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FORMATION PROGRAMS

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Preamble In order to achieve the goals of the formation of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, Atlantic Province formation program, the following practical guidelines have been established. A distinction is made in the guidelines between Students and Candidates. A *student* is a resident of the House of Studies who has not yet completed Initial Formation. A *candidate* is a resident of the House of Studies who has completed Initial Formation and is in the progress of completing the objectives of Special Formation.

PART I - TIMELINE FOR FORMATION

TITLE I- INITIAL FORMATION

1. Focuses principally on helping the student to adjust to community life and introduces the student to a general understanding of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, with specific emphasis on the Atlantic Province.
2. The minimum duration for this level of formation is six months all students who feel called to either the Priesthood or Brotherhood.
3. Duration is based on the following criteria:
 - a. Age of the student
 - b. The ability to live in community
 - c. Recommendation by the Director of Formation and the Formation Committee stating that the student has sufficiently met pre-determined goals with regards to the following:
 - Personal growth
 - Spiritual growth
 - The completion of academic course work
4. Students who feel called to the priesthood are required to complete a minimum of eight philosophy courses before they begin their theological studies. Both ecclesial and congregational circles, however, encourage twelve philosophy courses.
5. Students who feel called to the brotherhood are required to complete some theological courses.
6. Presentations are given once a week in the first semester that will focus on vocational discernment.
7. Presentations are given once a week in the second semester that will focus on the life of the Founder, St. Gaspar. An understanding and appreciation of the Union of the Blood of Christ (USC) will also be provided.

TITLE II: SPECIAL FORMATION

8. This level of formation has a minimum of three years duration or a maximum of 4 years duration.
9. Candidates are evaluated on the following criteria with specific goals established for each candidate at the beginning of each semester:
 - Personal growth
 - Spiritual growth
 - Completion of academic degree
10. With regards to the completion of the academic degree, the following criteria must be respected:
 - a. The Director of Formation must approve all course selection before final registration is made.
 - b. A minimum grade of C+ is required for all classes
 - c. Candidates in danger of receiving a grade lower than C+ for a course must notify the Director of Formation before a failure is irreversible
 - d. The Director of Formation receives all final grades for course work that is completed at the end of each semester.
 - e. Any commitments to apostolic works and/or field placements are to be approved by the Director of Formation
 - f. The ability to live in community
11. The Rite of Admission to Special Formation is celebrated on and or near the day of May 24th, the feast day of Our Lady of Help of Christians, for those students who have completed Initial Formation.
12. Brother candidates are encouraged to pursue an academic background, a professional accreditation, or a technical skill during the three years period of Special Formation; priesthood candidates are required to complete a course of theological studies resulting in a Master of Divinity degree.

13. Year 1

- a. In the spring of the first academic year of Special Formation, the ministry of Lector is conferred.
- b. In the first semester there will be presentations given once a week on the Circular Letters of St. Gaspar and the understanding of the Bond of Charity.
- c. In the second semester there will be presentations given once a week on the Normative Text, Provincial Statues and the Canon Law concerning Societies of the Apostolic Life (SAL).
- d. In the summer following the first academic year, the candidate will participate in the Inter-Provincial Summer Program of the North American Provinces.

14. Year 2

- a. In the spring of the second academic year of Special Formation, the ministry of Acolyte is conferred.
- b. In the first semester there will be presentations given once a week on Precious Blood readings and articles to help deepen the candidate's understanding of spirituality, community and mission.
- c. In the second semester there will be presentation given once a week on the Circular Letters of Venerable John Merlini.
- d. In the summer of the second academic year the candidate is required to make a cross-cultural experience either in Tanzania or the Mission in Mexico.

15. Year 3

- a. In the first semester there will be presentations given once a week on the history of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood, the Atlantic Province and the USC.
- b. In the second semester there will be presentations given once a week on the articles from the CPPS Heritage series. This will also include materials from Frs. J. Klope, B. Conti, L. Contegiacomo, and M. Colagiovanni.
- c. At the end of the third academic year, the candidate normally graduates and is asked to complete a CPE course or spend time in Rome, Italy where he will gain an understanding of the Italian language and experience the various Gasparian sites. The Provincial Director and the Director of Formation, in consultation with the candidate, will determine the appropriate choice.

