint study of a theological nature to examine events and factors more clearly connects their life with their spiritual formation and their formal classroom learning. Apart from this, it imparts to the students a fuller theological preparation.

However, to satisfy all these requirements in teaching-methods and the demands of personal study, professors must be sufficiently numerous and well-trained for their duties.

92. A library is an indispensable instrument for study, both for the professors and the students. Each major Seminary should have one carefully arranged and looked after by a qualified librarian. It should be kept continually well-stocked with books: for this purpose, an annual allowance should be generously allotted and the assistance of all who use it should be enlisted.

Students should be taught the modern methods of making use of a library.

93. The Episcopal Conferences are to determine definite standards of attainment required of their students, whose progress should be ascertained at stated intervals by means of discussions and written essays and examinations.

---

<sup>195</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Christus Dominus*, n. 17; cf. Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, n. 16.

## XVI

## STRICTLY PASTORAL FORMATION

94. The entire training for the Priesthood must have a thoroughly pastoral slant, because the purpose of the Seminary is to form pastors of souls (cf. n. 20), and consequently the pastoral aspect must receive special emphasis in all the subjects which are taught<sup>107</sup>.

---

<sup>106</sup> As the chapter will show more clearly, this training presupposes that throughout their studies the students, in their love of the apostolate, keep close to Christ the Redeemer, and "are also trained in matters both human and divine to be a real leaven in the world for the strengthening and increase of Christ's Body" (*Perfectae caritatis*, n. 11). Students should, therefore, by degrees acquire a pastoral attitude of mind and try to develop in themselves, along with a book-knowledge of the subject, those practical abilities which enable them to bring Christ's grace and teaching to all men.

All this demands that a worthwhile contacts be established between the Seminary and the world outside, both in the Churches and in lay society. It is there that the real field of the apostolate is to be found. A Seminary is not to be thought of as a hermitage, where the students feel forcibly cut off from the real world and society. Nor is it to be so open that they think they can do exactly what they like. Everything must be done in truth in other words, in the light of their future priestly life, a life which they understand correctly and accept.

In order to get the most out of this formation, the Superiors should be particularly careful to lay down suitable rules governing the life of study and prayer and for the observance of a correct order of values. These rules should have the primary purpose of training the future priest in the right use of his liberty, and experiments should only be admitted which can genuinely further the specific purpose of forming pastors of souls. Candidates for the priesthood will always accept such rules without difficulty provided they are shown quite clearly what their purpose is — that it is a joint affair, a searching together that goes on day by day with a love that burns ever brighter, and which becomes clearer through discussion with the Superiors.

A further requirement in this practical preparation for the apostolate is that the students be put to worthwhile work, not only with the diocesan clergy, but also with the laity. In this way they will get a better insight into the pastoral situation of the diocese. They should follow the teaching of the Second Vatican Council which outlined the status of the laymen in the Church (*Lumen gentium*, chp. 4), and described the specific, active part he has to play (*Apostolicam actuositatem*, chp. 3). Gradually, they should make suitable contacts, under the direction of skilled leaders, with lay apostolate groups,

Special pastoral training, however, is also to be given, adapted to local conditions which vary according to whether the Christian way of life is flourishing, neglected, or is simply non-existent, or whether it is a country with confessional differences or a plurality of religions. In particular, this pastoral training should include catechetics and homiletics, the administration of the Sacraments, spiritual direction according to the varying states of life, parochial administration, pastoral joint-action with non-Catholics and non-believers, and other questions necessary for the building up of the Body of Christ<sup>108</sup>.

Together with all this the students should be trained how to acquire the ability to involve themselves with true pastoral concern in the lives of the faithful. The study of psychology, pedagogy, and sociology are of great assistance in the acquisition of this fuller knowledge of people and their problems, which, however, should always be taught according to correct methods and the rules established by ecclesiastical authority<sup>109</sup>.

---

and so obtain for themselves a true picture of the laity's distinctive role in the Body of Christ. They should realize the value and the need for the apostolate of the laity (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n. 9; *Apostolicam actuositatem*, n. 25), and see for what it is the magnificent work which the laity performs in the Church. They should, moreover, learn to appreciate in what consists the service of the laity which is the proper office of the priest: that means bringing home clearly the dignity and the complementary character of the priesthood and the lay state.

<sup>107</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatum totius*, nn. 4, 17. Several papal documents describe the perfect pastor, e.g.: St. Pius X, Exhortation to the Clergy *Haerent animo*; Pius XI, Enc. *Ad Catholici Sacerdotii Nostri primordia*; Paul VI in many addresses: e.g. *Voi avete*, 3 Sept. 1963; *Questo annuale incontro*, 17 March 1969.

