

CONGREGATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

**UNDER THE PROTECTION OF
THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY**

**GUIDE
FOR
SPIRITAN FORMATION**

2013

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FOREWORD

The present *Guide for Spiritan Formation* has a long history. Its origins go back to an international gathering of Spiritan formators at SIST, Nigeria, in 1991 when the need for written guidelines for our overall formation programmes in an increasingly diversified Congregation first emerged. The orientations agreed at this meeting, which were followed by a process of consultation throughout the Congregation, eventually gave rise to the publication of the first edition of the *Guide for Spiritan Formation* in 1997.

Since then, the Congregation has continued to evolve; the world itself has changed and has challenged us to reflect more profoundly on our Spiritan vocation and on our need for appropriate initial and ongoing formation if we are to be truly effective instruments of God for the evangelization of the poor in fidelity to the charism of our founders. These changes and their implications for Spiritan formation were discussed at successive General Chapters and Enlarged General Councils and were enriched over the years by shared experience at various meetings of formators. It gradually became clear that a substantial revision of the *Guide* was called for and not simply a series of superficial amendments to reflect more recent Chapter decisions. A Congregation-wide consultation process initiated by the Generalate in 2006 culminated in another international gathering of Spiritan formators at Nairobi, Kenya in July 2010. The new edition of the *Guide* began to take shape and the text was eventually presented for approval at the 2012 General Chapter in Bagamoyo, Tanzania.

This new edition of the *Guide* reaffirms the conviction that Spiritan formation is a lifelong journey; initial and ongoing formation are indispensable components of our lifelong Spiritan pilgrimage “led by the Spirit, with Jesus, towards the Father” (Maynooth, 0.5). The *Guide* presents detailed reflections on the international character of our Congregation today; it stresses the need to give prominence to the specifically Spiritan aspects of our formation in view of the particular mission with which we have been entrusted and the spiritual heritage that is ours; it elaborates on the vital importance of discernment in early formation and on the appropriate moments for renewal on our subsequent journey; it provides guidelines and orientations for the study programmes of those called to a particular service in the Congregation and gives renewed importance to collaboration between circumscriptions and within Unions of Circumscriptions.

The immense missionary challenges of today’s world require more than ever “fervent and generous missionaries who will give themselves entirely and who are ready to undertake and suffer all things for the greater glory of God” (Francis Libermann, *Notes et Documents* I, 659-65).

As we celebrate the year of faith, I pray that the Holy Spirit may continue to guide and accompany us on our missionary pilgrimage in the footsteps of our founders.

John Fogarty, C.S.Sp.

John Fogarty, CSSp
 Superior General
 Rome, Pentecost, 19 May 2013

I. GENERAL ORIENTATIONS

A. CONTEXT

1. The purpose of this guide is to give direction to Spiritan formation taken in its entirety. As such, it concerns initial, ongoing and specialised formation and is addressed to each professed or future professed Spiritan according to their particular calling.

The current wide diversity of ways in which lay people are associated with the Congregation does not allow, for the moment, to give precise common orientations concerning their formation. The Superiors of circumscriptions will need to be attentive to providing them with a suitable time of formation in line with the spirit and vision of this guide (SRL 105; 135.1).

2. This guide is not to be considered as a stand-alone document but rather as a complement to our fundamental text, the *Spiritan Rule of Life* (especially Chapter VI). The guide seeks to develop certain aspects of SRL which are related to current needs. It is not, therefore, an exhaustive text. Indeed, it will be read and studied in conjunction with the Rule of Life.

3. In the same way, for reasons of conciseness and accessibility, we have left out references to Church documents concerning formation for religious life and priesthood. It is presupposed in this document that they will be taken into account.

B. OBJECTIVES OF THIS DOCUMENT (SRL 106)

4. This guide would like to offer a dynamism and global direction to Spiritan formation which will allow it to become more relevant to the demands of Spiritan mission both now and into the future. It also

seeks to give inspiration and guidance to formation programmes in individual circumscriptions as well as in Unions of circumscriptions.

5. It seeks to facilitate a fundamental unity in Spiritan formation which will allow us to respond, in community, to our vocation, taking into account the diverse contexts and cultures to which we all belong. This unity will be a major factor in the credibility of our Gospel witness. Each Spiritan develops a sense of belonging to the Congregation at each stage of the formation process.

6. Thanks to this basic unity and common dynamism, this guide hopes to make possible a closer collaboration between different circumscriptions and Unions of circumscriptions. This collaboration also enables a mutual enrichment and a more efficient use of resources.

C. CONVICTIONS (SRL 100-102)

AT THE SOURCE OF ALL FORMATION

7. The source of our formation is to be found in the call received from the Lord to follow and imitate him (SRL 101), a call which gives meaning and unity to the different elements of the formation process; it orientates them towards the choice that we make to live, with all our being, the Paschal mystery. It is these elements which also help us to grow more and more as disciples and servants of the Gospel. This movement finds concrete expression in the gift that we make of ourselves by living the Paschal mystery of our baptism through our religious consecration to the apostolate.

Formation is the work of God who forms us like a potter. It is a work of faith which transforms us. It requires continual discernment in order to answer the call we have received and to allow the talents given to us by God to bear fruit.

INFORMED BY OUR EXPERIENCE OF ON-GOING FORMATION

8. We read in the texts of the 1992 General Chapter: *During this chapter Spiritans shared their experience of mission... By entering into the different experiences we realised that we were being evangelised. As we make our own this experience of ongoing formation we have been able to better perceive from within what 'to be formed' means* (Itaici 36.1). On the basis of this experience of the capitulants present at Itaici, and of other similar experiences, we can see that the time spent examining the reality of our own lives can lead us to discern new calls. It becomes a time of formation which allows us to grow in our own consecration and to constantly rediscover the reality that religious life and the apostolic life are the two fundamental aspects of the Spiritan identity that we seek.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ON-GOING FORMATION AND INITIAL FORMATION

9. Formation is not just a stage or period in our life. It concerns all our existence. It is never finished because it is present at every stage of our life, including retirement. It is present also because we never cease to receive new calls to mission which are born from new and fresh situations. Formation is an ongoing process.

As for initial formation, it is the time when the candidate to Spiritan life accepts to be guided in a particular way, in his response to the call he has received. Experienced confreres help him reflect on his personal story – both spiritual and human – in order to better recognise his calling and to conform his life to it. It is, in a sense, a way for the candidate to learn how to form himself.

FORMATION FOR GOD'S REIGN

10. Religious and missionary formation is a service within the Church which aims at giving better witness to the “Reign of Justice and Peace” (SRL 22). To this end every aspect of formation (initial,

ongoing and specialised) contributes to joining with all those men and women of our time who have committed themselves within their respective societies and cultures to promoting a fruitful encounter between the Church and these societies and cultures (SRL 16.1). It is, therefore, appropriate that we continually seek to understand the contemporary world and its evolution.

THE FORMATOR'S ROLE (SRL 104 - 105)

11. A formator is one who accompanies the disciple in the early years of his following of Christ. The most important formators are the persons of the Blessed Trinity: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The formator's model is Jesus, himself a model of obedience to the Father and who was filled with the Holy Spirit. He led his disciples from the moment of their first call and he led by example.

11.1 A formator is one of those who accompanies the young disciple on his journey of discipleship. A formator is part of a team. Even when the number of students in a Spiritan formation community is very small it will be normal that a formator has the company and assistance of other finally professed confreres. Ideally all who live in the formation community would be part of its formative project (cf. The Formation Team, Nairobi Document 4). *Community life is the most active and efficient instrument of formation. It is a way of accessing our own humanity, and a way of evangelisation, acting first on ourselves* (Nairobi document 11).

11.2 A formator is carefully chosen by the superiors responsible for formation after he has had a number of years of intercultural mission experience and living in international community. He is given a specific training for his role (cf. TA 6.17).

The formator's role involves a variety of tasks requiring a number of skills.

11.3 He accompanies the young disciple. To do this he lives in the same community, prays, eats, works and spends normal living time with the students. He is friendly with them without having favourites or seeking popularity. The formator works to help the community stay on track in relation to its mission (as in the Community Mission Statement = *Projet Communautaire*).

11.4 He helps the young disciple to discern his vocation. To do this he has frequent one-to-one meetings with the disciple. This is done in a formal setting: at a pre-arranged time; a formal space (formator's office); with time boundaries (one hour for example); and in privacy (no third person is present) and confidentiality.

11.5 During these sessions the formator mainly listens as the disciple talks about his journey with Christ, the joys and difficulties he is encountering, and the things he has been discovering. At appropriate moments the formator can offer his assessment of how things are going for the student and challenge him in some areas or lead him to ask other questions. In the case of difficulties, the formator can help the student to engage in a different interpretation of events going on in the community or in his life.

11.6 The formator's role is different from that of the spiritual director whose work never replaces that of the formator. Neither is the formator's work replaced by a psychotherapist or counsellor. The formator's accompaniment is more global.

11.7 While faithfully helping the disciple to discern his life and vocation, the formator has another role and task. He is also discerning on behalf of the Congregation whose superiors have delegated him to do this job. It is his duty to make sure, in so far as is possible, that those who have no vocation do not mistakenly take vows in the Congregation. He must also (as part of the formation team) watch out for students who may have a

vocation to the priesthood but not to religious or community life. People who obviously have a vocation for the secular priesthood in their home diocese need to be helped to move in that direction (cf. TA 6.10).

11.8 A very important task of formators is evaluation. Since they have the task of accompanying students in the sense of living with them and helping them to discern the way forward, they are the ones best placed to offer an evaluation of a student's progress or lack of it to a major superior and his council. It is they who have to take the decision about accepting candidates for the novitiate or for vows, temporary or perpetual. A major superior who chooses to ignore the advice of his formators in these matters will have to clearly state his reasons; if not, he risks damaging the whole process of formation and preparing future problems for the Congregation and for the candidate himself (cf. TA 6.8 and Nairobi document 5).

11.9 To do his job effectively the formator must first of all be present. Without this he will not know his students and he will not be accurate when he gives his assessment of them, whether it is at the point of recommending them to enter the novitiate, to make vows or to leave the formation programme altogether. Despite many invitations to do other things for other communities, the formator must be quite clear that his main task is to occupy the role of formator, giving this the best of himself and most of his time.

11.10 A formator is not alone. Since nobody has all the skills required, the formator and his team need to make sure that the necessary skills they lack which are needed at times in the formation community, are brought in. This could be the case with occasional retreats, Spiritan spirituality, reflection on pastoral placement, workshops on sexuality, and many other areas depending on which needs arise.

11.11 Formators will remember that after the persons of the Blessed Trinity the main agent of formation is the young disciple himself. The onus is on him to care for his vocation, to grow in maturity and to seek every opportunity to develop as a disciple of the Lord. Formators, therefore, have a humble role of service somewhat like that of a midwife, helping something to be born. A formator is therefore an educator, a cultivator.

11.12 While a formator provides friendly accompaniment to students, he is not their peer. *He needs to find the right distance: closeness to the students, genuine sharing of their lives, but also a clear difference to be faithful to the specific mission of the formator* (Nairobi Document 12). For the relationship to be healthy, the formator needs to have peers other than the students with whom he can also take recreation and have different kinds of conversation.

11.13 In the interest of confidentiality, and in order to preserve the trust between formators and students, conversing with students about other students is unacceptable. It should never happen.

11.14 When a candidate makes a request for the profession of the vows or for ordination, the formation team carries out a confidential consultation among the students regarding the candidate concerned.

11.15 In order to remain healthy and able to exercise his role effectively a formator needs to be accompanied himself. To grow personally and professionally he will have issues that can benefit from the help of another professional. At the level of the circumscription and of the Union of circumscriptions, it is important that a formation commission exists which meets periodically. The continued support of the circumscription superior and his council is also essential (cf. Nairobi Document 5).

D. COLLABORATION BETWEEN CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS AND WITH OTHER PARTNERS

12. Collaboration between circumscriptions allows for a better quality of formation. It promotes openness among formators and those in formation. It makes possible a more economical use of money, structures and personnel and so helps to streamline available resources. At times it is a vital necessity.

13. For the same reasons collaboration with local Churches and other religious institutes, especially missionary ones, is also valuable. This is already happening in many places such as the various forms of inter-novitiates that exist. The need for this collaboration becomes particularly acute when it is a question of establishing important centres for higher studies and formation (TA 6.14).