TITLE III: DEFINITIVE INCORPORATION

16. Definitive Incorporation is celebrated on December 3rd, on feast of St. Francis Xavier, the patron saint of the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.
17. Candidates preparing for brotherhood or priesthood go on a five-day retreat approved beforehand by the Director of Formation before the Definitive Incorporation.
18. Brothers are assigned a ministry after Definitive Incorporation.
19. Candidates preparing for the transitional diaconate go on a five-day retreat, approved beforehand by the Director of Formation.

TITLE IV: ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE

20. The ordination to the diaconate is celebrated between December 8th and January 31st.
21. The diaconate is exercised for the duration of six months to one year.
22. Candidate preparing for the priesthood ordination go on a five-day retreat, approved beforehand by the Director of Formation.

TITLE V: ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

23. The date of the Ordination to the priesthood is decided on a case-by-case basis with the Provincial and his Council.
24. If one's home parish is in the USA or Canada, the home parish is the preferred place for the ordination.
25. If one's home parish is overseas, then a parish staffed by the Missionaries of the Precious Blood in the Atlantic Province is preferred.

PART II
VENERABLE JOHN MERLINI HOUSE OF STUDIES

TITLE I: COMMUNITY LIFE

1. Community Life centers on the ways we come together, as brothers in Christ, to support, nurture and encourage one another in our Christian vocations. As such, it fundamentally involves respect for the rights of others in the house, a commitment to meals and prayers in common, hospitality towards visitors, and a commitment to participating in the monthly House Congressus. The Director of Formation approves any absence from any community events, particularly meals and prayers.

2. Meals

Each resident of the house will take a turn cooking per week. Items needed for the meal must be clearly written on the grocery list before the shopping day arrives. The Director of Formation is responsible for the grocery shopping. Food shopping will be bought weekly. A schedule will be set up for cleaning the pots, pans and dinnerware. Should a student or candidate be absent for a community meal, he must inform the cook of the day.

3. Hospitality

Guests are welcome at the house of formation. A general spirit of hospitality always prevails.

4. Common Rooms

Since the rooms in the house which everyone utilizes, those rooms should be kept clean at all times and at no time should anyone enter a community room with bare feet. A schedule will be made which will assign each house resident a common area to be cleaned on a weekly basis.

5. Laundry Room

The laundry room floor should be kept clean from lint and the lint trap in the dryer should be emptied after each load of laundry. Laundry should only be done once a week and between 9:00am and 9:00pm.

6. Kitchen

Counter tops, sinks, and floor should be kept clean and free from crumbs, debris, and dirty dishes, glasses when the kitchen is not in use. The dishwasher should be run and emptied once a day.

7. Sacristy

Counter tops and the sacred vessels should be kept clean at all times. The sacristan is responsible for cleaning and ironing the purificators and corporals each week.

8. Living Room/TV Room

The coffee table should be clean of crumbs and the magazines should be kept arranged. The TV/DVD should **NOT** be used after 11:00pm unless permission has been given by the Director of Formation.

9. Personal Computers

Abused use of computer time is not recommended and will be questioned by the Director of Formation.

10. Chapel

The chapel is to be kept clean at all times. An atmosphere conducive to reflection should be maintained before and after common prayer.

11. Library

Any faxes received in the library should be given to the person to whom the fax is addressed. Any junk mail faxes should be thrown in the garbage. All the students and candidates must share the house computer. The books in the library should be returned the library as soon as possible.

12. Household maintenance

- a. **Visitor Restrooms and Guestrooms** should be cleaned on weekly basis. Whoever is the host for a guest(s) is responsible for preparing the rooms (s) and for cleaning the room (s) after the visit is concluded.
- b. **Appliances** in the event of the household appliances should break, the Director of Formation should be informed so that the appliance may be repaired.
- c. **Garbage** in the common rooms should be collected on a weekly basis and disposed of outside. Kitchen garbage should be collected daily and disposed in the large trashcan.
- d. **Security** for the House of Studies must be turned on at all times when no one is in the house. When and if everyone is out of the house, all windows should be closed.

TITLE II - ACADEMIC LIFE

13. Academic Life centers on obtaining the necessary skills and training to be an effective minister of the Church and the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. As such, academic studies should be under-taken with diligence and dedication to learning as much as possible about a given area.

