
"Let the holiness of God shine forth" (cf. Mt 5, 16)

*542

global challenges of Pallottine formation



Welcome to Pallottine formators from the many Provinces and Regions of the Society and also from the Pallottine Family.

As per the statistics of 31 December 2017, we have 458 students in various stages of formation: Europe [62], Africa [136], Asia [219], America [41]. In fact though, since formation is for life, *all* members can be considered to be under ongoing formation.

The following ten points identify the principal challenges facing us in the field of formation today:

1. Formation must lead to the internalisation of Gospel values:

Formation is not just a matter of complying with rules and norms or doing what formators demand; it must lead to the internalization of good religious and moral values – Gospel values. It aims at forming faith convictions that will transform one's entire personality and sustain him/her.

2. Formation must be an accompanied vocational journey:

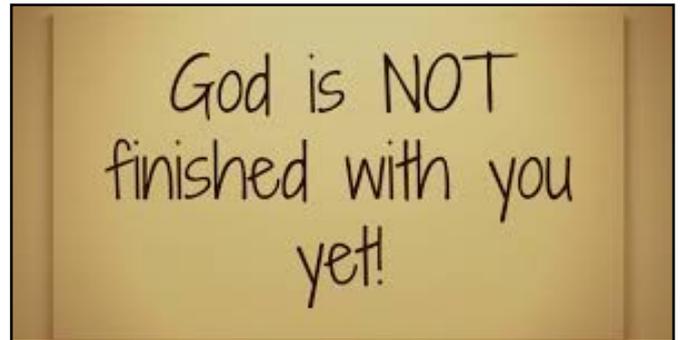
The entire human and vocational life is an exodus. The formator is someone who accompanies the entire life history of a person, like Jesus accompanying the disciples going to Emmaus. One's personal life history provides the best material for formation.

3. Formators must not be just professors or disciplinarians – but bear authentic testimony:

More than teaching or preaching, it is the authenticity of life of formators that leaves a profound impression in the life of students. No formation is possible without genuinely loving the students and participating in their life history with all its ups and downs. It is useless to demand high standards of life from students when other members of the formation house or Province/Region do not live up to such standards.

4. Formation must be seen as a life-long process:

Though initial formation is very important, it is an illusion to think that all the problems will be solved during the 8 or 10 years. New situations and changes in life will give rise to new questions which will require new solutions. Spiritual-human-pastoral-theological-charismatic updating and formation for all stages of life is vital. We might well ask ourselves: ‘what



structures and programs exist in our entities for ongoing formation?’

5. Formation must heal our broken humanity:

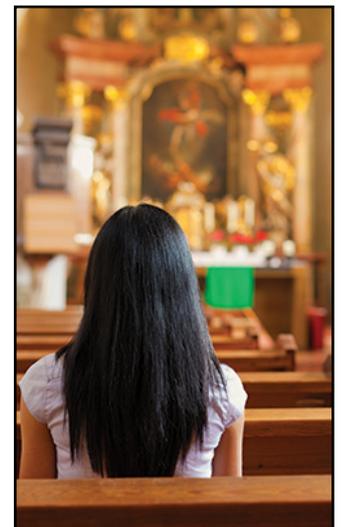
We are like treasures preserved in earthen vessels. We are incarnated beings – precious and fragile. Human formation is of particular significance because only when we have a healthy natural foundation will we be free to respond to divine grace with freedom. Formation for affective and sexual maturity demands particular emphasis in the world of today.

6. Formation must overcome a lack of sensitivity to the sacredness of their own vocation for many who are priests or living a consecrated life in a secularised world:

In the face of today’s secularised society there has been an apparent change in this area, especially in the West. What can we do if we do not have committed members? What will be the future of our Institutes? The Spirit blows where He wills! Prayer for vocations, a more evangelical life, emphasis on an apostolate of family and youth, etc., could be possible solutions. Fidei Donum [inter-Diocesan / international exchange of personnel] is another solution that the Church and religious institutes have adopted in the present situation.

7. Formation demands a strong and clear charismatic identity:

We need members who have a strong Pallottine identity which comes from profound knowledge and love for our Founder, St Vincent Pallotti. The *Ratio Institutionis* SAC is a wonderful formative manual, deeply rooted in the spirituality and charism of our Founder. All must realise that we also belong to a bigger Pallottine Family and share the same spirituality and charism with other members of the Union, following the norms established by the General Statutes of the Union of Catholic Apostolate.



8. Formation not an end in itself, but is oriented towards mission:

Formation is for mission. We are all called to go forth, especially to the peripheries, and to share the Good News of Jesus with the People of God. We need to sometimes ask ourselves whether or not we are getting blindsided by our academic studies and exams, without reflecting on why we are going through such processes. Otherwise the danger is that we form a group of men or women totally insensitive to the pastoral needs around

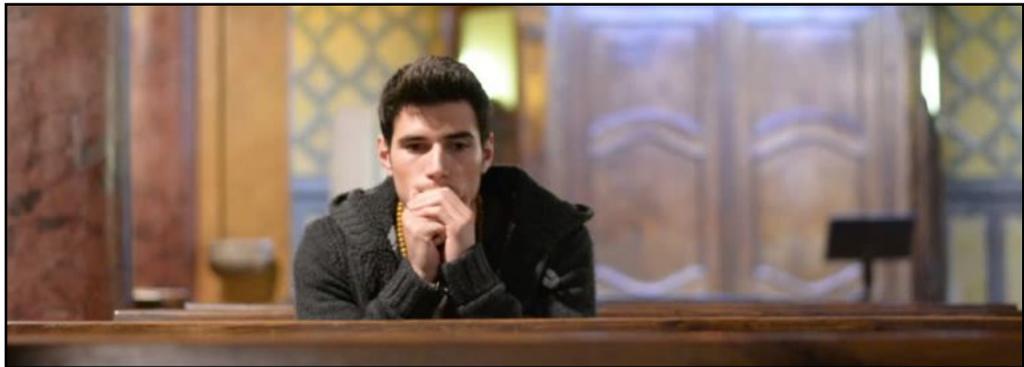
us and to the mission for which we are formed. If we do not become pastors according to the heart of Jesus, we really miss the point!

9. Formation must become a real priority for the General/Provincial/Regional Councils:

A big question before us is: how far do those who are in administration take formation and the appointment of formators seriously? My observation is that it varies from entity to entity. Major Superiors themselves are supposed to be formators par excellence. We can have many and big apostolic works and institutions but we must remember that just one uncommitted member is enough to destroy the whole edifice in a scandalous way. That speaks to the importance of good formation.

10. Formation means transformation by living the paschal mystery on a daily basis:

Finally, formation is not just a question of training or of a good formative pedagogy. It is a matter of living the Paschal Mystery on a daily basis. This means dying to self and rising again in the newness of the life of Christ. It is genuinely a work of the Holy Spirit, as it was with the disciples in the Cenacle of Jerusalem.



So what must be our response?

- The person responsible for formation should be organising formation programs at the national or continental levels. I encourage him/her to participate personally in such meetings and visit our formation houses. Among all the dimensions of formation, the Pallottine element demands particular attention.
- We must do everything possible to prepare formators who are able and committed to accompanying students.
- We need to celebrate Pallotti Day every 22nd of the month and to pray for vocations.

I want to acknowledge and thank formators from all over the world for their service to the Society in the field of formation. If they love both the work and their students it will never be a burden. The future of the Society depends much on your life testimony and willingness to accompany our young members. May God, through the intercession of our holy Founder, bless all of us. Thank you.

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12.09.18
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you commented...

on #292 Thanks for this. Interesting pieces, the first brought me back to a brief visit I made to the Beguinage in Bruges some years ago. And while there are no beguines there now (replaced by Benedictine Sisters, I think) there was a sense of peace and purpose there. Good to hear of a revival of an expression of this vocation in the Church.

DM 17.09.18

Thank you for the article written by Lee-Anne Wein...she clearly outlines the role of consecrated secular women from the 12th Century model to meeting the needs in Australia today (indeed nothing much has changed!)... We (UAC) have several similar groups living as consecrated secular women, following the charism of Saint Vincent...

CS 17.09.18