14. At the level of the Congregation solidarity between circumscriptions is manifested through the sharing of the *Cor Unum* fund. This solidarity is more easily expressed in the context of a Union of Circumscriptions. It could also be extended to include linguistic zones and, exceptionally, a wider level. It can take on many forms:

14.1 Regrouping or an exchange of students between circumscriptions;

14.2 Exchange of personnel (formators or teachers);

14.3 Collaboration in the area of training of formation personnel;

14.4 Putting in place structures for ongoing formation;

14.5 Hosting confreres who are pursuing a programme of specialisation.

15. Between circumscriptions, solidarity at the level of personnel can be done in various ways:

15.1 By providing a teacher on a long term or short term basis, who could be permanent or part-time. This level of solidarity is, perhaps, the easiest to put in place especially for short term placements.

15.2 Through the participation of a formator in the formation team of another circumscription who is given the task of “accompanying” students. This can be demanding for each of the members of the team but it can also contribute to a more open and qualitatively better missionary formation. This collaboration occurs in international formation communities especially those which depend on Unions of Circumscriptions which have a collegial responsibility for the animation of these communities. It is normal that the formation team would also reflect this international character.

15.3 By confiding to a formator a more important responsibility in the accompaniment of candidates (postulant director, novice director, director of a scholasticate) outside of his own cultural milieu. This would generally be necessary for a time in new circumscriptions. However, where possible, this type of responsibility is best exercised by a native formator who would be more familiar with the social and cultural contexts of the candidates in formation.

16. If, in the context of initial formation, students are sent to institutions outside of the Congregation (universities, consortiums) then superiors and formators will ensure that the programmes correspond to the objectives for formation given in nos. 49 and 62 of this guide (See also TA 6.14).

II. INITIAL FORMATION FOR SPIRITAN RELIGIOUS AND APOSTOLIC LIFE

1. SOME FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS

17. INTENTION

The aspects of initial formation which are presented here complement each other. They all include a spiritual dimension. In the spirit of the *Spiritan Rule of Life*, they concern the formation of all candidates and young professed Spiritans whether they are considering priesthood or lay consecration as brothers.

A. APOSTOLIC ORIENTATION

18. The “apostolic life” is at the heart of our Spiritan vocation and it is its unifying principle (SRL 3; 100). All initial formation will be animated by an apostolic orientation whose objective will be to prepare candidates for the religious missionary life. In this way, even though our Congregation is a “clerical” institute (SRL 148), our Spiritan vocation is different in kind to that of a diocesan priest (TA 1.1.5; 6.10). It is therefore necessary that at every stage of the programme of initial formation, concrete expression be given to these orientations.

19. At every stage of formation, time should be allocated for apostolic work. The length of time for this will vary in function of the stage of formation in which it takes place (SRL 136). In order for it to be beneficial, this apostolic work involves planning, supervision and evaluation.

20. During the time of initial formation, this apostolic work will be given concrete expression by facilitating an encounter with the ba-

sic realities of human existence: the temporal and spiritual hopes and needs of different categories of people and communities. Particular attention will be given to people who are marginalised or in difficult situations. In order to bear fruit, pastoral works which are more linked to the teaching of religion or the celebration of sacraments need to be rooted in a familiarity with the reality of human existence (TA 6.6).

21. Even if reflection has already taken place with the local ecclesial community, the time of apostolic work will be complemented by a debriefing and an evaluation within the formation community. It is important also that individual debriefing takes place with those responsible for formation.

22. In the same way as with prayer, the apostolic life is also nourished by our relationship with God (SRL 84). Therefore, individual and community prayer as well as apostolic activity, daily meditation, the liturgy, *lectio divina* and faith-sharing, nourish each other. At each step, formators will initiate candidates into the methods and dispositions which facilitate personal and community prayer. Each candidate will be guided on the journey of “practical union” which is at the heart of our Spiritan spirituality (SRL 5; 87; 88; cf. TA 1.1.1).

B. CAPACITY TO ANALYSE

23. Each candidate comes from a particular culture. Entry into an international congregation does not mean alienating oneself from one's own culture. Rather it is an invitation to challenge one's culture in the light of the Gospel and to prepare oneself to “shed” all that would impede an encounter with other cultures.

24. We consecrate ourselves in a special way to the evangelisation of the poor. This requires us to cross a certain number of frontiers, whether they be national, linguistic, religious, racial, cultural or social. We are called to broaden our perspectives to take into account

the different faces of humanity and the different forms of spiritual experiences that we meet in the world of today. And this will happen whether we are working and living within the Christian community or with other believers or non-believers.

Every Spiritan will seek to understand the deep meanings of different rites, traditions, customs, behaviours and institutions of other Christian churches, of other belief systems and of each human group that he is called to meet on his journey.

He will seek to understand better the evolution of the contemporary world with its tendencies to globalisation. This understanding will also seek to identify new challenges such as consumerism, materialism and individualism.

He will seek to discern in every person the mysterious presence of the Spirit of Christ and at the same time recognise the traces of sin and fragility that call for a fuller witness to the proclamation of the Good News.

25. All this requires serious study. Each young Spiritan will be initiated into this way of study and will receive a careful accompaniment (SRL 137; 140). This will allow each student to develop the capacity to participate fully, according to his state and gifts, in the commitment to mission and to the ongoing reflection on mission of his community and the wider Congregation.

26. In order to understand our own faith journey and to be able to give it structure and to grow in it, as well as being able to give witness to it, we need to become familiar with the history of revelation as we read it in the lives of the believers who have gone before us. This is how we learn to discern the meaning of the words and deeds of our ancestors in the faith. Then we can be inspired by them in order to live in the context of today. Concretely this is done by an interpretative reading of the Bible, of Church history and of the development of doctrine.

27. Our Spiritan history and patrimony, from its origins to today, are a privileged part of this history of revelation that we continually seek to interpret (TA 1.2).

28. Initial formation helps us to become familiar not only with the study of theology and religion but also with the tools, methods and learnings of the human sciences. We tend, spontaneously, to look on unfamiliar realities in a naive way. We need to learn how to distinguish the different levels of these realities. This is made possible by an interdisciplinary approach involving theological reflection, anthropological study and the social sciences. The main axes of the basic intellectual formation for every Spiritan are as follows:

28.1 Elements of cultural, social and religious anthropology;

28.2 Elements of fundamental philosophical reflection leading to examining the great questions posed by humanity and based on an understanding of the local cultural context;

28.3 Scripture study and biblical exegesis;

28.4 The study of Church history both local and universal and the history of the Congregation. An introduction to the critical study of history;

28.5 Theological reflection guided by a missionary approach and touching on the essentials of the Christian faith and in particular on the mystery of Christ;

28.6 Elements of missiology: understanding our relationship with other Christian churches; the diversity of cultures and other religions (inter-religious dialogue) etc.;

28.7 Spirituality: seeking an integration of the various aspects of reflection in the context of spirituality and centred on a lis-

tening to the Holy Spirit (cf. *Post-Novitiate Programme of Spiritan Spirituality during initial formation*).

28.8 The challenge of contemporary mission requires of us a familiarity with other areas of study such as sociology, psychology, linguistics, religious studies, economics, political science, communications, etc.;

28.9 At every stage in their formation, candidates will be introduced to questions of JPIC and in particular to the use of social analysis as a model for understanding and evaluation (TA 3.5).

29. During the time of initial formation the study of at least one foreign language in use in the Congregation is obligatory. This allows for better communication with other linguistic groups and invites each of us to a change of perspective (SRL 141.2; TA 6.9).

C. A PROCESS OF DISCERNMENT

30. Initial formation is an integrated process of discernment.

30.1 The candidate is the primary agent of his own Spiritan formation. It is for him to enter loyally into this process.

The formators have their own role to play in this process of discernment. A formator meets at least once a month with each candidate. In larger formation communities the director of the formation team will meet each candidate following a fixed schedule.

30.2 At the level of the external forum the formators will verify if the candidates are, effectively, called to the Spiritan religious missionary life. The opinion of the formation team will be communicated to the candidates through the director of the formation community. It will be communicated in writing at least once a year to the superiors of circumscriptions whose candidates are in the formation community. If the formators

find that a candidate, after discernment with him and the formation team, is not suited to the Spiritan life, they will ask the superior to withdraw him. They will help to direct him towards the diocesan priesthood, if that is his vocation, or towards a choice of life and commitment which corresponds to his gifts and talents.

30.3 At the level of the internal forum, a spiritual guide will help the candidate to reflect on his life and see if he is called to the Spiritan religious missionary life. The candidate will take care to ensure that this is a process of faith nourished by regular personal prayer.

30.4 At each stage, the formators will receive the full file on the candidate from the formators who accompanied him in the preceding stage.

D. THE INTEGRAL GROWTH OF THE PERSON

31. Naturally, formators will be attentive to the spiritual, intellectual and apostolic development of those in formation. However, it must be said that certain dimensions of the personality of candidates do not always receive the attention they merit. As experience has shown us, an authentic spiritual and apostolic life needs, in order to flourish, to be grounded in an appropriately balanced life which takes into account the physical, psychological, social and psychosexual dimensions of human existence.

31.1 Being guided in self-awareness and in developing a balance in his life is one of the conditions necessary for young person in formation to be able to commit himself and freely and serenely continue his life of discipleship following the poor, chaste and obedient Christ, in the service of others.

31.2 Given the evolution in modern technology, attention will be given to the use of communications and social media (telephones, Internet, etc.). These means of communication are useful and helpful but they can create real dependency on the part of the user and can lead to problems of personality and interpersonal relationships both within and outside of community. Workshops will be organised to help the student to develop a responsible attitude regarding the use of modern technology and means of communication.

31.3 The development of the person bears fruit in his capacity to take on responsibilities, in the ability to be creative and assume a certain personal autonomy which should not be confused with individualism.

32. The accompaniment which allows for this personal development requires careful attention from each formator and spiritual director. Where possible they will seek the help of suitably qualified lay men and women to help them in their work.

32.1 The ongoing help of a spiritual guide is irreplaceable in assisting those in formation to look back on their past and present history and to integrate, in a balanced way, the different aspects of their personality. In this way they will learn how to welcome what is positive in their lives while at the same time taking into account, in all humility, their inevitable limits, ambiguities and failures.

32.2 In the work of discernment it is useful, where the possibility exists, to put in place a psychological evaluation with suitably qualified personnel from outside of the formation team. This process can allow those who freely enter into it a greater personal freedom, even if it cannot replace a regular spiritual accompaniment (TA 6.10).

E. PREPARING FOR THE VOWS OF POVERTY, OBEDIENCE AND CHASTITY

33. Formation that leads to a religious commitment of poverty, obedience and chastity requires that these questions be considered as concretely and realistically as possible and that they be seen in their proper context of a faith-filled spiritual commitment. A climate of trust is essential in order for this aspect of formation to be effective. (cf. *Vita Consecrata* n° 87 – 91)

34. PREPARING FOR THE VOW OF POVERTY

34.1 Sent into the world, we see the huge disparity in standards of living and the great injustices which prevent the putting in place of a true solidarity between men and women of our time, something that threatens world peace.

As disciples and witnesses of “him who became poor for us” we have a strong sense of the call to do justice, to share and be in solidarity with the poor and to develop a sober use of material things. We receive this call from the time we begin formation; it is part of the dynamic of living the vow of poverty.

The vow of poverty consists also in the humble acceptance of what is lacking in us, of our limits and of our impotency in trying to achieve everything. This acceptance does not prevent us from taking initiatives and in being creative with the little we have.

34.2 Each year the formation community draws up a community budget and gives each of the candidates the opportunity to reflect on how this budget is adhered to. In this perspective, the relationship between the cost of maintaining a Spiritan student and the standard of living in the local society is not lost from view. Consideration will be given, in particular, to the living conditions of other students. These conditions remain the ref-

erence point in our evaluation of what is lived in our formation communities.

34.3 In dialogue with a formator, a regular evaluation, will take place so that the student can examine his personal lifestyle: his use of time, his surroundings, the different possibilities for formation and training available to him, his personal goods and the community goods which are at his disposal. Each student will also learn how to manage his personal budget, no matter how small it is, and to keep proper accounts.

34.4 Students are invited to participate in the financial running of the community.

34.5 Students are encouraged to take into account, in their lifestyle, the Gospel values of justice and peace and to conform their lives to them. Careful attention will be given to the manner in which students open themselves up to the socio-economic realities of the world in which they live. In this way their outlook on the world is sharpened and they develop a stronger sense of responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop a healthy political awareness. Formators will be attentive to fostering a real contact with the poor. The choice of setting up formation communities in poorer neighbourhoods can, along with other means, facilitate this commitment to the poor (cf. TA 6.6; 6.14).

34.6 Each student in formation participates in the household duties of the community. It is good also that the students develop certain practical skills such as farming, mechanics, management, cooking, etc. In this way each student can acquire a sense of responsibility and broaden his own skill-base in line with the needs that present themselves in his apostolic life.

Some formation teams allow students to take up activities which are a source of revenue for the community. This can be a way of learning to live one's life in a responsible and pragmatic

way. However, a healthy balance is needed so that the time and place given to these activities does not take away from the other aspects of formation (cf. *Anima Una* 61, *Living the Vow of Poverty Today*, 4.3).

35. PREPARING FOR THE VOW OF OBEDIENCE

The preparation needed for taking the vow of obedience is a long process where each student learns, through different forms of mediation, how to be available for God's will. The required emptying of oneself is in stark contradiction to society's latent individualism and the desire for self-fulfilment at any price (cf. *Anima Una* 63, *Living the Vow of Obedience Today*,).

35.1 This process necessitates the development of good listening skills, especially a listening to discern God's will through prayer and *lectio divina*. Candidates will learn how to listen to others and how to take on board opinions and ideas which are different to their own.

35.2 It is a journey of dialogue. Each one learns how to dialogue with their formators and superiors. This demanding practice, if it is carried out in a climate of trust, can open up a real path towards human and spiritual growth.

35.3 Through community discernment, this preparation can be a way of freeing ourselves from our desire for power and domination (SRL 82), as well as being a path to human and spiritual growth that leads to a healthy questioning of oneself.

36. PREPARING FOR THE VOW OF CHASTITY

The call to celibate chastity is a rare and demanding vocation which can only be lived as a total gift of self to Christ. This step is accompanied by contemplation on the life of Christ and adherence to his mission. The vow of chastity, lived in celibacy (SRL 60), touches on the psycho-sexual dimension of the human person. In this way

candidates are invited to live their inter-personal relationships in an open and responsible manner.

36.1 Preparation for the vow of chastity is done through a dialogue of trust with a spiritual director.

36.2 In their regular meetings with the students, the formators will evaluate the quality of the student's relationships with others.

36.3 Formation for the vow of chastity presupposes a community life where the place of each person is recognised and deeply respected.

36.4 In societies where there is a more and more permissive attitude to sex and sexuality, the formation community will be a place of simple fraternal living where a spirit of freedom and realism allows each student to examine, in a transparent way, the quality of their inter-personal relationships (cf. *A Love that is Genuine*; TA 6.4).

36.5 Modern technology offers the best and worst of things. Anybody can access pornographic sites on the Internet. Formators will address this question with the students in formation in order to teach them how to use this technology in an appropriate way.

36.6 Formators will call on specialists to organise workshops and sessions which will help students in their discernment and allow them to arrive at a real psycho-sexual maturity in the living of the chaste life.

36.7 From the beginning of the formation programme, candidates will be instructed in the principles and procedures concerning the safeguarding of minors and vulnerable adults, and they will receive regular updates in this area.

F. COMMUNITY LIFE

37. Community life is “an essential element of the Spiritan vocation” (SRL 28); this underlines the place that it will have in initial formation. It is the formator’s responsibility to progressively introduce each future candidate to community life so that he can discover, for himself, its riches and demands. In this way they will help the candidate overcome any sense of individualism which would paralyse the life of the group (cf. TA 0.2.4). The student community itself, taken as a whole, is a place of mutual support and encouragement.

38. For those in formation, the community is a privileged place for prayer and listening to God’s Word. Common prayer and Eucharist are lived in rhythm with the Church’s liturgy (SRL 35; 98). The experience of liturgical prayer contributes to giving structure and solidity to a faith-filled religious consecration and places it in the context of the historical tradition of the ecclesial communion (cf. SRL 83-99). All through their formation, students will take seriously the inculturation of the liturgy.

39. In community the student is introduced to a mutual “apostolic commitment” (SRL 39.2). As well as faith-sharing, there is a sharing of goods and talents. In this way each one is invited to an exercise of responsibility with regard to the other members of the community (SRL 34).

When a formation community is composed of people coming from different countries and cultures, this fraternal solidarity is a missionary witness of charity and reconciliation in Christ (SRL 37; 141). From this point of view, we see the important implications and the value of international community life for initial formation (TA 2.13; 4.6; 6.14).

G. ECCLESIAL LIFE

40. Generally speaking, a vocation is born, one way or another, within the favourable environment of a local Church. The responsibility of the local Church with regard to those that come to knock at our door continues throughout the period of early accompaniment of the vocation and then again during the time of initial formation. This is why a close collaboration between formators and the local Church is indispensable. This collaboration will be especially visible when students are working on their apostolic experience (SRL 31).

41. It is within the ecclesial community that young Spiritans in formation are called to live their life of faith and engage with their apostolic experience. They learn how to practice, with other men and women of faith, a common attentiveness to the Word of God, a sharing in prayer, a reading the “signs of the times” and a collaboration within the faith community. Students are helped to recognise and encourage the giftedness and charisms of each person for the good of the community and to respect each person and the ecclesial responsibility they hold. Students who are preparing for presbyteral ordination will be attentive to the place of lay people and they will eschew any form of clericalism that is foreign to the spirit of the Gospel (TA 1.1.5).

H. RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILIES

42. That which is true for the relationship between a community and the local Church is also true, to a large extent, for the relationship between and their families in formation: they are the cells of the Church where vocations are born and develop (cf. no 37). Within a favourable environment these families themselves, while respecting the responsibilities of each person and the freedom of the candidate, become partners with the formation community. They deepen the relationship that unites them to their members. This can

be expressed in different ways: spiritually, educationally, materially or financially.

Knowing personally the candidate's family helps formators understand better those who have been confided to their care and thus they can offer a better accompaniment.

43. Solidarity between families can be expressed in different ways. This can be the case when families experience good times or bad. According to each situation, and understanding the possibilities available, the student in formation can associate and involve members of his community in the life of his family.

It is also true that certain families of our confreres in formation are themselves poor or living in very modest circumstances. Some confreres, including those in formation, are confronted with challenging situations. An attentive community reflection, carried out in conjunction with the leadership of the circumscription, will seek to find the best way to show our solidarity with these families.

It is for each circumscription to deepen this reflection and to outline the details of how this solidarity can be lived out according to the local context (SRL 40.1). At the level of Unions of Circumscriptions it could also be useful to engage in a similar reflection (cf. *Anima Una* 61, *Living the Vow of Poverty Today*, 1.3; 1.4).

2. STAGES IN INITIAL FORMATION

44. OBJECTIVE

With regard to each of the principal stages of initial formation, the following will be presented:

44.1 The objectives to be attained and what one would like to see in the candidate at the end of a particular stage of formation;

44.2 Some means to arrive at these aims and especially those which contribute more specifically to a Spiritan formation;

44.3 An evaluation sheet based on the objectives and the indicators for each stage in the formation process.

The necessary distinctions that we make between the different stages of the formation process should not take away from an integrated vision of the process taken as a whole.

This integration is facilitated by a regular coming together of the formators involved in each of the stages.

A. VOCATION ANIMATION (SRL 107)

45. Vocation animation consists in the fostering of awareness and the accompaniment of vocations to Spiritan life, either as brothers or as priests. This can take on various forms such as retreats, holiday activities adapted to the needs of young people, reflection groups on missionary and priestly vocations, presentations to student or youth hostels, vocational schools or minor seminaries.

This animation is carried out in a spirit of openness with regard to the local Church and other religious institutes. It allows for regular contact with families and Church educational institutions (parishes, schools, colleges, movements). It also enables young people who do not normally have direct contact with these places to do so.

46. WELCOMING ASPIRANTS

Vocation animation brings up the question of how to welcome aspirants. When young people ask us questions such as “What should I do?”, “Where do you live?”, we learn from Jesus himself when he answers: “Come and see...” (Jn 1:38-39).

It is a question here of taking into account, when the occasion arises, the expression of a desire to orientate oneself towards Spiritan

life. It is the work especially of the “Director of Vocations” but also of every Spiritan (SRL 107) to get to know the candidate, to guide him in his desire and to help him in his discernment. This is so that when the time comes he can express his wish to begin Spiritan formation. For this to happen, certain requirements need to be fulfilled:

46.1 Basic information on the nature and the aims of the Congregation is given to the aspirant. Care will be taken to present him with the variety of vocations that can be lived in the Congregation: brother, priest or different forms of associate membership.

46.2 Where possible short stays in Spiritan community or participation in certain apostolic activities alongside Spiritan confreres can help the discernment process before entering formation.

46.3 Spiritual direction will be offered to the aspirant.

47. DISCERNMENT BEFORE ENTERING FORMATION

The Director of Vocations will take the time necessary to accompany the candidate. Ideally this period should last at least one year before entering the postulancy. Before this stage the necessary discernment will be carried out with those in charge of the postulancy.

47.1 Care will be taken to ensure that the candidate has received all the Sacraments of Initiation and that he is not newly baptised.

47.2 The suitability of the candidate (sufficient health, no incompatible commitments), the uprightness of his intention and his availability and generosity of faith that will allow him to enter the formation process and be guided by his formators will be verified.

47.3 References are asked for from various people who know the candidate such as his Parish Priest and lay people from the parish.

47.4 The vocation of the candidate is grounded in a strong foundational experience of God.

47.5 The candidate has some experience, even if limited, of active participation in Church activities.

47.6 The academic pre-requisites for entry into Spiritan formation are those which would correspond to the end of secondary school, whatever the course of studies followed. The general formation of the candidate will enable him to engage, at least at a basic level, in the study of the human sciences and theology. Where necessary, the time of this initial accompaniment will be prolonged to allow the candidate to reach the required level of schooling.

47.7 The formation team will ensure that the candidate welcomes the apostolic and missionary orientation of the Congregation which is a very specific form of religious vocation. From this perspective a priestly vocation is not, in itself, a sign of vocation to Spiritan life (TA 1.1.5).

47.8 For candidates who come to us from dioceses or other congregations the Director of Vocations will request written references and recommendations from those in charge of the seminary or the formation programme of another religious institute.

47.9 Prudence is recommended when there is question of admitting older candidates. Careful attention will be given to the information gathered about the candidate and on his life before entering and why he did not make his decision earlier on to enter Spiritan formation.

48. EVALUATION SHEET

This is the preparation stage before entering Spiritan formation. Confreres who have the responsibility of accompanying vocations will carry out an evaluation of the candidates based on the following elements. This will be done after having consulted those responsible for their home parishes (priests, religious and lay people).

	<i>OBJECTIVES</i>	<i>INDICATORS</i>
<i>Health:</i>		Medical examination before entry to Spiritan formation.
<i>Family:</i>	To create a relationship between the candidate's family and the circumscription.	Knowing the family well. The family's future participation in the formation of the candidate.
<i>Personality and character formation:</i>	Capacity to live relationships simply. Accepting the formator.	Maintaining interest and an honest seeking to examine one's vocation. Maturity and balance. Honesty and a sense of responsibility.
<i>Life within a group:</i>	Introduction to community life.	Regularity in attending meetings or events. A willingness to share.
<i>Spiritual and religious formation:</i>	Introduction to prayer and the sources of Christianity.	A taste for personal and community prayer.
<i>Pastoral commitment:</i>	A supervised pastoral activity.	Working in a parish or ecclesial movement.
<i>Intellectual Life:</i>	Updating level of schooling.	Verifying capacity for study by success in the end of second level examinations.

B. PRE-NOVITIATE (OR POSTULANCY) (SRL 108)

49. OBJECTIVE

This stage of formation has as its aim to allow the candidate to come to a sufficient human and spiritual maturity in order to freely and responsibly enter the novitiate. Formators will be particularly attentive to the following elements in their discernment before admitting candidates to the novitiate (cf. TA 6.10):

49.1 Given the fact that we are a missionary Congregation, candidates should be available and open to living mission in international and transcultural communities in the spirit of the Vatican II document *Ad Gentes*. Mission can also take place in one's own country.

49.2 It is understood that the Spiritan vocation is, essentially, a vocation to the religious missionary life. Even though many Spiritans are also called to presbyteral ministry, a priestly vocation does not, in itself, constitute the proof of a Spiritan vocation.

49.3 A balanced spiritual life: a sense of individual and community prayer and of the sacramental life; a capacity for silence and solitude as well as an openness to what is happening in the world.

49.4 A capacity and a taste for community life: "We are called, in Christ, to live our Spiritan vocation in community... Community life is thus an essential element of the Spiritan vocation" (SRL 27-28).

49.5 Candidates will demonstrate an availability to work with the poor and excluded.

49.6 Spiritan ministry requires a spirit of sacrifice and the capacity to withstand difficulties.

49.7 Good physical health is necessary.

49.8 Candidates will have a balanced psycho-sexual life. Attention will be given to their psychological growth and personality. Agreed models of psychological assessment will be used when available (TA 6.10).

49.9 A healthy sense of judgment and the necessary human and spiritual qualities to live one's personal and social life.

49.10 A sufficient knowledge and understanding of the basic elements of the faith.

In order to reach this objective several methods and requirements need to be fulfilled by the candidates and their formators.

50. DISCERNMENT PROCESS

This discernment process concerns both candidates and formators.

50.1 From the beginning the candidate is helped to discover the role and the value of a spiritual accompaniment as a privileged means of discernment done in dialogue.

50.2 When a candidate remains undecided on his orientation as priest or brother it is better not to rush the choice but, rather, allow him the time that is necessary for him to discover the meaning of each of these two paths.

50.3 The formators will carry out regularly a thorough assessment of the growth of the candidate and they will communicate their remarks and reflections to the candidate through the director of the formation team. These remarks will also

touch on basic behaviour such as table manners, style of dress, public behaviour and generosity in carrying out the humble tasks of community life. These remarks will also be communicated to the candidate's superiors at least once a year.

51. CONTENT

Whatever the length of the pre-novitiate (cf. no 53) this stage will include the following elements:

51.1 An introduction to the spiritual life which will awaken in the candidate a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This aims at familiarising the candidate with individual and community prayer that is apostolic and nourished by listening to God's Word and the witness of those who live by the Gospel. This prayer will be attentive to what is happening in the world and be concerned with the work of mission that has yet to be accomplished.

51.2 The candidate will acquire a basic knowledge of the history of the Congregation, of its current commitments and its religious and missionary life. Opportunities will be made available to meet Spiritans and, where possible, to spend some time in other communities.

51.3 All candidates receive an introduction to the study of Scripture, theology and liturgy so that they are better equipped to benefit from the novitiate. An overview of the basic elements of the Christian faith will also be part of the programme.

51.4 Already at this stage the candidates will have the opportunity to engage in pastoral work according to what is available in the local context. Part of their holidays will also be given over to involvement in ministry while at the same time living in an apostolic community.

51.5 The candidates will work on gaining a good competence in the language in which their later formation will take place. They will also begin the study of one of the other official languages of the Congregation.

51.6 Already at this stage of formation candidates will be introduced to questions of finance: how to do accounts; how to give account of the monies put at their disposal and how to develop a sense of responsibility for the material goods of the community.

52. THE CONTEXT

The pre-novitiate takes place in the cultural milieu of the candidate or as close to it as possible. This allows for more clarity in verifying the candidates' motivations and, where necessary, can help to adjust them towards the service of mission. This cultural context is also more favourable for a better human and spiritual grounding of the candidate.

This stage takes place in the context of a community life. This could be a formation community established for this purpose or an apostolic community which is adapted to meet the requirements for the formation of one or more postulants.

53. LENGTH OF THE PRE-NOVIATE

This preparatory stage, known as the postulancy, will last for at least two years and will normally include the philosophy cycle for clerical candidates or a comparable formation for those who want to be brothers. It can take different forms depending on the different experiences and personalities of the candidates:

53.1 In certain cases the pre-novitiate can be the time when candidates study other subjects apart from theology.

53.2 Candidates who have already studied at the university will need less time for this stage of formation.

53.3 In every case care will be taken that this stage of pre-novitiate is in line with the objectives set out above and that the formation content corresponds to that of a religious and missionary Congregation.

54. COMMITMENT IN WRITING

It could be advantageous that a written commitment be entered into between the postulants and those charged with their formation. This would be a written agreement on the principal modalities of this stage of formation and on the way in which each party engages in the formation process. It allows candidates not only to better understand what is expected of them but also to feel that they are already part of “the family”.

Postulants whose families are in a position to make a financial contribution to the community will be invited to do so.

55. EVALUATION SHEET

This stage of formation prepares for entry into the novitiate. Before the superior of the circumscription, in consultation with his council (SRL (2013) 245.1.1) makes his decision, the formation team will carry out their discernment taking into account the following elements:

	<i>OBJECTIVES</i>	<i>INDICATORS</i>
<i>Health:</i>	Before entry to the novitiate formators will ensure that the candidate is in good health both mentally and physically.	Good personal hygiene. Personalised diets. Absence of frequent health issues.
<i>Personality / Character formation:</i>	Strengthening the candidate’s personality so that he can be free in himself. Reflection on one’s life story. Growing in maturity.	Growing in self-knowledge, awareness of one’s sexuality and feelings. Transparency. Good inter-personal relationships. Acquiring good behaviour patterns (personal hygiene, proper dress sense, good table manners, good behaviour in public).

<i>Religious and spiritual formation:</i>	A programme of prayer. Introduction to <i>Lectio divina</i> . Introduction to Spiritan spirituality.	Participation in community liturgy. Committed to a personal prayer life and spiritual direction.
<i>Religious life:</i>	Explaining to the candidate what the novitiate will demand of him.	Willingness to engage with this process.
<i>Community life</i>	Personal contribution and sense of responsibility. Sharing one's gifts. Moving on after conflicts. Managing resources. A sense of living the Gospel.	Open to sharing. Communication. Capable of recognising one's errors. Taking part in the life of the group.
<i>Pastoral commitment:</i>	Working locally in a pastoral situation.	Interested in the life of the Church. Keen to acquire new skills in pastoral work. A love for the poor.
<i>Intellectual life:</i>	The study of the Arts and Humanities with a good foundation in philosophy. Introduction to theology, Scripture and liturgy. Capacity for critical thinking. Methodology. Learning another language.	A balance between study and the other elements of the formation programme. Completing a course of study by obtaining a certificate or a diploma.

C. NOVITIATE (SRL 109 TO 124)

56. The novitiate is designed to allow candidates to Spiritan religious life deepen their sense of vocation (SRL 110). In their response to the Lord's call, the novitiate guides them towards the moment when they will choose, freely and responsibly, to consecrate their life to the apostolate in the Spiritan family or to opt for

another way of living out their Christian life. Temporary vows cannot serve as a sort of “experimental” commitment for those candidates who are undecided. They are a step towards perpetual vows and a clear option to live as a Spiritan (SRL 133).

57. In order to allow for a whole year to be given over for the novitiate programme, the novitiate should take place as near as possible to the cultural milieu of the novices. Should the novitiate have to function in another language than that of the novice then the necessary language learning should take place before entry into the novitiate.

58. The criteria which serve to determine the place of the novitiate in the formation programme are determined, in the main, by the fulfilment or not of the objectives assigned to the postulancy or pre-novitiate (see above 49; 53).

The essential criteria are that of a sufficient human and Christian maturity so that the candidate can enter into the novitiate process and experience real human and spiritual growth.

59. The elements of formation which are proper to the novitiate itself are organised around the indications given in the Spiritan Rule of Life Nos. 110; 110.1; 110.2; 110.3. Novice directors will take care to put into practice the common programme for formation in the novitiate published by the General Council (GC/11/02; cf. TA 6.12).

60. If the novitiate community is made up of novices from different circumscriptions then it is preferable that they have all arrived at the same stage in their formation process (TA 6.12).

61. EVALUATION SHEET

The novitiate is the heart of Spiritan formation. Its objectives and methods are described in detail in the common programme for the novitiate. This table takes up some of the aspects that are detailed in this document.

	<i>OBJECTIVES</i>	<i>INDICATORS</i>
<i>Health:</i>	Verify the objectives given in no. 55.	Follow the indicators given in no. 55
<i>Personality / Character formation:</i>	Motivations. Identify interior fragility and hurts. Capacity to make decisions. Capacity to take on a life-long commitment.	Self-awareness including knowing one's qualities and acceptance of weaknesses and any interior hurts.
<i>Religious and spiritual formation:</i>	A deepening of the encounter with Christ and the Spiritan charism. Openness to the Spirit. The integration of one's inner life.	A taste for personal prayer. A personal relationship with Christ. Maturity and capacity to live a certain solitude and in silence. Appreciation for the spirituality of the founders. A desire for God.
<i>Religious life:</i>	Beginning to live, in practice, the three vows.	An effective sharing of goods and co-responsibility. Transparency in one's interpersonal relationships. Listening to the opinions of others and those of the formation team.
<i>Community life:</i>	Capacity to share and to listen. Capacity to take on a responsibility given by the novice director.	Accepting remarks made by others. Giving up one's own personal projects or opinions. Taking on responsibilities.
<i>Pastoral commitment:</i>	The relationship between the religious and pastoral life.	Willingness to learn and evaluate experiences.
<i>Intellectual life:</i>	Access to Spiritan sources. Theology of the religious life.	Thoughtful reading of the writings of the founders and the documents on religious life. Individual work on a theme in Spiritan spirituality. Learning another language of the Congregation.

D. AFTER THE NOVITIATE

62. OBJECTIVE

Within the perspective of a life-long consecration to the apostolate this stage aims at giving the newly professed a sufficient maturity in all the areas required for Spiritan life. In this way it is a time for deepening:

62.1 The spiritual and religious commitment. During these early years that he is called to live outside of the protective environment of the novitiate the young Spiritan is accompanied in his quest for a personal discipline in his spiritual life which will be able to support him in his active life.

62.2 A missionary spirituality which combines the active dimension of full-time work (study, pastoral or professional work) with the faith dimension of a consecration of oneself (SRL 87-88). The young professed will find a balance between study, pastoral and professional work, prayer and spiritual renewal (TA 6.14). All these activities will be given support through spiritual direction and evaluation by the formators.

62.3 Life in community.

This stage is also the moment where the young professed learns the skills required for each form of Spiritan life and which will be validated by academic or technical training (SRL 138-139). During this stage each young professed will deepen his knowledge of the language that he began to learn during the preceding stages of formation.

During this stage the young professed begins a real discernment regarding his mission appointment. This process is carried out in a climate of prayer and dialogue with his formators and superiors. It presupposes a familiarity with the priorities of the Congregation.

63. LENGTH

This stage of formation lasts at least three years (SRL 128). It comes to an end with the sending out on mission (mission appointment) which is celebrated separately from final profession.

64. COMMUNITY LIFE

This is a time which is most favourable to a wider exposure to community living. This can happen by living in an international community, by workshops, or other meetings and assemblies with Spiritans of other circumscriptions and cultures (SRL 141.1; TA 6.9).

At this stage of Spiritan formation, there is, in so far as is possible, a regrouping of formation communities within the different Unions of Circumscriptions of the Congregation. Only in case of necessity will formation communities be opened for this stage of formation. This would only happen because of the number of students or because of the development of a particular circumscription (TA 6.14; EGC 2008, Ariccia, 3.3.2).

Community life among young professed coming from different cultures is challenging not only for the young professed themselves but also for their formators. The way communities are set up implies certain precautions so that each one, whatever his background or culture, can feel at home. Each formator will be able to accompany the young confreres and participate in their discernment at the level of the formation team. The formation team will reflect the diversity of the students in formation.

65. THE CONTENT OF FORMATION AFTER THE NOVITIATE

The community will help the newly professed to situate their intellectual and apostolic activities in the spiritual and apostolic context of the commitment they have just made.

65.1 Each student is guided in the study and meditation of our Spiritan heritage in its entirety. To deepen Spiritan spirituality,

the formators will use the programme for spiritual formation proper to this stage.

65.2 The superiors and formators will ensure that the young professed will be able to deepen their study of anthropology, mission theology, inter-religious dialogue and JPIC (cf. TA 6.14).

65.3 The young professed will also consider the place and the use of information technology in their own lives and in contemporary society.

65.4 At the end of this stage of formation, the young professed should be capable of keeping accounts and managing the material and resources for which they are responsible.

65.5 According to their particular vocation, candidates will use this time after the novitiate to prepare for their sending out on mission.

65.6 CANDIDATES FOR BROTHERHOOD

65.6.1 Candidates for brotherhood will develop their professional training or take up employment according to the needs of the mission, taking into account their own particular skills.

65.6.2 Throughout this period, their superiors will ensure that they have the opportunity to deepen their Spiritan spirituality and continue the discernment of their vocation with a view final consecration (SRL 139; TA 6.16).

65.6.3 They will receive a solid grounding in theological study.

65.6.4 As a general rule, they will live in community with the candidates for presbyteral ministry.

65.7 CANDIDATES FOR PRESBYTERAL MINISTRY

65.7.1 Candidates for presbyteral ministry should develop the required skills and competency for their service in the Church (SRL138). The formators will ensure that they are sufficiently prepared for their future responsibilities especially in the area of animation and leadership of the Christian community. They will learn presiding skills and how to exercise their sacramental ministry. They will also develop a healthy approach in the living out of their pastoral relationships in the context of their presbyteral ministry.

65.7.2 They will be helped to integrate their consecration to the apostolate with a spirituality of priesthood suitable for the exercise of their ministry.

65.7.3 If candidates for presbyterate are attending courses in consortia or other such institutes (universities, seminaries), the superiors and the formation team will ensure that the teaching given to them takes into account our Spiritan specificity.

65.7.4 The period of diaconal ministry before presbyteral ordination is a suitable time to deepen this preparation.

65.7.5 They will begin to learn the skills necessary for accompanying other persons.

66. MONTH OF PREPARATION FOR FINAL VOWS

Before making final vows, all temporary professed members will take part in a month of preparation. This will allow them to review their past experiences and prepare themselves for the transition from a formation community to an apostolic community (SRL 133.1).

67. EVALUATION SHEET

	<i>OBJECTIVES</i>	<i>INDICATORS</i>
<i>Health:</i>	Good health to be able to respond to the needs of a mission appointment.	Good hygiene and health. Capacity to manage one's time. Able to live with stress. Need for a health check-up.
<i>Personality / Character formation:</i>	Consolidation of candidate's desire to continue. Integration of Spiritan identity.	Psycho-sexual maturity. Able to make decisions freely. Capacity to live crisis moments.
<i>Religious and spiritual formation:</i>	A deepening sense of belonging to the Congregation. Preparation for final vows. A healthy spiritual life.	Faithful to the sacramental life and to community and personal prayer. Engaged in spiritual direction. Reading works on Spiritan spirituality.
<i>Religious life:</i>	Deepening the sense of the three vows.	Sharing of goods and responsibilities. Healthy use of information technology (Internet, telephone, etc). Accepting dialogue with others and with the formators.
<i>Community life</i>	Ability to organise one's life in an active community. Sense of belonging to the Congregation. Apprenticeship for life in an international community.	Concrete commitment to the life of the group. Able to take initiatives to improve the life of others. Being able to live with tension. Generosity. Flexibility regarding different opinions.

<i>Pastoral commitment:</i>	Preparing to receive a mission appointment Capacity to take on responsibility in missionary work.	Taking on a pastoral or professional responsibility. A humble approach to assuming responsibility for something. Capacity for team work. Being close to the poor.
<i>Intellectual life:</i>	Learning the necessary skills for missionary work.	Satisfying the demands for academic or professional qualifications. Willingness to further study mission theology in all its dimensions. Openness to the world. Learning another language of the Congregation.

E. PERIOD OF MISSIONARY EXPERIENCE [PME] (SRL 136.1-4)

68. “‘Stage’ is an essential element in the Spiritan formation process. It should normally be for two years in a transcultural mission situation among the poor and be appropriately accompanied. Young confreres will be suitably prepared for this experience and will be subsequently guided in their reflection upon it. Time will be set aside for language-learning during this period” (TA 6.13).

69. OBJECTIVE

Before taking up a professional activity, many young people undertake a time of internship or apprenticeship where good performance is a necessary requisite before being taken on in full-time employment.

In the same way, Spiritan students can “gain concrete experience of the characteristics of contemporary mission life” (Maynooth 2.25) during their time in formation. This is why PME is an obligatory step in Spiritan formation and an integral part of it. This implies that there be:

- (i) An active Spiritan apostolic community life;

- (ii) Involvement in the ministry of a pastoral team and a responsibility which is clearly defined and suitable to the capacities of the individual;
- (iii) A discovering of the values and demands made by engaging in an inter-cultural encounter and apostolate; a commitment to the poor and an awareness and attentiveness to questions of JPIC (TA 2.12; 3.5).

70. LENGTH

The length of PME is normally two years one year would be a minimum (SRL 136.1).

71. PLACE

It is not always possible to send a candidate into an inter-cultural situation. Without losing this perspective it is good to remember that to have an experience of cultural difference it is not always necessary to cross the frontiers beyond one's country. There exist also social, religious and ethnic frontiers.

72. BENEFITS OF PME

In order to gain maximum benefit from the time of PME superiors and formators will ensure that the following three elements are in place: preparation before PME; accompaniment during PME and debriefing and evaluation after PME.

72.1 BEFORE PME:

72.1.1 A community will be chosen to welcome the candidate on PME and a confrere will be selected from within or outside this community to accompany him. This selection will be the object of a real discernment. Collaboration between the confrere who accompanies the candidate, the candidate himself and the formation team will allow for the objectives and the programme of

this time of PME to be clarified and defined. A candidate on PME is not appointed to a formation community.

72.1.2 The candidate will be prepared by helping him to clarify his motivations and objectives as well as to understand the context in which will be doing his PME.

72.1.3 Where possible, the candidate will begin studying the language he will be using on PME.

72.1.4 The sending and receiving circumscriptions will discuss all the financial implications before the candidate's departure

72.2 DURING PME:

72.2.1 The general accompaniment given by the welcoming community and the specific accompaniment by the confrere designated for this task will be assured. Dialogue will take place regularly. Time for ongoing evaluation will be programmed. All this is greatly facilitated by a regular contact with the correspondent of the sending circumscription or by a visit during PME of one of the formation team.

72.2.2 The welcoming community will not see the place of the candidate as filling a gap by doing tasks that no one else wants to take on. The candidate will fulfil his role and responsibilities in the tasks which he has been given and which have been clearly defined from the outset. These tasks will touch on areas to which the Congregation is specially committed, such as work among the poor and marginalised; inter-religious dialogue; refugees and displaced persons; street children; youth ministry; and health care ministry. In general the tasks given

to the candidate will be appropriate to his level of competence and his skill-set.

72.2.3 If there are sufficient numbers of candidates on PME in the same circumscription the superior will facilitate a time for reflexion and sharing during regular six-monthly meetings. This could happen more frequently when candidates on PME are living in the same community.

72.3 AFTER PME:

72.3.1 After his return to the formation community, the candidate is helped to reflect and evaluate his experience of PME according to the following criteria: theological, pastoral, community and spiritual (reflection on Spiritan vocation). He will be helped to take on board personally the challenges and questions with which he was confronted on PME. Over the months that follow his return, a considerable amount of time will be devoted to these reflexions and evaluation.

72.3.2 This time of evaluation will be helped by a report on the candidate's PME that the superior will make to the formation team. The report will have been discussed with the candidate who is also asked to write his own report on the experience.

73. THE PLACE OF PME IN INITIAL FORMATION

Some implications of the choice of placing PME before or after the novitiate:

73.1 *If PME takes place during the Postulancy (Before the Novitiate)*

It plays the role of an apprenticeship to the missionary life (Maynooth 2.25). This allows the novice to gain a better understanding of the meaning of a spiritual and apostolic commitment.

All postulants, in particular the younger ones, are not necessarily equipped to gain the maximum benefit from PME if it is at the beginning of their formation. PME is of more benefit to those postulants who already have a certain maturity.

This option might necessitate another pastoral placement towards the end of formation but which would not replace PME during the course of the formation process.

73.2 *If PME Happens After the Novitiate*

It can play a more important role in the apprenticeship of Spiritan apostolic life in the context of religious profession.

If the novitiate experience is to be grounded on a certain experience of apostolic life, then this option already implies that during the period of postulancy the candidate has been given ample opportunity to live, in a meaningful way, this apostolic dimension to Spiritan life (SRL 136).

74. EVALUATION SHEET

PME is a key moment in the formation process. It confronts the candidate with the reality of missionary life. Often those responsible for PME neglect to put into place a time for evaluation which is important for both formators and superiors. This evaluation should be adapted according to the particular time when PME takes place – before or after the novitiate.

	<i>OBJECTIVES</i>	<i>INDICATORS</i>
<i>Health:</i>	The capacity to live in a missionary situation.	Adapting to local diet. Adapting to the climate. Good time management.

<i>Personality / Character formation:</i>	Adapting to a different cultural context. Radical openness to other peoples and respect of other cultures.	Able to take the initiative, to adapt and be flexible. Ready to take up new challenges. Willingness to learn another language. Open to being accompanied and to reflecting on experience.
<i>Religious and spiritual formation:</i>	Deepening sense of one's vocation. Integration of the spiritual and the apostolic life.	A spiritual life which is lived in relation to the apostolic life. A prayer life nourished by one's experience of ministry.
<i>Community life</i>	Living apostolic community with confreres of different nationality and culture.	Taking part in the pastoral reflexion of the community. Living a common life.
<i>Pastoral commitment:</i>	Learning how to live the missionary life. Becoming familiar with pastoral realities. Verifying if the candidate is enthusiastic for mission.	Attentive to the needs of the poor. Initiative and creativity. Faithful to task that has been received. Generosity and giving of oneself in respect of other confreres and those with whom one is working.
<i>Intellectual life:</i>	Understanding the people with whom one is working.	Desire to get to know the people with whom one is working through reading and research. Attentive to local media.

III. ONGOING FORMATION

1. INTRODUCTION

75. The following indications are intended to give concrete expression to the directives given by *Spiritan Rule of Life* concerning formation and, in particular, ongoing formation (SRL 142 to 147). They are meant to be read in constant reference to the Rule of Life and it is the inspiration behind the Rule of Life that allows them to be interpreted correctly. Numerous references refer back to the Rule of Life as well as to this *Guide for Spiritan Formation* (GSF).

By referring to these two sources, and in function of the local reality, each circumscription will establish the particular directives to facilitate the ongoing formation of its members (SRL 105).

2. ONGOING FORMATION: A NECESSITY

76. Ongoing formation has become a necessity of contemporary life. The evolution in mentalities and technology requires a certain self-questioning and updating in order to be able to respond to new challenges which are making themselves felt, not only in our work but also in the way we live our inter-personal relationships.

For us Spiritans, ongoing formation is a vital necessity. It allows us to continually update our response to God's ongoing invitation by being faithful and open to the signs of the times (SRL 142). Several general chapters and enlarged general councils have drawn our attention to this because of the changing nature of the world and of mission (cf. I/D 59).

Ongoing formation commits us to a deeper reflexion on our experience and the way in which we engage in mission in the contemporary world. In this way ongoing formation implies a permanent process of conversion and renewal. It concerns not only our personal life but also how we live in community. It directs us towards the total gift of ourselves for God's Reign (SRL 10; 54; 95; GSF 7-9). It touches on the way we live our mission, understand our charism and live our relationship with God, with others and with creation.

77. We consider it normal that initial formation places certain demands on us. It is less easy for us to see the need for ongoing formation.

There are several reasons for this lukewarm attitude to ongoing formation: difficulties in finding the time for it; routine; lack of support. When the time comes for us to invest in a period of renewal and updating, our hesitation can come from a fear of being confronted with ourselves or unease at leaving a particular situation in order to enter into a process whose benefits are not immediately noticeable.

78. In order for us to invest in ongoing formation, we need to be motivated; this motivation comes from the convictions which are at the root of our lives of faith:

78.1 PERSONAL GROWTH

Our Christian and apostolic vocation continually provides us with the possibility of personal growth and integration. It offers us the chance to have a greater quality and sense of fulfilment in our inter-personal relationships. Through the different events that touch us, our life is filled with different experiences that can enlighten and promote this growth. We need times of reflexion and prayer in order to maintain and foster self-awareness.