14. Finances

- a. Those students in Initial Formation who are preparing for admission to a Master of Divinity degree but have not completed the philosophy requirements, or have not yet completed their under-graduate degree are fully responsible for their school tuition/fees and book expenses. The same applies to those in the theology program during the Initial Formation year.
- b. All brother candidates are responsible for their school tuition and fees while in Initial Formation. Should a student not have sufficient financial resources to pay for the courses to be undertaken in Initial Formation, they may request the funds in writing from the Director of Formation. If and when the request is granted, the student will be required to sign a Promissory Note, indicating that, should he no longer remain in the formation program in the future, that is legally responsible to reimburse the Atlantic Province of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood for any loans which were granted to him.
- c. The Missionaries of the Precious Blood pay for tuition, school fees, and book expenses for all brother candidates in Special Formation.
- d. The Missionaries of the Precious Blood pay for tuition, school fees and book expenses for all priesthood candidates enrolled in the Master of Divinity degree.
- e. All students and candidates who have an automobile are responsible for paying their car insurance and fuel.
- f. All candidates receive a monthly stipend as determined by the customary of the Atlantic Province
- g. All students and candidates receive an allowance per month for public transportation, in addition.

15. Study Time

- a. All students and candidates are expected to spend sufficient time studying for their courses and researching topics for assigned papers.
- b. Food is NOT allowed in bedrooms, as it may encourage insects.
- c. To foster an atmosphere of study, a period of general silence is observed in the house from 10:00pm- 9:00am. This period of silence means that no loud music is to be played and that the community TV/DVD must be turned off during the aforementioned times. The Director of Formation can make exceptions.

TITLE III - SPIRITUAL LIFE

16. Spiritual Life centers on a constant striving to develop a greater intimacy with God and finding the courage to respond to God's call. A strong spiritual life is the living stream of any ministry.

17. Prayer
 - a. The house schedule for prayer is determined at the beginning of each semester and includes Liturgy of the Hours, Eucharist, Eucharist Adoration, Lectio Divina, Community prayers.
 - b. All house residents will make prayer a priority.
 - c. A schedule will be established for leading community prayers and for acting as sacristan.
 - d. Each student and candidate selects a spiritual director from a list provided by the Formation Director no later than a time determined by the Formation Director.
 - e. A schedule is prepared for candidates to share a reflection/homily during Eucharist.

TITLE IV - PERSONAL LIFE

18. Personal Life centers on individual goals and expectations, which enable the student and candidate, become all that God has called him to be.

19. Legal Status

Non-Canadians must have a student visa to pursue full time academic studies in Canada. Non-Canadian candidates will be sponsored for permanent residency in Canada only after having been Definitively Incorporated as a Missionary of the Precious Blood.

20. Health

- a. Non-Canadian enroll in UHIP (university health insurance plan) to cover any illnesses or medical conditions.
- b. Students are expected to exercise regularly and keep physically and mentally fit.

21. Free Time

Each student and candidate may select one weekend each semester to leave the House of Formation to visit family and or friends. The weekend begins with the student's or candidate's last class on the Friday and ends at 10:00pm on the following Sunday. The student and candidate must inform the Director of Formation. The Director of Formation must approve any other absences.

TITLE V - APOSTOLIC LIFE

22. Apostolic Life centers on putting into practice what is learned in the academic arena by ministering to persons and situations which need to be transformed by the liberating message of the Gospel. Priesthood and brotherhood candidates are encouraged to explore a variety of apostolic ministries, while respecting the requirements and obligations of their specific program.
23. Preparation for ministry of the Word continues to hold a significant claim upon the candidate's formation. In addition, compassion, social awareness, solidarity with the poor, concern for justice, cross cultural sensitivity, and a strong capacity and practice to collaborative ministry with women religious, laity, Union of the Blood Christ, and other communities sharing the spirituality of the Precious Blood are highly evident in the candidate's apostolic formation.
24. Ministry
 - a. The Director of Formation must approve any undertaking of a ministry and only after the 'Introduction to Ministry' course is successfully completed.
 - b. Students and candidates may help out at a parish on an informal basis with permission of the Director of Formation.
25. The Director of Formation works closely, assisted and consulted with the Formation Committee.
26. As a general rule, the Director of Formation has the final say in any and all issues surrounding the formation of students and candidates in Community Life, Academic Life, Spiritual Life, Personal Life and Apostolic Life. When in doubt, please consult the Director of Formation..

B – NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCES