

**Formation Documents for Dominican Student Friars
of the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus
(Western U.S.A.)**

Ratio Studiorum Generalis (RSG), English, 2017

Ratio Formationis Generalis (RFG), English, 2016

Ratio Studiorum Particularis (RSP), English, 2019

Ratio Formationis Particularis (RFP), English, 2019

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RATIO STUDIORUM GENERALIS



FRATRES ORDINIS PRÆDICATORUM
CURIA GENERALITIA

Rome, 07 march 2017

Prot. 50/17/123 Promulgation of the Ratio Studiorum Generalis

Letter of promulgation of the *Ratio Studiorum Generalis*

Dear brothers,

Study, preach and found convents! Just after the celebration of the Jubilee of the confirmation of the Order, it is in the dynamism of this renewed joy to be sent to preach the Gospel that I promulgate this new *Ratio Studiorum Generalis*.

We are sent, as disciples and seekers of God, to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God which is near. Disciples, founding their lives on listening to the Word, finding their joy in the wonder of the mystery of a God who hears his people, and going to him to reveal in fullness the promise of the covenant and to fulfil it. Disciples who, day after day, based on a contemplative study of the Word and the tradition of the Church, seek tirelessly to discern the signs of the times beginning from the friendship that is offered to them by the One who is the way, the truth and the life. Seekers of God who, placing themselves in the school of their Lord, go to meet all those who seek the truth, entering into dialogue with them and studying with them, like the first brothers Dominic sent to the universities. « Thus our spirit ought to be open both to the Spirit of God and to the hearts of those to whom the word of God is being preached, so that it may obtain a communication of the light, the love and the strength of the Paraclete. Consequently, the brothers should learn to recognize the Spirit working in the midst of God's people, and to discern the treasures hidden in the various forms of human culture, by which human nature is more fully manifested and new paths to truth are opened » (LCO 99, § II). Yes, it is true, an Order may have been instituted for the purpose of study, because it is totally dedicated to the evangelization of the Word of God (LCO 1, § III).

This *Ratio*, of which the original and approved text is in English, replaces the one approved by brother Timothy Radcliffe in 1993. It is the fruit of an intense dialogue within the entire Order, and I would like to express here a deep gratitude for all those who have contributed to its development. Because it wants to support the Preachers in their vocation of

learning how to become servants of the mystery of Truth in this world, it places, at the heart of study, the Word of God. Guided by the long and fine tradition of study in the Order, from the great masters Albert and Thomas down to our contemporaries, it proposes a method which indicates both the demands of contemplative study and the way in which this study is essential to the full realization of the vocation of the preacher. Proposing fundamental principles common to all, it underlines both the importance that each particular province should translate these into its own cultural context and adapt them to the specific vocations of the clerical brothers and of the co-operator brothers, both united in the same dynamic at the service of evangelization. In this way the dialogue initiated in the development of this *Ratio* will continue, taking into account the intercultural reality of the Order today, as well as the complementarity of vocations within the Order, seeking always to establish a stronger « culture of study » which carries the preaching project. A culture that is both rooted in fidelity to the tradition of the Church, and gives courage for encounter and for dialogue with contemporary forms of knowledge, while learning how to deploy, in contemporary contexts, the proclamation of the Gospel in the friendship of fraternity.

Study, preach and found communities. In promulgating this *Ratio Studiorum*, I express once again the hope that it will help each of us, and each of our communities, to deepen and to express their joy in being preachers in the contemplative study of Truth.

f. Bruno Cadore op

fr. Bruno Cadore, O.P.
Master of the Order

FIRST PART THE INTELLECTUAL FORMATION OF THE BROTHERS

Chapter I GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. In our time, because of the many changes in the world and in the Church, as well as the complexity of new cultural situations, the Order of Preachers takes most seriously "the prophetic office by which the Gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed everywhere both by word and example" (Fund. Const. § V). In a comparable period of social change and intellectual ferment, Saint Dominic founded his Order of Preachers with the mission to study the Word of God unceasingly and to preach it with grace and joy. He intimately linked study to the ministry of salvation (LCO 76), and sent his brothers to the universities so that they could place themselves at the service of the Church by making this Word known and understood. Thus our Order, by virtue of its very title, shares in the apostolic task of penetrating more deeply into the Gospel and preaching it "with due consideration for the conditions of persons, times and places" (Fund. Const., *ibid.*).

2. The tradition of the Order stresses the need of the Preachers "to cultivate the inclination of human beings toward the truth" (LCO 77, § II). From the moment that he enters the Order, a Dominican embarks upon the search for truth. He is introduced to this quest when he arrives at the novitiate, proceeds with it through his years as a student, and remains committed to it during his years of active ministry and beyond. In this undertaking he comes to a deeper understanding of the world, of those around him, and of himself. In fact, he gradually recognizes that this pursuit of truth is no other than a longing for God, as St. Augustine said so well in the first lines of his *Confessions*. In seeking a truth that is objective, knowable, and real, with the help of God's grace he discovers the Trinitarian God who is Truth himself. He is able to seek God and attain him because he is able to seek and attain the truth. It can be said that the human being is *capax Dei* because he is also *capax veritatis*.

3. The truth is not a reality that one can possess or can claim as one's own. It is the goal or *telos* that draws one ever forward and leads one more deeply into its mystery. It would therefore be a mistake to define the truth too precisely or to limit the scope of the search too narrowly. A Dominican seeks the truth everywhere. Most likely it is in his personal prayer and in his meditation upon the Sacred Scriptures that he first encounters the truth in all of its power and beauty; for it is in the silence of contemplation that he becomes aware of the One who is the source of all that is real. He comes to a deeper grasp of it in the celebration of the liturgy and in the life that he shares with his brothers, in his conversations at table, in his times of leisure, and in moments when he has the privilege to accompany another brother in illness, suffering, or personal crisis. He is transformed by the truth in his preaching, his teaching, and his service to the people of God. In the fidelity of the men and women whom he serves, in the integrity that he sees in their lives, in their weaknesses and failures, as well as in their questions, their struggles, and the challenges that they offer to him, he is made vulnerable to a richer and fuller experience of the truth. Illuminated and strengthened by the gift of faith, over time he comes to believe and understand more fully that the Truth which he has sought is no other than Our Lord Jesus Christ, who shares with the Father and the Holy Spirit the same divine life.

4. The search for truth leads directly to the study of *Sacra Doctrina*. It begins with the contemplation of the Word of God, it is nourished and sustained by the Word, and it culminates in our loving union with the Word. This Word, in which God shares himself in Sacred Scripture and in the Tradition of the Church, must always be the wellspring of a Dominican search for truth. In what God has revealed, and perhaps more importantly in whom God has revealed himself to be, a Dominican finds the certainty, the confidence, and the commitment to proceed with his quest. A brother learns to seek the knowledge of the natural and the social sciences, the wisdom of philosophy, and the lessons of history, especially the history of the Church and its reflection upon the Word of God over the centuries. He explores the truth through his study of dogmatic and moral theology. He encounters it through his reflection upon the sacraments and pastoral practice. In a particular way, he pursues the truth in the lives and thought of the great figures of our Dominican tradition, and most excellently, in St. Thomas Aquinas. By reading the signs of the times in the light of faith, he learns to understand and to share this life-giving word of Truth through the theology and practice of the art of preaching.

5. This encounter with the Word of God that deepens and grows over the course of his life invites the Dominican brother to use his reason, his understanding, and his ability to evaluate, to analyze, and to synthesize. When these gifts of human intelligence are elevated and brought to perfection by grace, they assist him more surely and more swiftly in his search for truth. This liberating and creative activity enables him to better grasp the current crisis, where study is too often understood in terms that are functional and geared to specialization, without the time required for careful reading, serious reflection, and patient investigation of the sources. In many disciplines, including theology, there can be a facile appeal to authority or recourse to quick and simple answers. A sense of nuance is lost as rational discourse gives way to slogans, polemics, and ideology. The result can be a pluralism that tends toward relativism or a unity that becomes uniform.

6. In this situation, we are invited to propose a different model of study, another way to search for truth. The Order has as its patrimony a rich intellectual tradition that understands study as contemplative, synthetic, grounded in the real, and reliant upon reason informed by faith. It forever asks the questions “Is this true?”, “Why is this true?”, and “How is this true?” Ours is a philosophical, theological, and spiritual heritage that can offer clarifying perspectives and responses to perennial human questions as well as to the critical issues of our time. We must therefore maintain, promote, and continually develop this Dominican understanding of study, the fruit of which is expressed in our theology and philosophy as one of the Church’s great “schools.”

7. In the Order, there is a profound unity between our study and the other elements of our life. Our study as Dominicans cannot be separated from the fraternal life that we share, from the prayer we offer in our liturgical celebrations or in the silence of our hearts, from the mission of preaching and care of those who have been entrusted to us by the Church. All of this is related in the vocation of each brother, “in dulcedine societatis quaerens veritatem” (St Albert). This is why this *Ratio* must be understood in the broader framework of the *Ratio Formationis Generalis*, which gives the principles for all of Dominican formation. It is thanks to this vision of the *Ratio Formationis Generalis* that we can see how our religious life offers a suitable environment for our study, and how our study contributes to the actualization of our Dominican vocation.

8. Such study does not end with the completion of a Dominican brother's initial formation. The search for truth and the love of study will animate the life of a brother for the rest of his life. The truth will challenge him, will require his attentive listening to others, and will demand his own ongoing conversion so that he may witness to Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, with deeper conviction, greater freedom, and fuller humanity. For some this will involve a commitment to higher or complementary studies. For every Dominican it will demand that he acquire the *habitus* of study, in which its practice becomes constitutive of his life as a contemplative. It will be his responsibility to cultivate this *habitus* with the help of his community. But, as with all good things, his life-long formation in study and his desire to pursue the truth is a gift from God, part of the grace of his vocation.

9. And since "before all else, our study should aim principally and ardently at this time that we might be able to be useful to the souls of our neighbors" (Prologue, Primitive Constitutions), the brothers should remember that their life, dedicated to the search for truth, has a character which is truly apostolic. To apply oneself to assiduous study, as the purpose of the Order requires, is indispensable for our mission in the Church to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A Dominican studies then in order that he may come to know the truth, that in knowing it he may love it, and that in loving it he may share it joyfully with those to whom he has been sent.

10. Every province, even one without students, must prepare a *Ratio Studiorum Particularis* (LCO 89-95, 226-244) that determines the specific program for organizing the intellectual life of the province, with the necessary guidelines for promoting the life of study of the brothers. The *Ratio Particularis* should be faithful to LCO, the General Chapters, this *Ratio Generalis*, and the directives of the local Church, taking into account the concrete cultural context that it must also address (cf. Appendix I).

Chapter II

THE PROGRESSIVE STRUCTURE OF STUDIES

Section A. Institutional Formation

11. It is for each province to determine the precise program of institutional studies for all brothers who are called to the preaching mission of the Order, whether as cooperator brothers or as deacons and priests. For brothers who will be ordained, the *Ratio Studiorum Particularis* must take into account the program of studies that the Church requires for them, including the content of studies, the duration of studies, the level of knowledge and academic competence to be attained, and the pastoral preparation that is needed. It will be especially important for the *Ratio Particularis* to make clear how these requirements of the Church will be satisfied within the framework of our Dominican intellectual formation, which is the object of this *Ratio Generalis*. Likewise, for brothers who will contribute to the

preaching mission of the Order as cooperator brothers, the *Ratio Particularis* must determine how they will receive their intellectual formation in philosophy and theology, based upon the same principles but responding to the specific needs of their distinct vocation. In this way the *Ratio Particularis* is to make sure that every brother in institutional studies will be able to participate fully in the life and mission of the Order and have a clear understanding of our intellectual tradition, as this is set forth below.

Art. I. Goals, Principles, and Objectives

12. Even as it nourishes contemplation and fosters the living of the evangelical counsels, our study is directed to the preaching of the Word of God and has this as its goal. During institutional formation every brother should develop a lifelong love of study that will assist him in assuming a clear identity as a Dominican preacher. Moreover, in the program of institutional formation preaching should be the principle that defines and unifies the curriculum.

13. To attain this goal institutional studies in the Order must clearly reflect the centrality of the Word of God, taking into account principally:

- 1) Divine revelation, its transmission in Sacred Scripture and Tradition, and its relationship to theology, according to the Magisterium of the Church, particularly the teaching of the Second Vatican Council;
- 2) Sacred Scripture, the methods for its interpretation, and its study, which should be “the soul” of our theology (*Dei Verbum*, 24);
- 3) The sources of theology in the texts and monuments of the Tradition;
- 4) The fundamental Importance of philosophy, especially in our Dominican tradition;
- 5) A clear and accurate comprehension of Catholic doctrine;
- 6) The teaching and method of St. Thomas Aquinas, including the significance of the Word of God in his theology, the reception of his work and its influence over the centuries, and the critical appropriation of his ideas;
- 7) The liturgy of the Church and of the Order, which makes the Lord present in Word and in Sacrament;
- 8) The value of human experience and the questions that it poses for a deeper understanding of the Word of God;
- 9) The significance and practice of dialogue in Dominican theology.

14. The objectives of this institutional formation, which should be adapted to the specific vocation of those preparing either for ordained ministry or for service to the Order and Church as cooperator brothers, include the following:

- 1) To exhibit a clear grasp of the content and methodologies of the different theological disciplines;
- 2) To read and interpret texts comprehensively and critically;
- 3) To ask questions, to identify problems, to analyze them with appropriate tools, and to offer solutions;
- 4) To form critical judgments reliably;

- 5) To make connections within a discipline and across disciplines;
- 6) To acquire the competences necessary for evangelization, including those relating to public speaking or identified with modern methods of teaching and homiletics;
- 7) To develop skills for listening, for dialogue, and for working with others, including the proficiencies needed for forming and building up communities ;
- 8) To acquire the ability to use digital technologies in research, preaching, and pastoral activity;
- 9) To attain a good level of oral fluency in a foreign language, especially one of the official languages of the Order, in order to foster its international character;
- 10) To construct a personal synthesis and to create an intellectual framework where different theological and philosophic perspectives, social, economic and political realities, and pastoral experiences, can continue to be integrated throughout a brother's life.

Art. II. Methodology

15. These goals and objectives are attained through:

- 1) At least a six-year cycle of studies, which should be adapted to the specific vocation of the brother, his previous studies, and his need for an integrated and full institutional formation as a Dominican preacher:
 - 2 years of philosophy,
 - 4 years of theology;
- 2) A clear, accurate, and engaging presentation of the different disciplines:
 - With the study and use of primary sources, in preference to textbooks and manuals,
 - With teaching materials that are regularly revised in light of current scholarship,
 - With bibliographies and course syllabi,
 - With digital media and other new forms of technology, where this is possible,
 - With the opportunity to engage in inter-disciplinary studies,
 - With reference to other academic fields, various pastoral situations, and current cultural realities;
- 3) A pedagogy that is student-centered, reflecting the spirit of inquiry found in the medieval *disputatio*:
 - With a dynamic classroom environment,
 - With awareness of the local culture and global context from which the questions of students emerge today and with a desire to engage these perspectives meaningfully,
 - With opportunities for the students to assist one another in their mastery of the material,
 - With professors who are available to students both in the classroom and outside of it,
 - With academic requirements that demand critical thinking and research, and not mere memorization;
- 4) The promotion of common study and research:
 - With professors establishing collegial relationships with one another through the sharing of research and ideas,
 - With students studying together and working together on research projects,
 - With professors and students forming a community of study and mutual learning,
 - With the creation of academic networks that extend beyond the center of studies;

- 5) The use of appropriate instruments of assessment:
- With a view to authentic intellectual formation and not merely the completion of course credits or academic requirements,
 - With methods of evaluation that seek to determine whether a synthetic understanding of the material has been acquired,
 - With a comprehensive examination at the end of institutional studies, which is proper to the Order, that will evaluate the student's global understanding, personal integration, and synthesis of the different fields of theology, while allowing for necessary adjustment when students study in a center outside of the Order in which such an examination is already required.

Art. III. Dominican Intellectual Tradition: Areas of Competence

16. In addition to his knowledge and understanding of theology generally, every brother must be familiar with the contents of the intellectual tradition of the Order. This includes not only brothers who are studying for ordained or lay ministry in centers of institutional studies of the Order but also those who are pursuing their studies in academic centers outside of the Order. The *Ratio Studiorum Particularis* must make clear how the intellectual tradition of the Order is to be transmitted to all brothers in institutional formation in each of the following areas:

17. *The Word of God.* As preachers of the Word of God, our brothers must have a firm foundation in Sacred Scripture. Their formation must include the rigorous study of the human word of the sacred author in its historical, cultural, linguistic, and literary context, as well as the theological meaning that is derived from the text, in keeping with the interpretation and teaching of the Church, so that it is the very Word of God which nourishes our brothers and is proclaimed by them as the authentic and living Gospel.

18. *Philosophy.* The Order has always valued the study of philosophy and recognized its proper autonomy from theology, even as the latter helps to make philosophy more fruitful. Not only does philosophy offer an explanation of reality through the use of reason, it gives principles for understanding and organizing our knowledge of reality, as well as the grammar for rational discourse with others. In addition to providing an intellectual framework for the understanding of the Catholic faith, as expressed in *Fides et Ratio* and the Acts of the General Chapter of Providence (ACG Providence 2001, 118 and 119), philosophy serves as a vehicle for dialogue by engaging other cultures, religious beliefs, and intellectual positions. For this reason there should be at least two years of study in this discipline, preferably more, with the attainment of a baccalaureate or license. Along with this study of philosophy, our brothers should acquire knowledge of the content and methodologies of the social sciences, such as history, psychology, sociology, and cultural anthropology.

19. *The History of Theology.* Not only must our brothers study Church history, they must be acquainted with the important texts from the tradition, patristic, medieval, and post-reformation, which have shaped the history of theology. In a special way, our students should be familiar with the history of Dominican theology and the contribution of the doctors, St. Albert the Great, St. Catherine of Siena,

and St. Thomas Aquinas, the last of whom they must study critically, making the necessary distinctions between his time and ours, so that they might understand his method and significance for Catholic theology.

20. *The History of the Order.* Our brothers must learn about the history of the Order, not simply its intellectual history, but also the religious and spiritual history that has helped to make the theological tradition of the Order so rich. This study should consider the great figures of our past, including brothers and sisters who have witnessed in recent times to a living and robust Dominican theology.

21. *A Dominican Theological Vision.* Arising from the insight of St. Dominic that study should be linked to the ministry of salvation (LCO 76) and developed by those in the Order who have followed him, especially St. Thomas Aquinas, our “best teacher and model” (LCO 82), there is a Dominican vision of theology with its own dogmatic, moral, spiritual, and pastoral emphases. Placed within a framework of wisdom, this philosophical and theological perspective considers God in himself and all things in relationship to Him as their beginning and end. For those who learn and experience the divine (*discens et patiens divina*), all things become worthy of theological inquiry and are made suitable for preaching. By its wish to engage all that is real, a Dominican approach can be said to interpret the signs of the times. It insists upon the fundamental unity, intelligibility, and meaning of creation, the dignity of the individual in his concrete and historical situation, and the goodness of the world, which, despite its suffering from the effects of sin, is sustained by a provident God who is infinitely knowable and infinitely loveable. It recognizes that human beings, who have been made in God’s image and likeness and who have been restored by his grace, have the capacity to know God and to love him, the one who is Truth and Goodness himself. It emphasizes the centrality of Our Lord Jesus Christ in this process, whose saving life, death, and resurrection enables humanity to attain God through Christ’s continuing presence in his Church. It affirms a vision of the moral life, where, by the practice of the virtues, especially those that have been informed by grace, humanity can arrive at true happiness and participate in God’s own divine life, the shared life of the Trinity.

22. *The Dynamics of Dialogue.* In the intellectual tradition of the Order, dialogue with one another, with other people, and with other communities has a significant place. Students must learn the skills necessary for dialogue with other Christian churches, with the great religious traditions of the world, with contemporary culture, and with modern science. They must have opportunities for interdisciplinary studies and for exploring other academic fields and systems of knowledge. Within this dynamic of dialogue our brothers must develop the ability to make connections between theology and actual pastoral situations and to recognize the reciprocal relationship between them.

23. *Preaching.* Our preaching should be informed by our study of the Word of God, our knowledge of theology, and our attentiveness to the world in which we live. Dominican preaching, therefore, should be the culmination of all that has preceded it. Our brothers must study the theology of preaching and homiletics and receive guidance in its practice so as to become compelling preachers of the Gospel.

Section B.
Additional Studies and Complementary Studies

24. Additional studies are valuable to the brothers and to their provinces, providing greater expertise for their apostolic work, useful credentials, and more flexibility for the mission. For this reason all brothers are to pursue two additional years of study after institutional formation has been completed. These studies are intended to help brothers to broaden their knowledge of a given field or to develop greater competence in the pastoral or administrative realm. Some brothers may satisfy this expectation of the *Ratio* by following a formal program of complementary studies, resulting in a master's degree, a license, or a doctorate.

25. Although the desire, personal initiative, and capacity of a brother to follow a particular course of additional studies or a program of complementary studies should always be considered, it must be remembered that such studies are to promote the common good of the province and the Order. The province therefore will determine the future requirements of its centers of study, its other academic commitments, and its administrative and apostolic needs according to a provincial plan (LCO 107). Likewise, it is the province, rather than the brother himself, that will assess these needs; and it is the province that will call him to a particular program of additional or complementary studies. With the commission for the intellectual life, the regent of studies will identify brothers for different kinds of future study. In consultation with the prior provincial, the regent will meet with the brothers and present them with a program of studies, after which the provincial will give his final approval. With regard to complementary studies, the provincial, together with the regent, will take into account a brother's age, maturity, and ability for engaging in such studies, as well as the length of time needed to complete them. A brother called to such studies will make a commitment to his province to complete the program by obtaining the degree requested of him within an agreed period of time.

26. A brother may prepare for complementary studies while he is engaged in institutional formation, but he should not generally begin such studies formally until institutional formation has been completed (LCO 244 §II). Although it is always necessary to take into account pastoral formation for our brothers, and the immediate needs of the province, it is advisable not to delay the commencement of complementary studies by more than two years, especially when the conferral of the doctorate is envisaged.

27. As in all things, complementary studies are for the mission. A brother must be prepared to use his academic degree for the intellectual apostolate in which he has been formed. Major superiors should therefore take care to maintain, as much as possible, coherence between a brother's studies and the mission that he has been asked to undertake (cf. n° 75, 1). Nevertheless, even a brother with a doctorate is to remain available for other service to the province, when the mission requires this of him.

Section C.
The Place of Study in Permanent Formation

28. Just as the human, spiritual, and pastoral growth of a brother does not end with the completion of his initial formation, so his intellectual formation does not conclude with institutional studies (cf *Ratio Formationis Generalis* 2016, Part IV, nn. 171-200). Since the *habitus* of study is integral to the vocation of a Dominican, every brother must cultivate it throughout his lifetime, in light of the specificity of his vocation.

29. The responsibility for developing the *habitus* of study belongs first to the brother, then to his local community, and finally to the province.

- I. On the part of the individual brother, it requires both the time for serious study, which is free from other ministerial responsibilities, and the will to pursue this form of contemplation, which has an ascetical and graced character. Like the other elements of our vocation, the desire to study is a free gift from God and an essential aspect of our life (LCO 83).
- II. The local community should also seek to deepen its commitment to study. In this effort the prior of the convent, assisted by the conventual lector, should provide opportunities for shared study, which the lector will organize (LCO 88 §§ I and II).
- III. At the level of the province, the prior provincial, assisted by the promoter of permanent formation, has the responsibility for the permanent formation of the brothers (LCO 89 §§ I and III; 251-ter). To the extent that it concerns study, this responsibility is shared with the regent of studies and the commission for the intellectual life (LCO 93 §I.3). In consultation with the regent, the promoter should decide what shall be proposed to the provincial with regard to the promotion of study in the province.

SECOND PART THE ORGANIZATION OF STUDIES

Chapter I LAWS GOVERNING STUDIES IN THE ORDER

30. In the Order studies are governed by:

- 1) the laws and decrees of the Church as these pertain to study;
- 2) the particular laws of the Order, as these are found in LCO, the Acts of General Chapters, the ordinations of the Master of the Order, the *Ratio Studiorum Generalis* (RSG), and the *Rationes Studiorum Particulares* (RSP).

31. The *Ratio Generalis* provides the fundamental principles for doctrinal unity and the organization of studies throughout the Order. It assists the centers of higher studies in their intellectual mission and guides the preparation of the *Rationes Particulares* of the provinces.

32. The RSP specifies in detail the broad provisions of the RSG, taking into account the unique needs of the province, the requirements of the local Church, and the questions arising from the social, economic, cultural, and intellectual milieu in which the brothers carry out the mission of the Order. Therefore each RSP will give its own emphasis to such topics as ecumenism, inter-religious dialogue, the sociology of religions, and the phenomena of secularization, fundamentalism, and globalization.

33. The RSP is binding upon the province in the same way that the RSG is binding upon the Order. Specific elements of the RSG that the RSP must address are contained in Appendix I, LCO 91 §IV, 92-bis §III, and 237 §I. The RSP is prepared as follows:

- I. The commission for the intellectual life proposes a draft of the RSP to the council of professors of the center of institutional studies for its review, as well as to other centers of study in the province if this is deemed advisable. The RSP is then revised and presented to the prior provincial and his council for their consideration of the text.
- II. Having received the opinion of the commission for the intellectual life and the opinion of the council of professors, the prior provincial, with the vote of his council, presents the RSP to the Master of the Order (LCO 89 § II.2, 231.5). After approval by the Master, the commission for the intellectual life is responsible for the implementation of the RSP.

34. It is recommended that provinces in the same region, especially those with cultural affinities, work together in the preparation of either their individual *Rationes Studiorum Particulares* or a common *Ratio Studiorum Particularis*.

35. In provinces where the brothers follow all or part of their institutional studies in a center outside of the Order, the RSP should include the academic program of this center and should delineate clearly the following:

- 1) the statutes of the center of institutional studies of the province, so long as the requirements of LCO 91 § II can be satisfied;
- 2) the courses, conferences, and other means used to present the intellectual tradition of the Order to brothers who are studying outside of it (nn° 16-23);
- 3) the manner in which the intellectual tradition of the Order will be integrated into the actual program of studies of the students.

Chapter II THE ORGANIZATION OF STUDIES IN THE ORDER

Section A. Those Responsible for Study in the Order

36. Keeping in mind the provisions of LCO and common law, the Master of the Order is responsible for the organization of studies in the whole Order so that its mission of preaching may respond to the needs of the Church and people of our time (LCO 90 § I and 230).

37. In fulfilling this charge of promoting study in the Order, the Master of the Order is assisted by the socius for the intellectual life who works to strengthen the Order's commitment to study. In addition to the responsibilities outlined in LCO 427 §I, the socius for the intellectual life is:

- 1) To develop a vision of study for the Order that keeps in mind the needs of individual provinces, as well as the good of the whole Order;
- 2) To provide guidance to the centers of institutional studies;
- 3) To improve communications among provinces by building networks among regents of studies, professors, and students, as well as the various centers of studies in the Order, through informational technology and social communications media;
- 4) To advise the Master of the Order when doctrinal controversies are presented to him (Appendix III).

38. The Master of the Order is also assisted in this task by the permanent commission for the promotion of studies in the Order (LCO 90 § II). Under the presidency of the socius for the intellectual life, the permanent commission for the promotion of studies has among its responsibilities:

- 1) To advise the Master of the Order on important questions that concern the intellectual life of the Order;
- 2) To develop strategies that will respond to the future intellectual needs of the Order;
- 3) To seek ways to better allocate the resources of the Order as these pertain to the intellectual life;

- 4) To work with priors provincial, regents of studies, and moderators of centers of studies to strengthen provincial centers of study;
- 5) To assist the Master of the Order in renewing the institutions under his immediate jurisdiction, especially by working with the priors provincial and regents of studies to prepare brothers for positions on these faculties;
- 6) To foster regional collaboration among the provincial centers of study in the Order;
- 7) To reflect upon the *quaestiones disputatae* of our time and to recommend the study of such issues to brothers who are experts in the field, so that their research can serve the preaching of the Order;
- 8) To assist in the preparation of the *Ratio Studiorum Generalis*.

39. Because of their competence in the sacred sciences, the masters in sacred theology also contribute to the mission of study in the Order through their teaching and the theological expertise that they possess (LCO 96). Not only does the Order recognize the great value of their scholarly achievements, it sees the masters in sacred theology as compelling witnesses to the pursuit of truth and to the importance of contemplative study for our mission of preaching. By their commitment to the highest level of theological discourse, exchange, and research, they place themselves at the service of the Order, which may request the masters in sacred theology:

- 1) To offer guidance to the Master of the Order on theological or philosophical questions that touch the intellectual life of the Order and the Church;
- 2) To participate on commissions established by the Master of the Order for strengthening the intellectual life of the Order;
- 3) To provide an expert opinion on candidates who have been presented to the Master of the Order for promotion to master in sacred theology;
- 4) To serve on commissions organized by the Master of the Order or by their prior provincial in order to address controversial statements that have been made by one of the brothers (Appendix III);
- 5) To offer counsel to the prior provincial or to the regent of studies on matters that concern the intellectual life of the province;
- 6) To give advice to the commission for the intellectual life.

Section B. The Different Centers of Study

40. In the Order there are centers of studies, which are communities of brothers who devote themselves full-time to the discipline of study. A center of studies must have at least three brothers with the necessary academic qualifications, an adequate library and other educational resources, as well as sufficient financial support to fulfill its mission (LCO 91 § II). According to LCO 92, the principal centers of study are:

- 1) A center of institutional studies, which is a community of professors and students of the Order, in which others may also participate, where basic studies (the first cycle) in philosophy and/or

theology follow the plan of institutional formation for the Order (cf. LCO 92.1°) and where the lectorate of the Order may be conferred;

- 2) A center of higher studies, which is a community of professors and students of the Order, in which others may also participate, where academic programs, leading at least to the degree of the license (*licentia docendi*), the degree for the second cycle, are provided (LCO 92.2°);
- 3) A center of specialized studies, which is a community of brothers committed to research, writing, and to particular academic projects, but not necessarily to teaching (LCO 92.3°);
- 4) A center of permanent formation, which is a community of brothers dedicated to research, writing, and the preparation of programs directed to permanent formation (LCO 92.4°).

41. The process for appointing the moderator of a provincial center of studies is determined by provincial statute. Other major officials of the center may be appointed as specified in the statute of the center.

42. The moderators of centers of institutional studies and of higher studies should strive to obtain both ecclesiastical and civil recognition for the academic degrees conferred by their centers, where this is possible.

Chapter III THE ORGANIZATION OF STUDIES IN THE PROVINCE

Section A. Those Responsible for Study in the Province

43. Just as every brother has the responsibility to undertake his own formation in the tradition of the Order, so every brother has the duty to apply himself to study, especially to a deeper understanding of the Word of God. In this effort he is assisted by the brothers of the province, including the prior provincial, the regent of studies, and the commission for the intellectual life. At the conventual level, the prior and the conventual lector share this responsibility.

44. Among his principal responsibilities, the prior provincial is to foster the spirit and practice of study among the brothers. In addition to the tasks listed in LCO 89 § I, it is for the provincial:

- 1) To instill, by his own example, a love of study among the brothers;
- 2) To oversee the planning of the future intellectual needs of the province, including the preparation of brothers for the apostolate of teaching;
- 3) To provide oversight and adequate resources, including a sufficient number of professors, for the maintenance and future development of the center of institutional studies and other centers of studies in the province;
- 4) To appoint an academic advisor or team of advisors for the students in the center of institutional studies so that their institutional formation may be integrated and complete;
- 5) To see that communal study occurs regularly in the convents of the province;
- 6) To take care that the pastoral plan of the province does not prevent the brothers from finding time for study;

- 7) To participate in efforts, together with the regent of studies, the socius for the intellectual life, and the Master of the Order to provide for the intellectual needs of the whole Order, especially the institutions under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master.

45. In this work, the prior provincial is assisted by the regent of studies, whose task it is to promote and coordinate the life of study in the province. In addition to the responsibilities outlined in LCO 93 § I, the regent seeks:

- 1) To plan, in close connection with the prior provincial, the intellectual life of the province;
- 2) To work with the regents of his region in developing strategies for sharing professors, facilities, and academic resources in order to strengthen the intellectual life of the region;
- 3) To identify students for programs of additional studies and for complementary studies and to assist them in the application process for such studies, including possible scholarships and other funding;
- 4) To oversee the progress of students in complementary studies, to see that they have adequate resources for their studies, and to conduct fraternal visitations when this is necessary;
- 5) To see that there are regular external evaluations by the state or by an accrediting body for the center of institutional studies.

46. The prior provincial is also assisted in this task by the commission for the intellectual life, which provides guidance on questions pertaining to the life of study in the province. Under the presidency of the regent of studies, the commission has various responsibilities (LCO 89 §II), as well as the following:

- 1) To offer a vision for the intellectual life of the province;
- 2) To assist the prior provincial and the regent of studies in planning the intellectual life of the province according to its apostolic priorities;
- 3) To recommend those brothers who should pursue programs of additional or complementary studies;
- 4) To work with priors and conventual lectors in developing programs for study, including those that will strengthen the quality of communal study in the convents of the province;
- 5) To give advice to the promoter of permanent formation, especially on issues that concern study.

47. At the level of the convent, the prior seeks to encourage the brothers in their commitment to study (LCO 88 § I and II). With the assistance of the conventual lector he organizes regular meetings on topics related to study, including theological questions with direct relevance to pastoral practice and ministry. Similarly, with the assistance of the conventual librarian and the conventual lector, he makes sure that the budget of the library is adequate for acquiring up-to-date reference materials, especially on preaching, evangelization, and the study of the Word of God.

48. In the convent, there is a conventual lector. Just as the prior receives guidance from the promoter of permanent formation with regard to the overall permanent formation of the brothers in the convent, so the conventual lector looks to the regent of studies on matters that touch directly the life of study in the convent. The responsibilities of the conventual lector include the following (LCO 326-bis):

- 1) To assist the prior in the permanent formation of the brothers (LCO 251-bis);

- 2) To promote communal reflection on contemporary questions relating to theology, Church teaching, and pastoral concerns, including those presented by the provincial chapter;
- 3) To encourage the brothers in the convent to attend workshops and courses offered by the diocese, local universities, and other centers that will enable them to serve the mission better;
- 4) To implement in the convent the recommendations of the commission for the intellectual life that have been confirmed by the prior provincial;
- 5) To foster a spirit of common and individual study among the brothers so that the convent becomes a true center for religious, pastoral, and theological reflection.

Section B.

Institutional Formation within the Order

Art. I. Centers of Institutional Studies

49. The Order recognizes the value of forming our brothers in the Dominican intellectual tradition where they teach and learn from one another in a true community of study. For this reason, the institutional formation of our brothers in a center of studies of the Order is to be preferred. Such formation may take place either in a center of studies of the province or in a center of another province. In either case, the first concern must always be the quality of the formation that our brothers receive, including its human, spiritual, religious, and apostolic dimensions.

50. When institutional formation occurs within the Order, it will be in a center of institutional studies where the brothers pursue their basic studies as part of their initial formation.

51. In the event that a center of institutional studies must be divided, for example with different disciplines or cycles taught in separate locations, recourse should be made to the Master of the Order (LCO 230.1°). The organization and structure for such a center will be outlined in the RSP or in the statute of the center of institutional studies.

52. A center for institutional studies must be viable academically, materially, and financially. There must be an adequate number of students and professors, with at least three brothers having the necessary academic qualifications, sufficient space for classrooms, a good library, and the necessary financial resources (cf. LCO 91 §II).

53. Just as the establishment of a center for institutional studies must have the approval of the Master of the Order, so also must its transfer or suppression have the approval of the Master.

54. Although every province should have a center of institutional studies (LCO 233 §I), it may happen that a province is not able to satisfy the requirements for such a center (LCO 91 §II) or that it makes the decision to send its students to a center of studies that is not connected to the Order. In such cases, the province should provide courses or seek to establish an institute where professors of the Order might offer part of the curriculum in philosophy and theology according to our Dominican intellectual

tradition (nn° 16-23), engage in research, serve as role models for the students, and stimulate the intellectual life of the province.

Art. II. Governance of Centers of Institutional Studies

55. Apart from the authority of the Master of the Order, the responsibility for the governance of a center of institutional studies belongs to the prior provincial and his council. The manner in which this responsibility is exercised shall be outlined in the RSP or in the statute of the center of institutional studies, taking into account LCO 237. It may be carried out in different ways through governance structures appropriate to academic institutions in the region, including a board of directors composed of Dominican brothers and lay experts, who together assume the ordinary powers of governance.

56. The administration of the center of institutional studies is entrusted to a moderator, who is appointed according to the process outlined in the provincial statute or the RSP, taking into account LCO 92 bis §I and LCO 236. He has the charge of implementing the decisions that he receives from a higher authority, especially the governing body of the center. At the same time, he possesses the necessary executive authority to direct the center and to promote its mission, with the responsibility for its strategic, administrative, academic, and financial management, as these are set forth in the RSP, the provincial statute, or the statute of the center of institutional studies. The moderator is:

- 1) To address questions of strategic planning;
- 2) To make sure that there are adequate facilities, resources, and staff for the good management of the center;
- 3) To support and assist the professors in their teaching and in their professional development;
- 4) To review the academic performance of the professors, including the quality of their research, through an annual meeting with each of them;
- 5) To observe the standards of academic accreditation required by the country or region where the center is located;
- 6) To prepare an annual budget and financial reports for approval by the prior provincial;
- 7) To promote the mission of the center of studies through frequent communications, recruitment of new students, and fund-raising.

57. Because the responsibilities of the regent of studies and the moderator of the center of institutional studies can sometimes converge, the RSP should clarify the relationship between these two officials of the province. The RSP may also wish to determine how the obligations of the master of students for the formation of brothers in institutional studies are to be understood in relation to those of the regent and moderator (see also *Ratio Formationis Generalis* 2016, n. 142).

58. In fulfilling the responsibilities outlined in n° 56, the moderator is assisted by the major officials of the center of studies, who with him form the *moderatorium* (LCO 92-bis § II). Ordinarily, these major officials include a vice-president or vice director of the center, a general-secretary or registrar, and a financial officer or administrator.

59. The academic oversight of the center of institutional studies is shared with a council of professors, of which the moderator is the president. The council of professors assists the moderator by offering advice and providing counsel, especially on academic matters. This council should promote everything that pertains to study, keeping in mind always the integral formation of the brothers (LCO 237 §I). The council is:

- 1) To maintain and foster the Dominican intellectual tradition in the center;
- 2) To organize the cycle of institutional studies and to approve the curriculum;
- 3) To assess the diligence and progress of the students in their studies;
- 4) To help each student discover his talents and to determine how these may be developed through additional or complementary studies, which it may recommend to the prior provincial and to the regent of studies;
- 5) To review the RSP that is proposed by the commission for the intellectual life and to make observations and suggestions with regard to it.

60. The council of professors may be co-extensive with the council of the faculty or it may be a separate academic body. Membership on the council of professors, including the participation of those who are not Dominican brothers, shall be determined by the RSP.

Art. III. The Library for the Center of Institutional Studies

61. Although new networks of communication have arisen and there are many possibilities today for the storage and retrieval of data, the library nevertheless remains an indispensable resource for research and study. The library must contain the reference materials, periodicals, and monographs required for serious academic endeavors. At the same time it must make available to professors and students up-to-date information technologies that will enhance this research.

62. The librarian of the center of institutional studies should be appointed according to the procedures found in the RSP, the provincial statute, or the statute of the center. In fulfilling his charge, the librarian should be assisted by others who form a library committee, the membership and responsibilities of which should be set out in one of the preceding documents.

63. Taking into account the financial circumstances of the center of studies as a whole, the moderator and the librarian for the center must see that the library has an adequate budget for maintaining the kind of reference materials necessary for research today.

64. In order to use the resources of the library to their greatest advantage and to promote a culture of research, the librarian should look for concrete ways to collaborate with other libraries, including those that are not connected to the Order. By establishing networks, there can be great mutual benefit through the shared use of limited and costly resources.

Art. IV. Institutional Formation within the Order but Outside the Province

65. When a province sends brothers to the center of studies of another province, their institutional formation is to be directed by the moderator of their province's center of studies or by the regent of studies of their province as determined by the RSP, taking into account (LCO 233 §I). In cases where there is no center of institutional studies, this responsibility falls directly to the regent. (See *Ratio Formationis Generalis* 2016, Appendix D, "Notes for a contract when novices or students are formed in another province.")

Section C.
Institutional Formation outside the Order

66. In some provinces and vicariates, brothers are sent for their institutional formation to a center of studies that does not have a formal connection to the Order. When considering this possibility, the prior provincial with his council should consult the Master of the Order and should take into account the following:

- 1) the needs of the province, especially those that are intellectual, ministerial and economic;
- 2) the ability of the province to establish a center of institutional studies with a strong academic program;
- 3) the geographic and cultural affinity of the center of studies to which the students would be sent;
- 4) the kind of intellectual formation and the quality of the programs that such a center would offer;
- 5) the value of collaboration with a university, a diocese, or other religious communities in a center outside the Order;
- 6) the necessity of insuring that the brothers are formed in the intellectual tradition of the Order.

67. If a decision has been reached to send students to a center of studies that does not belong to the Order, the prior provincial and the regent of studies must make certain that the Dominican intellectual tradition, as found in this *Ratio Generalis* (nn° 16-23), is fully presented to the brothers as part of their institutional formation. The RSP should include the plan of studies of the center to which the students are sent and should also indicate clearly the manner in which the intellectual tradition of the Order will be passed down to our students (n. 54). Moreover, the regent should see if it is possible for qualified Dominican professors to assume positions on the faculty of the center, especially in the fundamental disciplines.

68. If students study outside of the Order, the prior provincial and the regent of studies should take care that they are assigned to a convent where there is access to a good library and other resources needed for academic research.

69. When a center of institutional studies exists in the province, but brothers are sent for at least part of their institutional formation outside of the Order, either the moderator of the center of institutional studies or the regent of studies has the responsibility for their academic program, as determined by the RSP, but taking into account LCO 233 § I. When a center of institutional studies does not exist in the

province, this responsibility belongs to the regent or to a brother designated by the prior provincial according to the RSP.

Section D. Professors and Students

Art. I. Professors

70. Professors in centers of study of the Order should be models of the Order's commitment to the intellectual life. They should adhere to the highest professional and academic standards that are expected of their colleagues elsewhere. They should be experts in their disciplines, committed to research and publication, and informed about new forms of pedagogy. They should also exemplify the dynamic relationship between scholarship and pastoral practice by engaging in some ministerial activities outside of the center (LCO 239).

71. Professors in centers of institutional studies should hold the doctorate.

- 1) In instances where professors of philosophy and theology in such centers do not hold the doctorate, they must at least possess the canonical license or its equivalent.
- 2) For the teaching of such courses as biblical languages, homiletics, and liturgical or pastoral *practica*, an appropriate qualification and expertise in the discipline is needed.

72. Professors must be committed to their own professional development through research and publication in peer-reviewed journals, through membership of academic societies, and through active participation in conferences where they regularly present papers. Professors must also acquaint themselves with and utilize the new information technologies, like electronic publishing, that are transforming academic life.

73. Professors should seek opportunities to work with brothers of their own province and other provinces, to share research with them, and to participate together in academic conferences and symposia.

74. Professors should contribute to the intellectual growth of their students by teaching and learning from them in a spirit of mutuality, by encouraging critical thinking among them, by providing them with both a coherent and dynamic vision of philosophy and theology, and by sharing with them their own love of study.

75. Priors provincial and moderators of centers of studies, especially centers of institutional studies, must recognize the unique character of a professor's intellectual formation.

- 1) Provincials must proceed carefully before they relieve a professor of his charge of teaching at a center of studies for the sake of some other ministry or responsibility, including one of administration or government (cf. n° 27).
- 2) Moderators must recognize the importance of specialization and the need for original research on the part of professors. They should therefore not transfer professors from teaching in one discipline to another without a serious reason.
- 3) Moderators must provide professors with sufficient free time in the academic year for research, for revising their courses, and for improving their teaching.
- 4) Moderators should also make available sabbatical time for professors to undertake defined writing projects, with adequate funding for such research.

76. Professors should engage in periodic self-reviews of their teaching and research, as well as in evaluations made by the moderator of the center of studies, according to the provisions of the RSP or the statute of the center of studies. Strengths and weaknesses in teaching and research, as well as the professor's overall contribution to the center, should be identified as part of this process. Where there is a serious need for improvement, this should be duly noted, with the understanding that the professor's continued presence as a member of the center will require that these concerns be appropriately addressed by him.

Art. II. Students

77. Because a center of institutional studies is a community of professors and students, students should contribute to the common good of the center through their active participation in its academic life. In particular they should commit themselves to study and to mastering the material that is presented. To make clear what is expected of them, it may be helpful to prepare a student handbook that addresses such questions as personal responsibility, academic honesty, and ethical standards that are proper to students.

78. As integral members of the center of institutional studies, the Dominican brothers who study there should be consulted as part of the process for selecting a moderator for the center of studies.

79. When a student is sent to a university for special courses during the period of his institutional studies, those responsible for his formation, especially the regent of studies, the moderator of the center of studies, and the master of students, should make certain that such a university program does not interfere with the institutional formation of the student and his overall formation as a Dominican brother (see LCO 243).

Chapter IV INTER-PROVINCIAL COOPERATION

80. Because the Order is international, indeed world-wide, provinces should seek creative ways to collaborate with one another in the promotion of the intellectual life. Not only does such cooperation enrich the quality of research and the level of teaching, it strengthens the fraternal bonds among provinces, institutions, and individual brothers. Moreover, it broadens the intellectual horizons of those who participate and provides an experience of the vigor and diversity of the Order. For this cooperation to be fruitful, however, priors provincial, regents of studies, moderators of centers of studies, and professors will have to commit themselves to this vision and work together for its realization.

81. The regents of studies in the different regions of the Order should meet regularly with the socius for the intellectual life to propose programs and activities that promote mutual exchange among the provinces. The regents should review regularly the quality and effectiveness of this academic collaboration. Forms of inter-provincial cooperation include the following:

- 1) Joint research projects that are undertaken by Dominican scholars from different provinces;
- 2) Academic conferences and symposia that are sponsored by more than one province;
- 3) Seminars and summer sessions that rotate from province to province;
- 4) Regional workshops on permanent formation for the brothers, in consultation with the respective promoters of permanent formation.

82. Cooperation among the centers of institutional studies in the Order should be encouraged. The moderators of these centers should aim:

- 1) To establish projects in common, such as academic conferences, lecture series, and research networks;
- 2) To exchange professors and students, as well as library materials, information technology and practical expertise;
- 3) To provide courses or programs in Dominican studies that would benefit students from a number of centers;
- 4) To offer workshops on permanent formation for brothers of the same region;
- 5) To give students from different centers the opportunity to obtain canonical degrees;
- 6) To develop distance-learning or web-based programs where students in centers outside of the Order could study in a center of institutional studies.

83. With the support of the priors provincial and regents of studies of their respective provinces, the centers of institutional studies in a given region should seek to develop one-semester or one-year programs in Dominican studies for their brothers in institutional formation. In developing such programs, preferably in one of the official languages of the Order (cf. n° 14.9), care should be taken that the courses may be incorporated into the *curricula* of the participating centers. The program could include the following:

- The contribution of the Dominican doctors of the Church,
- Modern Dominican theologians,

- Dominican spirituality,
- The history of the Order,
- The importance of the liturgy for Dominican life and preaching,
- Theology of preaching and homiletics.

84. In regions where it is not possible for provinces to maintain centers of institutional studies, the provinces may wish to establish collaborative structures to provide for the Dominican intellectual formation of the brothers (nn° 16-23). Over a period of several years, various elements of our Dominican tradition could be offered in different provinces, especially in the time between formal academic sessions.

85. Priors provincial, regents of studies, and formators should help the brothers in institutional formation to broaden their understanding of Dominican life and study. When it is feasible, provinces should arrange for brothers to study for a year at a center of institutional studies of another province. In order to facilitate this movement of students among the provinces, centers of institutional studies should seek to establish agreements for mutual recognition of courses. Where possible, this should include civil recognition of courses taken by a student outside of his province.

86. In order to improve the fluency of our students in foreign languages, to provide them with a different theological perspective, and to deepen the cooperation among provinces, the centers of institutional studies may wish to invite professors from different regions to offer courses to the students in a language of the Order other than their own (cf. n° 14.9).

87. At the request of the respective priors provincial, the Master of the Order may establish an interprovincial center for institutional studies under the authority of a single moderator. The rights and obligations of the different provinces in the governance of the center should be set forth in the RSP of the province to which the center belongs or in a separate agreement approved by the Master (LCO 391.4°).

88. In order to form our brothers in the Dominican tradition of study, collaboration should be encouraged with the institutions under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order, especially the University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome, the École biblique et archéologique française in Jerusalem, and the faculty of theology at the University of Fribourg, of which the Master is the Grand Chancellor.

Chapter V
EXAMINATIONS

Section A.
Examinations in General

89. The RSP should make clear how the center of institutional studies evaluates the academic performance of the students, including their ability to integrate what they have learned over the course of their institutional formation. The instruments of assessment should take into account not only the student's mastery of the material presented but also his ability to engage in critical analysis and synthetic thinking. Formal research papers, reviews of books, written and oral examinations, and active participation in seminars are appropriate ways for a center of studies to determine a student's academic progress.

Section B.
Examination for the Lectorate

90. In order for a province to grant the lectorate of the Order (LCO 94), and in addition to other requirements found in the RSP, it is necessary for a brother:

- 1) to complete the cycle of institutional studies prior to the examination;
- 2) to receive approval from the council of professors for pursuing the lectorate;
- 3) to submit a formal research paper for approval;
- 4) to receive a favorable judgment in the presence of three professors of the center of institutional studies who shall examine the student for at least two hours on various themes in either philosophy or theology.

Section C.
Examination for Faculties to Hear Confessions

91. The examination for faculties to hear confessions shall take place in the presence of at least two examiners, at least one of whom should be a professor of theology. The examiners shall assess the candidate's understanding of pastoral and moral theology from a Dominican perspective, as well as his knowledge of the canonical discipline of the Church, with special attention given to his maturity of judgment for the exercise of this ministry. The exam shall last for at least one hour, after which the examiners will vote by secret ballot. An absolute majority is required for successful completion of the exam (cf. LCO 251). Further specificity with regard to the exam should be included in the RSP.

92. The prior provincial has the responsibility to determine the examiners for hearing confessions. He may delegate this to the regent of studies, to the moderator of the center of institutional studies, or to the prior of the studentate community.

93. If the candidate has successfully completed the examination, the examiners will make note of this in a signed document. As soon as the candidate is ordained to the presbyterate, he will enjoy the faculties to hear confessions, as these are outlined in LCO 138.

APPENDICES

Appendix I

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRODUCING *RATIONES STUDIORUM PARTICULARES*

(All References are to the *Ratio Studiorum Generalis* (RSG) unless otherwise noted.)

A) Creation and Approval

In every province the prior provincial and his council shall present to the Master of the Order for his approval the *Ratio Studiorum Particularis* (RSP) that was proposed by the commission for the intellectual life of the province and reviewed by the council of professors of the center of institutional studies (n° 32 and LCO 89 §II and 231.5).

B) Relative Authority

The RSP is an essential part of the organization of the studies of a province (n° 30.2) or a region (n° 34). Recognizing the higher authority of LCO, General Chapters and the RSG, it is binding upon the province (n° 33).

C) General Orientations

The RSP shall take into consideration the specific cultural context, the circumstances of time and place, the maturity of the students, the customs of universities in the region, and the directives of the local church. It shall make clear the importance that doctrinal synthesis has in the Order, even as it delineates the various disciplines to be taught and the appropriate methodologies for presenting them.

D) Specific Provisions

With regard to *institutional formation*, the RSP must provide for both cooperator brothers and brothers preparing for ordination (n° 11):

- the goals and objectives of the program of study (nn° 12-14),
- the methodology for achieving these goals (n° 15),
- the manner of teaching philosophy and theology, whether they are to be studied simultaneously or not,
- a general description of the disciplines in which the students should have competence.

The RSP should also make clear:

- where the full curriculum for institutional studies is published,
- where actual course descriptions are to be found, including the methodology for teaching and the number of hours assigned to each course,
- where the academic calendar is listed each year.

For *additional and complementary studies* the RSP must describe the process for approving candidates for such study.

For the *center of institutional studies*, the RSP must provide:

- The legal name and location of the center of institutional studies,
- A copy of the statutes or by-laws of the center of institutional studies,
- A description of the governing structure of the center of institutional studies, unless this is set out in the statute of the center of institutional studies (n° 55),
- The structure of governance for a center that operates in two distinct locations, unless this is set out in the statute of the center of institutional studies (n° 51),
- The process for the appointment of the moderator of the center of studies, unless this is set out in the statutes of the province (n° 56),
- The specific responsibilities of the moderator of the center of studies, unless these are set out in the statutes of the province or the statute of the center of institutional studies (n° 56),
- The membership of the council of professors (n° 60),
- A clarification of the roles of the regent of studies and the moderator of the center of institutional studies (n° 57), including their respective responsibilities with regard to:
 - professors who teach in the center of institutional studies,
 - planning for the needs of the center, including the preparation of future professors,
- The obligations of the master of students for the formation of brothers in institutional studies in relation to those of the regent and moderator, if this is viewed as desirable (n° 57),
- The procedure for appointing the librarian of the center of institutional studies, unless this is set forth in the statutes of the province or the statute of the center (n° 62),
- The procedures for selecting members of the library committee, as well as the responsibilities of this committee, unless this is set forth in the statutes of the province or the statute of the center of institutional studies (n° 62),
- The determination of whether it is the regent of studies or the moderator of the center of institutional studies who oversees the studies of brothers who pursue their institutional formation in another province (n° 65).

In provinces where students pursue their institutional studies in *non-Dominican institutions*, the RSP must:

- Provide the program of the center of studies where the brothers receive their academic formation (nn° 35 and 67);
- Determine whether it is the regent of studies or the moderator of the center of institutional studies who oversees the academic program of brothers who study in academic centers outside the Order (n° 69);
- Decide whether it is the regent of studies or a brother designated by the prior provincial who has the responsibility for the academic program of brothers who study outside of the Order, when there is no center of institutional studies in the province (n° 69);
- Present the program of courses, conferences, and workshops to form students in the doctrinal tradition of the Order (n° 35.2);
- Make clear how the intellectual tradition of the Order is to be integrated into the academic program of the students (nn° 35.3 and 67).

Regarding *professors and students*, the RSP must provide:

- The process of evaluation for professors, unless provided in the statute of the center of studies (n° 76),

- The manner in which student brothers will be accompanied or supervised by those responsible for studies in the province (n°44.4),
- The process for consulting Dominican students when a moderator of the center of studies is to be appointed (n° 78).

With regard to *inter-provincial centers of study*, the RSP must define the rights and obligations of the provinces, if these are not included in a separate agreement (n° 87).

For *examinations* the RSP will determine:

- The form of evaluation and examination in general (n° 89),
- the requirements for the lectorate (n° 90), in provinces where this degree is conferred,
- the manner of conducting the examination for faculties to hear confessions (nn° 91-93).

Appendix II

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ECCLESIAL, PONTIFICAL, AND DOMINICAN DOCUMENTS ON STUDY

CONCILIAR DOCUMENTS:

Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. *Lumen Gentium*. 21 November 1964.
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Appendix III
 PROCEDURE FOR CONTROVERSIES ARISING FROM
 PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF THE BROTHERS

Guiding Principles

I. The manner in which people communicate today through digital media, social networks, and other information technologies provides opportunities for presenting the Gospel and our Catholic faith that would have been difficult to imagine not long ago. Like the first friars, we enjoy the mobility to reach new audiences, to speak in different ways, and to make our views known, now in the public square of the digital world.

II. Of course, with these opportunities and with this freedom, the brothers must also exercise the virtue of prudence so that their statements are guided by a concern for truth and the common good. With his profession of vows every Dominican brother ceases to be a private individual who speaks and writes for himself. He becomes a public person who represents the Order and the Church in all that he does and says. Therefore with an almost unlimited access to a worldwide audience, he assumes an extraordinary responsibility for using the media carefully and wisely in service to the faith.

Statements to the News Media

III. Apart from this prudent use of digital technologies, there will be occasions when the opinion of a brother is solicited by the news media, either in an interview by telephone or on television. If the matter concerns the affairs of the province, it should be referred to the prior provincial. If it concerns the convent or parish, it should be referred to the prior or pastor, respectively. It is always preferable for a brother to offer a prepared statement than to speak extemporaneously. His local superior should review the statement and approve it before it is submitted to the reporter who has requested the interview.

IV. When it is not possible for a brother to prepare such a statement, he should at least speak to his local superior and review with him what he plans to say before he speaks to the media. In such a case he should be guided by the counsel that he receives from his superior.

Use of the Internet

V. Websites, blogs, and social networks all serve as legitimate channels for communicating the Word of God and for sharing political, social, and religious opinions. By means of these media there is the possibility of establishing a regular constituency of followers who return to these sites for information and virtual conversation. Unfortunately, popular sites are often controversial ones. Brothers with websites and blogs must be prudent. The statements that they make must be judicious and reflect the teaching of the Church. They should also promote the common good of the Order.

VI. Regrettably, it may happen that a brother may make a statement on the internet that fails to be prudent, to reflect the teaching of the Church, or to promote the common good of the Order. In such a

case, the local superior or the prior provincial may proceed in a number of ways, including the following. He may:

- 1) Notify the brother and make clear that the controversial or erroneous statement is unacceptable and must not be repeated;
- 2) Insist that the brother retract or provide the necessary nuance that would make such a controversial or erroneous statement acceptable to the Order;
- 3) Require that future statements on the internet site be monitored by brothers whom the prior provincial will choose;
- 4) Inform the brother that he must close the website.

Controversial Public Statements

VII. Occasions may arise when a public and controversial statement has been made orally or in writing that has not received the previous approval of the brother's superior. In such a case, we strongly urge the brothers, in the spirit of LCO 139, to address their concerns first to the brother himself and, if necessary, to his provincial. Only after this, may brothers present their objections directly to the Master of the Order. Moreover, they should not notify the local bishop or the Holy See without first following all of these steps. Neither the prior provincial nor the Master of the Order should acknowledge anonymous denunciations.

VIII. The prior provincial, by virtue of his office, has the duty to examine doubtful points concerning doctrine that have been expressed in public statements of the brothers, even if he has not received any complaints about them. In such a case, the provincial must speak with the brother in an effort to clarify and resolve the matter. In cases where the provincial has received a complaint, he should seek to meet with the brother and with those who have made the denunciation, in the hope that a favorable outcome can be reached through respectful discussion. Depending on the amount of negative publicity that the statement has generated or has the potential to generate, the provincial may wish to inform the local Ordinary and the Master of the Order.

IX. In cases where it has not been possible for the prior provincial alone to resolve the issue, he must decide with his council whether to address the matter at the provincial level or to refer it directly to the Master of the Order. Ordinarily, it is preferable to try to settle such questions within the province before seeking the intervention of the Master.

The Procedure in the Province

X. If the prior provincial decides to address the matter through a provincial investigation, he and his council will establish a committee to examine the public statement and the theological objections that have been raised with regard to it. This committee may request the assistance of experts.

XI. As part of its review of the public statement, the members of the committee will invite the brother to meet with them and, if advisable, with those who have made a formal complaint about the statement. The committee must give the brother adequate notice so that he may prepare himself for answering questions. He may choose an expert to accompany him. If the brother refuses to meet with the

committee or does not make himself available after a reasonable effort to accommodate him, the commission may proceed with its deliberations without him. The committee will give its opinion as to whether the statement was imprudent and dangerous to faith and morals. It will communicate its opinion in writing to the prior provincial.

XII. After the prior provincial has received the opinion of the committee, he will make his decision after consulting with his council. If the provincial judges that the statement is imprudent and dangerous to faith and morals, the provincial will inform the brother and require that he make amends. The provincial must do this in writing unless he informs the brother in the presence of at least two witnesses.

The prior provincial may then proceed in a number of ways, including the following. He may:

- 1) Require a formal apology;
- 2) Insist upon a public retraction of the controversial statement;
- 3) Order an immediate halt to the publication of the censured opinion;
- 4) Remove the brother from any administrative or teaching position;
- 5) Deprive the brother of his ecclesiastical faculties, if the brother is ordained.

XIII. If the prior provincial decides that there is insufficient foundation for the claim that the public statement is imprudent and dangerous to faith and morals, he will inform in writing those who have made the complaint. In the event that those bringing the complaint are Dominican brothers, the provincial will state in writing that they make amends by putting an end to their accusations and by making restitution through a public retraction of their damaging opinions.

XIV. If the matter has come to the attention of the Master of the Order or the ecclesiastical authorities, the prior provincial will inform them of the results of the inquiry and of the measures that he has taken to address the issue and to repair any damage that has been caused.

XV. The brother who has made a controversial public statement may always appeal to the Master of the Order against the findings of this process.

Procedure of the Master of the Order

XVI. The Master of the Order may be asked to examine a controversial public statement, in these and other circumstances:

- 1) A denunciation is made to the Master of the Order by a Dominican friar or by another;
- 2) A denunciation is made directly by an ecclesiastical authority;
- 3) A request is made by the prior provincial who, after consulting his council, decides that it would be inopportune for the province to address the matter;
- 4) A request is made by the prior provincial who, after receiving the findings of the provincial commission and consulting with his council, decides that he is unable to make a judgment about the imprudence and danger of the public statement or is unable to provide a suitable means to repair the damage;
- 5) An appeal is made by the author of the controversial public statement against the judgment of the prior provincial that his statement was imprudent and dangerous to faith and morals or against the remedies that the provincial has imposed upon him.

XVII. In such situations it is advised that the Master of the Order proceed as follows:

- 1) Refer the matter directly to the province (XVI, nn° 1-2);
- 2) Accept the judgment of the prior provincial or of the provincial committee, after his review of the dossier (n° XVI, n° 5);
- 3) Provide his own remedies, after his review of the dossier (XVI, n°5);
- 4) Proceed with his own investigation by accepting the request of the prior provincial (XVI, nn° 3-4) or the appeal of the author of the controversial public statement (XVI, n° 5).

XVIII. Whenever the Master of the Order believes it prudent to do so, he may conduct his own investigation of a public, controversial statement. The Master may adopt the process outlined below or may devise another.

- 1) The Master appoints a commission of theological experts to examine the public, controversial statement.
- 2) The commission examines the public statement and presents its findings to the Master.
- 3) The Master sends these findings to the brother's provincial, who forwards them to the author of the controversial public statement.
- 4) The author of the statement reviews the findings of the commission:
 - a. If he accepts the findings of the commission, the matter is deemed to be closed. The Master will then provide his own remedies to repair the damage that has been done.
 - b. If he rejects the findings, he will be given adequate time to prepare his own written response, as well as be given adequate notice so that he may meet with the commission in person. He may bring an expert of his own choice.
- 5) The socius for the intellectual life will convene and preside at this meeting of the commission with the author of the controversial statement. The socius for the intellectual life, who is a non-voting member of the commission, will forward to the Master the opinion of the commission as to whether or not the public statement was deemed to be imprudent and dangerous to faith and morals.
- 6) The Master shall make his decision about the imprudence and danger of the statement.
 - a. If the Master decides that the public statement is imprudent and dangerous to faith and morals, he may confirm a previous decision of the prior provincial and the remedies imposed by him; or the Master may provide his own remedies, including any disciplinary measures that he believes to be appropriate.
 - b. If the Master determines that there is insufficient foundation for the charge that the public statement is imprudent and dangerous to faith and morals, he can annul any previous adverse decision made by the province. Moreover, he shall ask the prior provincial to repair any damage that has been done to the author's good name and to his rights.

XIX. Once the Master of the Order has examined a controversial public statement and made a definitive decision, from the point of view of the Order, the matter will be regarded as closed.