78.2 UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENTS IN OUR VOCATION

The world is in a constant state of change which takes place at a global level and at a rate never seen before. We are changing ourselves. By taking the time to examine these changes, we come into closer contact with our true existence and the concrete invitation that God continues to offer us. We can then become more available to unsuspected developments in our vocation and a renewal of our ‘apostolic zeal’ (SRL 5; 9).

78.3 A BETTER QUALITY TO OUR APOSTOLIC SERVICE

In order to provide a better quality of apostolic service, we need to update our initial formation and training. We have to develop our skills and deepen our capacity to understand and engage with new apostolic responsibilities.

3. THE CONTENT OF ONGOING FORMATION

79. “Ongoing formation involves all aspects of our calling – human, spiritual, theological, professional and pastoral” (SRL 142.1).

After the time of initial formation, our apostolic activities take up most of our time and energy. In this way they become the principal source of our personal growth. This requires that we know how to evaluate them in order to respond creatively to the needs of evangelisation of our time (SRL 2).

A. ONGOING FORMATION CONCERNS OUR HUMAN GROWTH

80. Our personality is formed through the different events and commitments of our lives and this is what allows us to mature as human beings. They allow us to grow in a sense of personal respon-

sibility but they also make us more aware of our limits and weakness. Often, because of the pressure of work or life, we lose a necessary sense of balance and we seek refuge in overwork or through an excessive use of alcohol, food, cigarettes, TV, Internet, telephone, etc. This has grave consequences for our life and our relationships.

A regular reflection on our life allows us to be more objective with regard to how we are living our life and it prepares us better to meet the challenges of the different stages of life. In certain cases it will be necessary to seek specialist help.

81. MEANS

81.1 Sharing with others events and experiences which mark our lives.

81.2 Having the courage to identify our weaknesses and to seek help in overcoming them. It might be necessary to call for specialist help (psychotherapy, health practitioners, etc).

81.3 Certain violent events can lead to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). It is important to take time to process one's experiences and to seek help before resuming an active life.

B. ONGOING FORMATION CONCERNS OUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

82. Human growth is accompanied by growth in the spiritual life. Our experience teaches us that our relationships in community and with others, as well as the experiences of our personal lives, shape our relationship with the One who calls us to mission. But we also realise that we can allow ourselves to be consumed by our own zeal to the point of neglecting our spiritual life.

82.1 We need to be able to reflect on and evaluate the events and encounters which give shape to our lives and to discover in them the expression of the Paschal mystery.

82.2 We need to be able to live in ‘practical union with God’ and, for this to happen, to remain united with Christ in all our activity “like the graft on the trunk of the tree” (TA 1.1.1).

82.3 We need to ‘work hard’ for our own holiness in order to be faithful to the mission entrusted to us by Christ (Libermann, *Ecrits spirituels/Spiritual Writings* p. 374).

82.4 We need to constantly renew our availability to the Lord and to our brothers and sisters (TA 1.1.3).

82.5 We need to challenge ourselves in order to see if our life-style reflects our desire to serve and respect others (TA 1.1.5).

83. MEANS

83.1 Maintaining a regular prayer life both at a personal and community level (SRL 90; 91).

83.2 Undertaking an annual retreat (SRL 96).

83.3 Having the support of a spiritual director and continually discerning our life experience (SRL 142.3).

83.4 Familiarising ourselves with the lives of the founders and the life of the Congregation; regular readings in spirituality.

83.5 Celebrating the feasts of the Congregation in community or with the whole circumscription.

83.6 Pilgrimages in the footsteps of our founders or of other Spiritans who have marked the life of our Congregation. These pilgrimages can also be to significant places for Spiritans within one's circumscription.

C. ONGOING FORMATION CONCERNS OUR APOSTOLIC COMMITMENT

84. The quality of our apostolic commitment is not just a question of the amount of time we devote to those whom we serve. More than that it is a question of holiness of life. It depends on our capacity to update our initial formation, to evaluate our activity, to be challenged by those with whom we work and to deepen our capacity to understand and act.

This updating allows us discern the signs of the times (SRL 142.2). It can also become a way to challenge and question the methods, skills, and services we use for mission.

85. MEANS

85.1 Participation at meetings or sessions organised by the institutions within which we work (deanery, diocese, chaplaincy, school, etc). This allows for reflection on our work and for us to become familiar with current developments as well as with the work of others engaged in the same type of ministry.

85.2 Taking part in conferences and lectures.

85.3 Personal reading in line with our work and ministry (books, journals, etc). These readings nourish our theological and pastoral reflection.

85.4 Taking part in courses organised to update our knowledge and skills.

85.5 For some, it will be possible to take part in distance learning as is the case with JPIC.

D. ONGOING FORMATION CONCERNS OUR RELIGIOUS LIFE

86. We need to constantly come back and revisit our commitment to religious life. For us Spiritans, religious life is, in fact, the *sine qua non* of mission (Liebermann, ND XIII, p. 354).

87. Our life and mission are nourished by the practice of poverty, chastity and obedience.

When we embark on full time missionary activity, the vows that we make during or at the end of our initial formation take on another dimension.

87.1 The living out of the vow of poverty is confronted with the reality of a world based on profit and materialism. This is the same world which casts aside the poor and allows deep injustice to occur.

We need to regularly question our life-style and to verify the quality of our commitment to JPIC as well as our real solidarity with the poor (TA 1.1.4, *Anima Una* 61, *Living the Vow of Poverty Today*, December 2008).

87.2 The nature of our apostolic life leads us to take on responsibilities. There is always the risk of individualism or authoritarianism in our work. In some cases, confreres forget that they belong to and are in solidarity with a congregation. They do not engage in dialogue with their confreres or superiors. A renewal of one's vow of obedience means opening up a listening space and engaging in dialogue in order to discern, with others, how best to serve our mission.

87.3 Thanks to our apostolic life, we develop more relationships and widen our network of connections. These can be a source of great richness for us. However, they can also impede the life of our community. They can even become the cause of scandal if they are inappropriate (cf. *A Love that is Genuine*, General Council, 2003). Each Spiritan is invited to become more aware of his relationships with others and to discern whether they help or hinder his fidelity to the vow of chastity.

88. MEANS

88.1 Reading the documents from the Congregation, *A Love that is Genuine*, General Council, 2003; *Anima Una* 61, *Living the Vow of Poverty Today* (, December 2008; (*Anima Una* 63 *Living the Vow of Obedience Today*, October 2011.

88.2 Sharing on these documents in community or in the circumscription.

88.3 Evaluating, with a spiritual director, our way of living the three vows. This can be either with our usual spiritual director or during the time of a retreat.

89. WE ARE NOURISHED BY OUR COMMUNITY LIFE

89.1 Community life is an essential element of our Spiritan vocation (SRL 28). Our commitment to community life needs to be renewed according to the changes and developments it experiences. Special attention needs to be paid to cultural diversity which is one of the current challenges of our religious life (SRL 37).

We constantly verify if our community life is truly a place of mutual support, of sharing of our goods and our skills and of learning from each other. We evaluate it to see if it is a place of

prayer and of listening to God's Word as we seek to do His will according to spirit of our vow of obedience (SRL 29.1; 42; 49).

89.2 The increasing diversity of our nationalities and backgrounds in the Congregation draws our attention to the way we live out the demands of justice and solidarity in our communities, our circumscriptions and the wider Congregation (SRL 70.1; Anima Una 61, *Living the Vow of Poverty Today*, Part III).

In particular, we constantly evaluate our desire to be effective in our ministry and activity and to see that this does not make us forget the value of the time we spend with each other in community.

89.3 MEANS

89.3.1 Re-reading SRL 27-44.

89.3.2 Organising regular community meetings (SRL 44). These meetings are carefully prepared and are not limited to material questions and fixing dates. They are intended to keep alive the common and fraternal spirit of all the members of the community.

89.3.3 Annual visits of all the communities in a circumscription by the Superior of the circumscription or his delegate, followed by a report of the visit which is made available to members of the community (SRL 169).

4. FORMS OF ONGOING FORMATION

90. Ongoing formation involves each confrere, each community, each circumscription and the entire Congregation (SRL 143). It has

many different aspects, taking into account the involvement of the confreres, their environments and their time schedules.

A. USUAL MEANS

91. PERSONAL

Each confrere will arrange his schedule to ensure that ongoing formation is facilitated on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. In the first place, it will be his responsibility to find the balance necessary for prayer, reading or for rest – all of which are necessary for the mission that has been entrusted to him.

These individual requirements will make demands on the responsibility of each Spiritan. But it is also good that he takes time to share with others on how he is approaching his own ongoing formation and allow himself to be challenged. He will seek out the support of a counsellor who will help him in his spiritual journey (SRL 142.3).

92. COMMUNITY

92.1 Ongoing formation also has to do with the community or the circumscription to which we have been appointed.

The community context is, in general, one of the most favoured places for discernment (SRL 44). When a large number of confreres coming from many diverse backgrounds, take part (professed or lay people, priests or brothers, young or old), the discernment stands a much better chance of being enlightened and fruitful.

92.2 The local community is the fundamental place of our ongoing formation and of our support of this process. Reflection on events, whether individual or collective, which have to do with our involvement leads to a better sharing of responsibilities, of tasks, of pastoral projects. The daily sharing of prayer

and of the Word of God and the liturgical celebration of what God has accomplished are a source of inspiration and of strength for the future. A suitably updated community library will give confreres the chance of keeping themselves up to date on the various currents of reflection on the world and the Church.

92.3 Periodically, a meeting of a few days will be organised at a wider level to facilitate a deeper and more varied sharing of experiences and of reflections.

92.3.1 At the level of the Spiritan circumscription or the geographical sectors which make up the circumscription: These meetings can be of different types – general assembly, annual or biannual meetings, meetings of confreres who are carrying out similar duties – community superiors, bursars, formators, confreres on mission appointment. These meetings can also take the form of a retreat.

92.3.2 At the level of the Unions of Circumscriptions or indeed for the Congregation in its totality: Such gatherings facilitate meetings of confreres who are at the beginning of the missionary involvement, or of those involved in formation, JPIC, education, inter-religious dialogue etc. It is also possible to envisage general assemblies (or meetings, *encontrão*) of all the confreres who are available in order to facilitate sharing and reflection.

92.3.3 It is desirable that each Union of Circumscriptions establish formation programmes in regard to the Spiritan charism (cf. TA 6.15)

92.3.4 In certain countries, the Conference of Religious organises specific programmes in formation. We participate in them and we bring as energetic a contribution to them as possible.

B. AT CERTAIN MOMENTS OF OUR LIFE

93. Our Rule of Life does not use the expression “sabbatical” year but “renewal”. It states quite clearly that this time of renewal places the emphasis on updating and on spiritual replenishment (SRL 145). It should not be confused with studies of a specialised nature. Nor should it be seen as a time of doing nothing at all, or of wandering around the world at the expense of the communities a confrere visits.

Renewal makes it possible for us to stand back from our responsibilities and from our customary form of life. A chance is thus offered for a greater psychological and spiritual liberty in taking stock of one’s current situation. It allows us to better interiorise the past and the present and to open ourselves to the possibility of the future. These special times can take different forms:

93.1 A “short” period of a few weeks only, which is limited to bringing oneself up to date in specific competencies or else a renewal in areas that are particular to our Spiritan life.

93.2 A “long” period which need not necessarily last for an entire year; it could last for two or three months or a semester or indeed a year if necessary. These longer times of renewal which take place every ten years or so (SRL 145), make possible a complete replenishment, affecting every aspect of our lives – pastoral, spiritual, community. Increased possibilities of discernment and of support in prayer are offered when these periods take place in a community setting.

C. SPECIFIC SUPPORT AT CERTAIN PERIODS OF LIFE

94. Certain moments of life require very careful preparation: mid-life, transition from active ministry to retirement, an important change of appointment. An appropriate time of replenishment and renewal can be carefully planned if sufficient time is given.

95. Support during the first years of missionary appointment:

The first years of appointment require additional support and accompaniment. The circumscription and the community have the responsibility of helping a confrere to move from one type of community life, based on formation, to another based on missionary involvement. It is important that ongoing formation and suitable accompaniment, as set out in the Guide for Missionary Appointments, will continue.