<sup>108</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatum totius*, n. 19; Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, n. 16; Dec. *Perfectae caritatis*, n. 18; Dec. *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, n.4; cf. Pius XII, Apost. Const. *Sedes sapientiae*, 31 May 1956: A.A.S. 48 (1956), pp. 363 ss.; John XXIII, Address *L'ultimo incontro* to students of various Seminaries, 10 Aug. 1962: A.A.S. 54 (1962), pp. 584 ss.; Paul VI, Address *Voi avete* to those present at the Meeting called "The Thirteenth National Week of Pastoral Guidance" 6 Sept. 1963: *Insegnamenti*, I, pp. 117 ss.

<sup>109</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatum totius*, n. 20; Dec. *Christus Dominus*, nn. 16, 17; Past. Const. *Gaudium et spes*, n. 62; cf. Pius XII, Exhort. *Menti Nostrae*, 23 Sept. 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950), p. 680; Apost. Const. *Sedes*

95. The students are also to be trained in the various forms of the modern apostolate: Catholic Action and its associate bodies, working with deacons, enlisting the support of the laity to encourage and develop their own special apostolate and promote their greater active cooperation<sup>200</sup>, methods of assisting all men without distinction as needs and local conditions require, and the art of entering into worthwhile dialogue with them<sup>201</sup>.

Particular attention should be paid to the preparation of students for a correct and healthy relationship in the character and psychology of women as it is affected by the sort of life they lead and by their age. The purpose of this is to enable them as priests engaged in the pastoral ministry to undertake a more effective spiritual care of women and behave towards them with the normality and prudence which befit ministers of Christ<sup>202</sup>.

96. Students should be imbued with a true spirit of Catholicity which transcends diocesan and national boundaries and barriers imposed by differences of rite, and be open-heartedly disposed to be of assistance to others. They should, therefore, be instructed in the needs of the

---

*sapientiae*, 31 May 1956: A.A.S. 48 (1956), p. 364; John XXIII, Enc. *Princeps Pastorum*, 28 Nov. 1959: A.A.S. 51 (1959), p. 842; Enc. *Mater et Magistra*, 15 May 1961: A.A.S. 53 (1961), pp. 401 ss.; Paul VI, Enc. *Ecclesiam suam*, 6 Aug. 1964: A.A.S. 56 (1964), passim; Address *Benedicamus Domino* to the Bishops of Latin America before their Plenary Meeting at Medalli, 24 Aug. 1968: *Insegnamenti*, VI, pp. 403 ss.

<sup>200</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 20; Dec. *Apostolicam actuositatem*, n. 25; Dec. *Christus Dominus*, n. 17; Dogh. Const. *Lumen gentium*, n. 33; cf. Pius XII, Exhort. *Menti Nostrae*, 23 Sept. 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950), pp. 676 ss.; Paul VI, Address *Salutiamo i Delegati* to the delegates of the Bishops and priest advisers of the Sodality for Catholic Action, 9 July 1966: *Insegnamenti*, IV, pp. 355 ss.

<sup>201</sup> Cf. Vatican Council Council II, Dec. *Christus Dominus*, n. 18; S. Cong. for Clergy, Directory *De peregrinantibus*, 30 April 1969: A.A.S. 61 (1969), pp. 361 ss. n. 21; Paul VI, Motu proprio *Pastoralis migratorum cura*, 15 August 1969: A.A.S. 61 (1969), pp. 601-603; cf. S. Cong. for Bishops, Instruct. *De pastoralis migratorum cura*, 22 Aug. 1969: A.A.S. 61 (1969), pp. 614-643; cfl. also Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n. 6.

<sup>202</sup> Cf. Pius XII, Apost. Exhort. *Menti Nostrae*, 23 Sept. 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950), p. 664; cf. above pp. 38 ss., n. 48.

whole Church, as for instance, in the problems of ecumenism or of the missions, and anything else which is a matter of urgency in various parts of the world<sup>203</sup>. With special care they should be prepared for dialogue with non-believers<sup>204</sup>.

97. Throughout the whole of the scholastic year, as well as in vacation time, provided the Bishops think it fit, practical works of the apostolate, which form a necessary part of the strictly pastoral training, should be introduced in accordance with the age of the students and local conditions<sup>205</sup>.

Since it often happens nowadays that students go abroad during their holidays in order to gain pastoral experience, it would be as well if the Episcopal Conferences concerned were to lay down, by common consent, suitable provisions to ensure that the experience intended is really obtained.

98. A selection should be made of the more suitable practical activities, taking into consideration where the Seminary is, the number of students involved, and any other circumstances which can be undertaken during the scholastic year: for instance, giving religious instruction, taking an active part on feast-days in the parish liturgy, visiting the sick, the poor, prisoners, helping priests engaged in youth-work, etc.

Due proportion, however, should be observed between the time given to these practical exercises and the demands of study. Moreover, they

---

<sup>203</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 20; Dogm. Const. *Lumen gentium*, nn. 17, 23; Dec. *Christus Dominus*, n. 6; Dec. *Perfectae Caritatis*, n. 20; Dec. *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, n. 4; Dec. *Ad gentes divinitus*, n. 39; cf. Paul VI, Enc. *Populorum Progressio*, 2 April 1967: A.A.S. 49 (1967), pp. 257 ss.; Address *Lodierna udienza* to students gathered together for missiological studies, 2 Sept. 1964: *Insegnamenti*, II, pp. 517-518; Address to the Plenary Meeting of the Secretariat for Christian Unity, 28 April 1967: *Insegnamenti*, V, pp. 187-193; Address *As we look*, to the faithful present at the Syro-Malabar Liturgy in Bombay, 4 Dec. 1964: *Insegnamenti*, II, pp. 712 ss.

<sup>204</sup> Secretariat for non-believers, *Documentum de dialogo*, 28 Aug. 1968: A.A.S. 60 (1968), pp. 692-704.

<sup>205</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Optatam totius*, n. 21; cf. Pius XII, Apost. Exhot. *Menti Nostrae*, 23 Sept. 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950), p. 676; Apost. Const. *Sede sapientiae*, 31 May 1956: A.A.S. 48 (1956), p. 364.

should be performed in the light of theological principles, and under the direction of experts and wise priests who will assign each one his work, teaching them how to go about it, be at hand while the work is being done, and arrange for a review of its performance afterwards with the students in order that they may reflect on what the experience has taught them and receive effective advice. This is the right way of ensuring that these activities are a help, not a hindrance, to their spiritual and doctrinal formation.

99. These exercises can be more easily performed during vacation time if arrangements are made by the seminary Superiors. They might help priests in their pastoral work, or assist workers, etc., but always under the direction of experts as explained in the foregoing section.

## XVII

### POST-SEMINARY TRAINING

100. Priestly training, of its nature, is such that it must be continued and increasingly perfected throughout the whole of a priest's life, but more particularly during the first years after Ordination<sup>206</sup>. It is for this reason that the Decree *Optatam Totius*, no. 22, training should be maintained and developed in the spiritual, intellectual and, above all, pastoral fields, so that new priests may be better equipped to undertake and perform the duties of the apostolate. One might here recommend team-work for priests which, particularly today, has much to offer for the pastoral ministry.<sup>207</sup>

101. As a means towards the realization of a post-Seminary training, the Scheme for Priestly Training should indicate the practical measures

---

<sup>206</sup> Vat. Coun. II, Dec. *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n. 19; Dec. *Christus Dominus*, n. 16; Dec. *Perfectae caritatis*, n. 18; cf. Pius XII, Motu proprio *Quandoquidem templum*, 2 April 1949: A.A.S. 41 (1949), p. 165; Apost. Exhort. *Menti Nostrae*, 23 Sept. 1950: A.A.S. 42 (1950), pp. 691-692; Apost. Const. *Sedes sapientiae*, 31 May 1956: A.A.S. 48 (1956), p. 364; John XXIII, Address *Questo incontro* to teachers of religion gathered in Rome, 9 Sept. 1962: A.A.S. 54 (1962), p. 674; Paul VI, Motu proprio *Ecclesiae Sanctae*, 6 Aug. 1966: A.A.S. 58 (1966), p. 761.

<sup>207</sup> Cf. Vatican Coun. II. Dec. *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n. 7.

which the Episcopal Conference proposes and recommends. A few examples which are already in use are suggested:<sup>208</sup>

a) a pastoral year or biennium in which new priests live together and divide each week between a few days of class-room work and pastoral studies, and the rest of the week in parish work;

b) pastoral training given to young priests over a number of years while they are engaged in the ministry. This involves one or two days a week of school and pastoral studies;

c) vacation courses or courses given at an opportune time when the younger priests are given pastoral questions for consideration and study, and in which they prepare for triennial examinations;

d) a "Priests' Month" after about five years of priestly ministry, during which young priests renew themselves spiritually by a retreat, and bring themselves up-to-date in doctrine and pastoral matters by means of special courses and the study of pastoral problems under the guidance of experts.

None of these projects, however, will come up to expectations and be successful unless there is coordination between the Seminary and the post-Seminary courses, nor unless they are organized by a priest who is genuinely outstanding in intellectual ability, virtue, and experience.

Finally, the fraternal cooperation of parish priests and of priests of mature age and experience is needed. They are responsible for furthering the pastoral formation of the younger clergy. But, at the same time, they must also encourage that brotherhood of priests which the Decree *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (n. 8) recommends, and make sure that there is no division between the new and older generations of priests.

This Basic Scheme for Priestly Training has been ratified, confirmed and ordered to be published by the Supreme Pontiff, Paul VI, by Divine Providence, Pope.

Given at Rome from the offices of the Sacred Congregations on the feast of the Epiphany, 6th January, 1970.

---

<sup>208</sup> Cf. S. Cong. for the Clergy, Circular to the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences concerning the further education of the clergy, particularly the junior clergy, 4 Nov. 1969: nn. 16-21.