95.1 The first six to twelve months are a time of initiation and of discovery of the local situation on the ground – human, ecclesial and Spiritan. It is also a time for intensive study of the local language. An experienced confrere will take particular care of every aspect of accompaniment of the new arrival.

95.2 During the first years, this accompaniment continues in a form adapted to the situation. At this stage, dialogue and communication with members of the receiving community and with other confreres in the area are essential.

95.3 Periodic meetings, on a yearly basis, for example, among the confreres who are living through this experience of initiation, will be organised at the level of the circumscription and/or the Union of Circumscriptions

96. MID-LIFE SUPPORT

96.1 The “mid-life” period between the ages of 45 and 50 approximately, is a decisive stage of transition. After a fairly important period of activity and discovery of different aspects of the missionary life, we recognise the necessity of taking our bearings in relation to our life project and of sketching in a broad fashion the stage that is to come. To this end, we need to

deepen our self-awareness, our knowledge of our religious family and the understanding of the challenges facing us.

96.2 This is the moment for envisaging a more extended period of renewal.

96.1.1 A look at the past will permit a confrere to become more aware of the positive aspects that he has discovered in himself – (skills, gifts and talents which have been revealed in him, support received, significant spiritual experiences etc.). It can also help to identify the limitations which the past number of years have revealed, the hurts and the disappointments which he perhaps has caused.

96.1.2 These elements all become part of our self-awareness and of our vocation which must be both realistic and trusting, with a view to a renewed overall balance in one's life and in fidelity to our one's commitment.

97. SUPPORT ON THE OCCASION OF CHANGE OF APPOINTMENT

When a confrere is about to change his area of missionary involvement or of responsibility, a period of transition and adaptation is essential (SRL 145.2). The precise structure of this will be clarified in dialogue with superiors.

98. SUPPORT APPROACHING "RETIREMENT FROM ACTIVE MINISTRY"

98.1 As we enter this period of life, we become aware of certain demands which are specific to this moment of our existence – having, for example, to hand over responsibilities to others, or becoming more dependent on others because of health problems. Accepting this stage with serenity is closely linked to an approach grounded in the Paschal mystery lived

out in faith. “When you become old, another will lead you where you do not wish to go.” (Jn 21:18, SRL 76).

98.2 This remains a time when many elderly confreres continue to provide concrete services in so far as their competencies and strength permit them. All, even the most handicapped in health, can, through their prayer and spiritual radiance, become a precious source of support for those in training and for younger confreres, like a walking stick on which the latter can lean.

Each one of us is invited to welcome this time as one of a new form of consecration to mission, a time of a renewed human and spiritual growth (SRL 147).

98.3 To empower each confrere to perceive how his state of health and relations are being transformed and how to experience this transition in a positive way, outside help is generally useful. This help can take different forms, especially a time of renewal adapted to the needs of each one. Individual directories in each circumscription have made a study of the concrete possibilities, and foresee the length, the methodology and the content that will be most appropriate to meet each individual’s needs.

99. SUPPORT IN TIMES OF DIFFICULTY

In the course of life, certain exceptional difficulties can arise, which can test an individual’s human and spiritual balance – illnesses of one kind or another or crises emanating from another source. Standing back from the situation and specific help will be necessary.

99.1 The superior or his delegate will be required to provide specific help or accompaniment.

99.2 In order to find methods that are most closely adapted to the support of confreres, collaboration between circumscrip-

tions can be valuable, especially in an exchange of information and of experiences in this domain.

5. DIALOGUE WITH REGARD TO ONGOING FORMATION

100. Each Spiritan is responsible for the overall concern for his ongoing formation. In order to better determine both the times and methodologies, ongoing formation will call for regular dialogue:

- between the confrere concerned and his community;
- between the confrere concerned and his superior.

101. In community, confreres will be vigilant in taking time to renew and refresh themselves physically, spiritually and intellectually. Confreres will help each other in discerning together the apostolic orientations of their involvements.

102. It is the responsibility of superiors of circumscriptions to suggest to their confreres a time for renewal at an opportune moment and to draw up the necessary plans.

102.1 The superior of the circumscription of appointment will dialogue with the confreres concerned to ensure that they take seriously the demands of ongoing formation.

102.2 The superior will plan with the confreres times of renewal which will require a longer period of time. Together, they will see to the objectives, the methodologies, the content and the financing of this period.

102.3 The Superior will be particularly attentive to those confreres who need follow-up after suffering a traumatic experience. He will dialogue with them in order to direct them

towards some professional assistance which will take care of them in an effective way and will help them to overcome the trauma that they have suffered.

102.4 If the confrere is from another circumscription of origin, the Superior will dialogue with the Superior of this circumscription in order to inform him, or, if the case arises, to give him the details if the renewal is to take place in the circumscription of origin.

103. Just as circumscriptions are invited to define their orientations for initial formation, so too must they establish a plan for ongoing formation (cf. SRL 105). The objectives of ongoing formation will be clarified in the light of the specific nature of the circumscription concerned. Information on the various ways available within the circumscription will be given.

104. Making the necessary financial provision for renewal is, according to the Rule of Life (65; 72.1) a responsibility both of the individual and of the community and a subject of dialogue between the confrere concerned and his superiors.

104.1 The local community, in so far as it is possible, will allocate part of its budget to ongoing formation.

104.2 The circumscription of appointment will also take some financial responsibility for this time of formation.

104.3 In certain cases, and after dialogue among the superiors concerned, the circumscription of origin can also come to the help of confreres.

105. In keeping with the vow of poverty, we will favour places that are close to the place of work or origin and are less burdensome financially.

106. EVALUATION SHEET

If ongoing formation is an essential element of our growth, it is important to locate precisely the points where each one is called to develop, and sometimes, to give adequate time to reach that stage of development. The indications that have been highlighted are only some among the many examples which can lead to an improvement of our lives on condition that we give ourselves the appropriate means. This evaluation grid is personal. Each confrere can use it as he sees fit.

	<i>INDICATIONS</i>	<i>MEANS TOWARDS IMPROVEMENT</i>
<i>Human Growth</i>	Excessive activity	Evaluate the worth of all the activities, as well that which subconsciously I seek through them. Verify with confreres or superiors the appropriateness of the involvement and the sharing of responsibilities.
	Excessive consumption and addictions (cigarettes, alcohol, Internet, telephone)	Question oneself on the causes. Have recourse if necessary to someone who can help, even medically. Question oneself on the inconvenience one causes to those nearest by such behaviours.
	Trauma and fragility	Share with confreres or with specialists the difficulties one has experienced and whose effects are obvious in day-to-day living.
	Faltering Health	Learn to recognise the signs of tiredness and sickness. Adapt ones activities to one's physical capacities and to one's age.

<i>Spiritual growth</i>	No time for personal prayer, nonparticipation in community prayer or annual retreat.	Make out a timetable where prayer will have a clearly defined place as one of the important times in one's life. Schedule a time for retreat in one's year planner.
<i>Apostolic involvement</i>	A private agenda and a loss of taste for the tasks that have been assigned.	Check that one has the competencies for the assigned task and re-learn how to make oneself available. Check to see if there is a need to change one's place of apostolic work.
	Disagreements with others involved in the apostolate	Improve one's ability to communicate. Verify that my formation allows me to actively participate in the work.
	Poor participation in reflection on apostolic commitment	Accept the questioning, go to sessions, participate in the meetings, read books which have to do with my involvement. How long is it since I last read a theological book?
<i>Religious Life</i>	Accumulation of material goods and a failure to share financially	Re-learn solidarity and holding all things in common (SRL 65)
	Exclusive and inappropriate relationships	Question oneself regularly on one's relations with others as well as one's transparency in one's relational life.
	Individualism and a failure to listen to others	Accept words of contradiction which propose another way of doing things. Dis-

		cover the importance of community discernment.
<i>Community Life</i>	Imposing my way of seeing things	See what needs to change in oneself in order to be open to the point of view held by others.
	Difficult relationships with the confreres	Despite divergences and difficulties, show profound respect to the confreres.
	The community is merely a place of passage which provides me with food and shelter. I am often absent.	Seek out the deep reasons for such absences? Make the effort to participate in community meetings. Explain the absences and check my use of time.

IV. SPECIALISED FORMATION

107. There is a clear distinction to be made between ‘specialised’ formation and ‘ongoing’ formation. The latter concerns every single confrere, while specialised formation is when certain confreres are asked to undertake extended specialised studies with a view to acquiring a deeper professional competence in a particular field.

1. GENERAL GUIDELINES

108. IN RESPONSE TO THE NEEDS OF THE CONGREGATION

Such studies are not aimed at personal improvement in a narrow sense; they are undertaken as a response to the needs of the apostolate and of formation.

The areas concerned are many, depending on the current involvements of the Congregation. Initial formation needs formators and teachers, who have taken time out to prepare for their future task. Other areas have to do with our particular identity: theology of mission, Spiritan spirituality (General Chapter of Torre d’Aguilha, 2004, TA 1.3.3), anthropology, inter-religious dialogue etc. But more recent developments mean that we need specialists in JPIC, ministering to refugees, health care, education, lobbying (TA 3.4), economics, political science, social communications, etc.

It is the task of superiors of circumscriptions and their councils, and sometimes of Unions of circumscriptions, to look at the needs and decide how to respond. They will consult with those in charge of the local Churches to define these needs.

109. WHO DOES IT CONCERN?

Specialised training is not a right, nor a reward, and even less a way that superiors can deal with difficult confreres! It is a mission that a confrere receives from his own superior and his council for an agreed period of time. As with every mission in our Congregation, we do not give it to ourselves; a mission is given to us by our superiors (SRL 77.1). So it is the superiors of circumscriptions and their councils who ask confreres to specialise, in accordance with their recognised competences or their ability to undertake such specialisation. It must never be the confreres themselves who insist on doing specialised studies.

109.1 If a confrere is on appointment outside his circumscription of origin, the superior of the circumscription of appointment will consult with the superior of the circumscription of origin before approaching the confrere to undertake such studies.

109.2 If the superior of his circumscription of origin wishes to ask a confrere to specialise while he is still appointed to another circumscription, he will discuss it with the current superior of this confrere before taking any further steps.

110. WHEN DOES IT TAKE PLACE?

Normally, it will only be after several years of active missionary work that a confrere will be asked to undertake specialised studies. This gives those who have completed initial formation time to move away from the world of studies and get to know and experience the realities of missionary life.

However, when an urgent need arises, or when the projected studies will be lengthy (e.g. biblical studies), they can be started earlier.

110.1 In such a case, the superiors of the confreres concerned will inform the General Council of their intentions and of the nature and length of the proposed courses.

110.2 The dialogue with the General Council will include the future mission appointment of the confrere concerned.

110.3 The confrere will then receive an appointment from the General Council which will include the proposed specialisation.

111. THE LENGTH OF SPECIALISED STUDIES

Of their nature, some specialisations need a lengthy period. This is particularly the case with doctorates.

The time required for the particular programme will be clarified from the beginning. After a licence or a masters has been acquired, it is the superior of the circumscription and his council, after consultation with the university, who may ask a confrere to proceed to a doctorate.

112. WHERE WOULD SUCH STUDIES TAKE PLACE?

There are many possible places, depending on the nature of the specialisation. In some cases, it is necessary to be registered in a university; in others, the formation proceeds through specific sessions and placements which are needed to acquire a recognised qualification. One can also make use of the possibilities offered by distance-learning.

When choosing the location, it is important to look for a place where the confreres will be able to live in a Spiritan community.

112.1 Communities are encouraged to make themselves open to such confreres, irrespective of where they come from (Itaici 36.3.1).

112.2 If it proves impossible to live in a Spiritan community, everything should be done to ensure that confrere does not feel abandoned.

112.3 If the confrere concerned has to live in a circumscription other than his circumscription of appointment, before any decision is taken, the superiors will ensure that the provisions of SRL 182.1 are observed, according to the amendments inserted after the General Chapter of Torre d’Aguilha and the further precisions of the General Council made in October, 2005¹.

113. FINANCING SPECIALISED STUDIES

Before sending a confrere to do specialised studies, the superior who sends him must clarify how he will be financed: his board and lodging, fees, insurance, travel expenses etc. If the confrere can obtain a scholarship, the superior will make sure that it will cover the whole time needed for these studies.

114. A SIGNED AGREEMENT

Once all the above points have been established and clarified, an agreement will be drawn up and signed by the superior of the circumscription of origin, the confrere concerned and the superior of the receiving circumscription. A copy of this agreement will be sent to the General Council.

2. THE SPECIAL CASE OF TRAINING OF FORMATORS

115. The training of formators is one of the most serious concerns for circumscriptions; not only do they need confreres specialised in

¹ “Some clarifications regarding SRL 182.1” 20/10/2005, GC 05/06.

different subjects, but they also need confreres specially trained for formation work.

A. REMINDER OF THE GUIDELINES

116. The Rule of Life states that the choice of formators is an important decision of a circumscription council; their appointment is made by the major superior with the deliberative agreement of his Council (SRL 246.1.6).

This provision follows on another requirement: “The circumscription shall make long-term plans for changes in personnel for formation work. Appointments should be made so as to allow a reasonable time for the members appointed to prepare for the work” (SRL 105.2).

117. The General Chapters of Itaici and Maynooth gave a strong reminder of the importance of the training of formators:

“Clearly important in bridging cultural gaps are formators who can promote intercultural respect and understanding. There is recognition of the need of a long term plan for the training of formators, and of the Congregation’s need of specialists in the human sciences. The composition of the staff could include laymen and women” (Itaici 36.2.3).

“The training of formators is a priority and must be one of the main preoccupations of all those in positions of responsibility over the next six years” (Maynooth 2.31).

118. In many places, the General Chapter of Torre d’Aguilha went into more details concerning formators:

118.1 “Formators, lecturers and future community leaders will receive special preparation, including a prior experience of living in an international community so that they can facilitate this process for others” (TA 2.15).

118.2 “The houses of formation of new circumscriptions are often part of a consortium. In these houses the formators will provide the young confreres with the elements of Spiritan formation. They will take special care to make the link between intellectual reflection and the apostolic life in order to help the students to interpret what they see and hear” (TA 4.7).

118.3 “Prior to taking on responsibility in formation, it is desirable that a confrere should have had a fairly lengthy experience of transcultural mission among the poor, if possible, working in an international group. He will be given adequate time to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge in the areas of formation, spiritual accompaniment, spirituality and Spiritan history. The personal lifestyle and integrity of the formator is a witness to those in formation” (TA 6.17).

B. CHOICE OF FORMATORS

119. The planned choice of formators (SRL 105.2) is an important decision of the circumscription superior, who, after discernment, asks for a deliberative vote of the council. “*Certain decisions require, according to general law, the deliberative vote of the council of the circumscription*” (SRL 246.1.6).

120. Before seeking the approval of his council, the superior will seek, through the correspondent of his circumscription, the opinion of the General Council concerning those put in charge of formation communities (First cycle, Novitiate and Second cycle), according to the recommendations of the Enlarged General Council of Ariccia 2008 (cf. *Anima Una* 62, *Building on Rock*,: 3.3.3).

121. It is already taken for granted that national or ethnic considerations must not influence the choice of formators, but circumscription councils must look at other criteria.

121.1 The following will not be appointed as formators:

121.1.1 A confrere in his first years of missionary life.

121.1.2 A confrere who has not proved himself in missionary work.

121.1.3 A confrere who only thinks of his own career and would neglect the students.

121.1.4 A confrere who seeks his own appointment to a formation house.

121.1.5 A confrere who is authoritarian, paternalistic or who reflects a certain “clericalism”.

121.1.6 A confrere who has serious personal problems (on the level of the vow of chastity, of finances, of his attitude towards authority, or of a psychological nature).

121.2 A careful distinction will be made between the role of the formator and that of lecturer; a formator is not necessarily a lecturer or one who gives courses.

121.3 The following more positive criteria must be taken into account:

121.3.1 The maturity of the confrere.

121.3.2 His psychological balance.

121.3.3 A sufficiently long and positive apostolic experience, preferably among the poor.

121.3.4 Faithfulness to personal and community prayer.

121.3.5 Adequate knowledge of Spiritan history and spirituality; a formator must love and be committed to the Congregation.

121.3.6 The integrity of the confrere regarding his religious life and relationships.

121.3.7 Good judgment and skills of discernment; he should have a certain wisdom.

121.3.8 A respect for dialogue and the ability to take decisions prudently.

121.3.9 Respect for others and the courage to remind them of their responsibilities.

121.3.10 Ability to work in a team with others and to share responsibilities.

121.3.11 Ability to concentrate on the job of formation. A formator often receives requests from other congregations or gets involved in other activities; however, being a formator demands an adequate and constant presence in the formation community.

122. If the formation community is international, it is important that the choice of formators reflects this internationality as far as possible. Circumscriptions are therefore asked to co-operate in this area.

123. Note that the choice of the spiritual directors is very important in the development of the candidates (SRL 104). It falls to the formation director or the circumscription superior to clearly indicate to

the students those whom they may choose. Spiritual directors should be well-chosen and prepared for this role; it should not be left to chance.

If a formation community only has few formators (two or three) it would be better to find spiritual directors (male or female) outside the community so as to ensure a good staff discernment.

124. For pastoral placement of whatever kind, it is important that those responsible for formation ensure that the young confrere has a mentor who will support him, reflect with him and help him evaluate his experience. The circumscription superior will collect the opinions of the confreres in order to put together a report on the young confrere's pastoral placement, the contents of which will be made known to the young confrere before it is sent to those responsible for his formation. The latter will pay the most serious attention to these reports.

C. CONTENT OF THE TRAINING FOR FORMATORS

125. The training of formators touches on several different disciplines which are often complementary and of which a theoretical knowledge is not enough. It is based on a demanding examination of life informed by personal experience.

126. In a general way, for formators, the following will need to be taken into account:

126.1 Spiritual aspect: good knowledge of spirituality in general and Spiritan spirituality in particular; it is not only a question of a theoretical knowledge but of a daily lived experience. This aspect is completed by sessions of serious study of the Rule of Life.

126.2 Psychological aspects: a future formator will follow programmes which will help him to know himself better. Without himself being an expert, the formator must have a good basic knowledge of psychology, so as to facilitate the human development of the candidates. In general, candidates in formation are sent to professional psychologists or, when there is a need, to psychotherapists to help them reach a genuine self-knowledge.

126.3 Systems of self-knowledge and acceptance through accompaniment, regular evaluations and discernment.

126.4 Sociological aspects: knowledge and practice of group dynamics.

126.5 Knowledge of Church documents and of Canon Law concerning formation to the religious life, especially Canons 641 to 661.

126.6 Specific preparation to carry out a reflection on pastoral work.

126.7 Theology of consecrated life.

126.8 Philosophy of formation and models of formation.

127. FOR DIRECTORS OF NOVICES IN PARTICULAR:

127.1 Deepening of knowledge of Spiritan spirituality, through study of the founders' writings and the history of the Congregation.

127.2 The originality of Spiritan spirituality in relation to other great spiritualities.

127.3 Discernment according to Libermann.

128. FOR SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS:

The practice of spiritual direction; knowledge of the principles of discernment. Theoretical knowledge and practice go together, as well as the supervision of this practice by qualified personnel.

D. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

129. The following outlines the financial responsibilities at different levels in the Congregation for the training of formators:

129.1 The General Council co-ordinates the formation of formators in collaboration with the circumscriptions and the Unions.

129.2 Each circumscription sets aside a part of its budget for the formation of formators.

129.3 Each year, 5% of the *Cor Unum* fund will be set aside for the formation of formators (Bagamoyo 5.6).

129.4 In the name of solidarity, some circumscriptions already take charge of confreres for 3rd cycle studies. The circumscriptions who can afford it could concentrate more on supporting confreres training to be formators.

129.5 The circumscriptions and the Generalate will seek agencies who will take financial charge of the formation of some confreres.

E. PROCESS OF TRAINING OF FORMATORS

130. The training of formators is a long process, and requires at least one year in which a confrere must free himself from other duties. If a confrere is chosen to do specialised studies with a view to teaching in a formation community, he must also have some specific training as a formator before taking up such an appointment.

131. A number of courses are available in various countries where Spiritans are to be found. This information is available to superiors from the office of the Coordinator for formation at the Generalate.

132. To help them in their work, formators themselves will keep up to date by following courses, in-service training and attending sessions while still in the formation community. Regular meetings of Formation Teams are also a way of ensuring this ongoing formation for formators.

F. ANNEX: THE PARTICULAR CASES OF FORMATION COMMUNITIES WHICH DEPEND ON UNIONS OF CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS

133. In these cases, the choice of formators, the formation programme and the financial arrangements will be decided by the coordinator of the Union and the other major superiors of the Union.

APPENDIX A

SOME IMPORTANT REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

134. DOCUMENTS OF VATICAN II

- AG The Decree *Ad Gentes*, 1965: guidelines for mission
- PC The Decree *Perfectae Caritatis*, 1965: the renewal of religious life
- GE The Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis*, 1965: christian education
- OT The Decree *Optatum Totius*, 1965: the training of priests
- CD The Decree *Christus Dominus*, 1965: bishops and the formation of priests

135. PAPAL DOCUMENTS

- Paul VI Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 1975
- J. Paul II Encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*, 1990
- J. Paul II Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, 1992
- J. Paul II Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata*, 1996
- Benedict XVI Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate*, 2009.
- Benedict XVI *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Africae Munus*, 2012.
- Benedict XVI Apostolic Letter issued *Motu Proprio Ministrorum Institutio* whereby the Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus* is modified and responsibility for seminaries is transferred from the Congregation for Catholic Education to the Congregation for the Clergy, 2013.

136. DOCUMENTS OF ROMAN CONGREGATIONS

Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life:

- *Directives on formation in Religious Institutes*, 1990.

CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION:

- *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, 1970.
- *The Study of the Fathers of the Church* in the training of priests, 1989.
- *Directions for the training of seminarians with regard to problems relating to marriage and the family*, 1995.
- *Instruction Concerning the Criteria for the Discernment of Vocations with regard to Persons with Homosexual Tendencies in view of their Admission to the Seminary and to Holy Orders*, 2005.
- *Guidelines for the use of Psychology in the admission and formation of candidates for the priesthood*, 2008.
- *Decree on the Reform of Ecclesiastical Studies of Philosophy*, 2011.

CONGREGATION FOR THE CLERGY:

- *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Priests*, 1994.

Guidelines for the implementation of *Pastores Dabo Vobis*.

137. SECAM (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar)

The Training of Formators, Accra and Nairobi, 1987-88.

APPENDIX B

PROPOSALS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING HELD IN DURBAN ON SPIRITAN REFUGEE MINISTRY IN 2007²

FORMATION:

- That communities of formation offer to students an appropriate introduction to Refugee Ministry.
- That ongoing specialised training in such areas as Management Skills, Legal Affairs, Advocacy, Lobbying, Psychology, Trauma Healing, Reconciliation, Peace Building, Social Analysis and Research be available as needed to those who will be engaged in this ministry.
- Those already engaged in Refugee Ministry are willing to:
 - work with formators and provide in-service Training of Trainers.
 - offer experience, accompaniment, guidance and support in our projects for those with an interest in Refugee ministry — including “stage”, summer vacation and pastoral placements.
 - visit circumscriptions and formation communities to act as guest speakers/lecturers and to share experiences and insight into this ministry.

PERSONNEL:

- That more people with an aptitude for Refugee Ministry be identified, resourced and developed.
- That preparation for appointment to Refugee Ministry be strengthened at every stage.

² Taken from the Issue of Spiritan Life No 17 on *Spiritan Ministry with Refugees, displaced peoples and asylum seekers* pg. 107-108.

- That our living and working collaboratively in international community is a powerful instrument of witness in our ministry.
- As the building of trust is an integral part of this ministry, the long-term commitment of both the Congregation and specific personnel is necessary.
- That more Spiritans also make themselves available for emergency response and short-term placement in Refugee Ministry.

MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING:

- That good social analysis, adequate planning, research and "in built" evaluation are essential prior to Spiritan engagement in any particular refugee project.
- That pastoral methodologies enabling collaboration with, and empowerment of, refugees be a primary consideration.
- That adequate coordination of Spiritans engaged in Refugee Ministry is necessary at all levels in the Congregation.
- That we will explore the potential of networking with other "like minded" people and agencies.
- That the care of personnel be built in to our management structures.