INDEX	Page
FIRST PART: THE INTELLECTUAL FORMATION OF THE BROTHERS	1
Chapter I: GENERAL PRINCIPLES	1
Chapter II: THE PROGRESSIVE STRUCTURE OF STUDIES	4
Section A: Institutional Formation	4
<i>Art. I. Goals, Principles, and Objectives</i>	4
<i>Art. II. Methodology</i>	5
<i>Art. III. Dominican Intellectual Tradition: Areas of Competence</i>	6
Section B: Additional Studies and Complementary Studies	8
Section C: The Place of Study in Permanent Formation	9
SECOND PART: THE ORGANIZATION OF STUDIES	10
Chapter I: LAWS GOVERNING STUDIES IN THE ORDER	10
Chapter II: THE ORGANIZATION OF STUDIES IN THE ORDER	11
Section A: Those Responsible for Study in the Order	11
Section B: The Different Centers of Study	12
Chapter III: THE ORGANIZATION OF STUDIES IN THE PROVINCE	13
Section A: Those Responsible for Study in the Province	13
Section B: Institutional Formation within the Order	15
Art. I. Centers of Institutional Studies	15
Art. II. Governance of Centers of Institutional Studies	16
Art. III. The Library for the Center of Institutional Studies	17
Art. IV. Institutional Formation within the Order but Outside the Province	18
Section C: Institutional Formation outside the Order	18
Section D: Professors and Students	19
Art. I. Professors	19
Art. II. Students	20
Chapter IV: INTER-PROVINCIAL COOPERATION	21
Chapter V: EXAMINATIONS	23
Section A: Examinations in General	23
Section B: Examination for the Lectorate	23
Section C: Examination for Faculties to Hear Confessions	23
APPENDICES	25
Appendix I: INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRODUCING RATIONES STUDIORUM PARTICULARES	25
A) Creation and Approval	25
B) Relative Authority	25
C) General Orientations	25
D) Specific Provisions	25
Appendix II: BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ECCLESIAL, PONTIFICAL, AND	28

DOMINICAN DOCUMENTS ON STUDY	
Conciliar Documents	28
Pontifical Documents (<i>found on the internet</i>)	28
Texts from General Chapters of the Order	28
Texts from the Masters of the Order (<i>found on the website of the order</i>)	28
Appendix III: PROCEDURE FOR CONTROVERSIES ARISING FROM PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF THE BROTHERS	30
Guiding Principles	30
Statements to the News Media	30
Use of the Internet	30
Controversial Public Statements	31
The Procedure in the Province	31
Procedure of the Master of the Order	32

RATIO FORMATIONIS GENERALIS – 2016

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	
A. Forming a Dominican Preacher	page 2
B. The purpose of the <i>Ratio Formationis Generalis</i>	2
I. DOMINICAN FORMATION	
A. Fundamental values of Dominican life	3
B. The process of integration into Dominican life	6
C. The contexts of formation	8
II. PERSONS INVOLVED IN FORMATION	
A. The community in formation, the community of formation	9
B. Brothers in formation	10
C. Those responsible for formation	11
D. The formation councils	12
III. STAGES OF INITIAL FORMATION	
A. The promotion and direction of vocations	13
B. Preparation for the novitiate	14
C. The novitiate and simple profession	15
D. The studentate	17
E. Solemn profession	19
F. Diaconate and priesthood	19
IV. PERMANENT FORMATION	
A. General principles: community in/of formation; ‘masters’ of continuing formation; the brothers themselves	20
B. Transition, first assignation	21
C. Issues for permanent formation	22
D. Identity and mission	22
APPENDIX	
A. The purpose of the <i>Ratio Formationis Particularis</i>	24
B. Preparing the <i>Ratio Formationis Particularis</i>	24
C. Contents of the <i>Ratio Formationis Particularis</i>	24
D. Notes for a contract when novices or students are formed in another province	25

I. INTRODUCTION

A. *Forming a Dominican Preacher*

1. 'The aim of our formation is the making of a Dominican preacher, one who will be a preacher of grace and a true witness to Christ' (Rome 2010, nn.185, 200). It requires an environment characterized by prayer, poverty and study, by apostolic zeal and a sense of mission, by joy in liturgical celebration and common life. Its success is measured by genuine personal maturity, the practice of prayer, fidelity to the vows, community life, continual study, solidarity with the poor and a passion for the salvation of souls.

2. Formation begins in the stages of initial formation and continues throughout our lives. This is why most of this *Ratio Formationis Generalis* applies not just to initial formation but also to permanent formation. This single process of formation finds its unity in the purpose of the Order: the mission of preaching (Mexico 1992 n.27,2). Initial formation introduces us, therefore, into something that characterises the whole of our lives.

3. In our tradition formation means growing in discipleship as we follow Christ on the way of St Dominic. It is not just about academic study and it is not just about one period of our lives. It presupposes humility and docility, accepting that we need always to grow in knowledge and in virtue, to understand better, and to be renewed. Most deeply, of course, formation is the work of God's grace.

4. Our formation will seek to integrate the intellectual and pastoral dimension in the human and spiritual development of the brothers (*Pastores Dabo Vobis* §§42-59). Many general chapters have emphasised that our formation seeks to help the brothers to become more mature as men and believers, as religious and preachers. Brothers preparing for priesthood need a particular initial formation in preparation for their vocation, as do the co-operator brothers in preparation for theirs.

5. Our formation must attend to these aspects because it is the formation of apostles, after the pattern of life devised by St Dominic. Its paradigm is the school of apostolic life in which Jesus is the Master. So our first text for formation is Sacred Scripture. Jesus trained the apostles as preachers of grace by inviting them to share his company and to learn from his words and actions. He taught them how to pray and initiated them into the mysteries of his person and of his mission. His final formation of them was through the gift of the Spirit who sustained in them their love for the Master and their desire to follow him. St Dominic restored this school of apostolic life in view of his mission and we are called to live it in ways adapted to our time and circumstances.

6. We believe that we have been called by God to follow St Dominic and so to follow Christ in his preaching mission. We are called to grow into this mission by the Word of God, by the Church, and by our Constitutions. We are called also by the need of our brothers and sisters to whom we are sent to announce the Good News of salvation (cf. Trogir 2013 n.124). We are called especially by the poor, the blind, and the afflicted, by prisoners and offenders, by the oppressed and the marginalized (cf. Luke 4:18). All this urges us towards a permanent formation: the Word of God which abides in us, the studies which we pursue, the men and women we meet, the mentalities which challenge us, the places and events in which we are immersed.

B. *The purpose of the Ratio Formationis Generalis*

7. The *Ratio Formationis Generalis* contains general spiritual principles and fundamental pedagogical norms for the formation of the brothers (LCO 163). It recalls and develops the prescriptions of LCO 154-251-ter, as well as the acts of general chapters. It describes the spirit and context of formation in our Order and draws some conclusions of a practical nature. It leaves to each province the task of applying and adapting these principles and norms according to the specific requirements of each province.

8. The *Ratio Formationis Generalis* is addressed to all the brothers. Each one retains a primary responsibility for his formation, under the guidance of masters and other formators where appropriate, and always in response to the grace of the vocation we have received (cf. LCO 156).

9. The *Ratio Formationis Generalis* is addressed in a particular way to brothers who are given a specific responsibility for initial or permanent formation, to guide them in their tasks.

10. The *Ratio Formationis Generalis* is to be read along with the *Ratio Studiorum Generalis*. Study is an essential part of our form of religious life. The work of study is not an alternative to apostolic work but is a necessary part of our service of the Word of God. Because study is integral to our form of life, it is related to prayer and contemplation, to the ministry of the Word, and to our life in community. So our formation can never be considered without reference to study nor our study without reference to the other aspects of formation.

11. It is essential for the sake of brothers in initial formation that good contact is maintained especially between regents and directors of studies on the one hand, and masters of formation on the other. The overall progress of brothers in initial formation is overseen also by the provincial and local councils of formation.

12. Guidelines for the production of the *Ratio Formationis Particularis* are given in the Appendix to this *Ratio Formationis Generalis*.

I. DOMINICAN FORMATION

A. *Fundamental values of Dominican life*

13. Formation means the progressive initiation and integration of brothers into our way of life with its mission of preaching as described in the Fundamental Constitution, in LCO 2-153, and in the acts of the general chapters.

14. Dominican life requires prayer, poverty, community life, study and preaching. Our vocation is contemplative, communitarian and missionary. Its source is a thirst for God and a desire to preach the compassion and friendship of God, directed towards the fullness of justice and peace, a desire established and formed by God's grace.

The evangelical counsels

15. Our constitutions understand the vows in relation to the following of Christ, the service of the Church, and our personal freedom for these tasks. In professing the evangelical counsels we seek to be conformed to Christ obedient, poor and chaste. These gifts of grace, received in our profession, enable the deepest desires of human nature to serve our search for God, the preaching of the Gospel and the care of others. Living the evangelical counsels makes us witnesses of the kingdom that is coming. In forming apostles and preachers we can never forget that our human nature is wounded by sin and needs to be healed by grace. Where we seek to possess material goods, other people, and power, it enslaves us. By contrast, the gifts of grace bring freedom. We receive these gifts and develop them in living our vocation fully.

16. Our deepest human desires – for autonomy and achievement, for marriage and family life, for property and satisfying work – are distinct but it is helpful to consider them together and in our profession we name only obedience. We profess obedience to God, to Mary, to St Dominic, to our superiors, according to the institutions of the Order, including therefore our characteristic form of capitular government. St Dominic asked the brothers to promise him 'community and obedience' (LCO 17 §I).

Obedience

17. Obedience is the heart of our religious life, as we seek to imitate the love and obedience of Jesus for the Father. Entrusting ourselves to Him, and to each other, we seek to live together with the freedom for which

Christ has set us free, mature men capable of sharing in the projects and responsibilities of the community. Formation in obedience begins immediately and continues throughout our lives as we learn to practice a genuine dialogue: listening openly and receptively to each other, speaking frankly and charitably to each other, learning how to work together, to moderate meetings, to resolve dialogue into determinate action, to be obedient to such determinations and to contribute generously whatever our particular responsibility in the community. The witness of obedience corrects distorted ideas of freedom and living it authentically enables us to confront abuses of power credibly and in solidarity with those who are voiceless and excluded.

Chastity

18. LCO speaks of the Christological, ecclesial, apostolic and eschatological meanings of consecrated chastity which unites us to Christ in a new way, strengthens our hearts for preaching, and heals our wounds. It gives us a new kind of availability to people, a deeper respect for each person, and a freedom to welcome and receive all with the compassion and tenderness of Christ For such a commitment 'it is essential that the brothers grow in physical, psychological and moral maturity' (LCO 27 §II) Those with responsibility for formation must assist this growth in every possible way. At each stage of initial formation, and from time to time in permanent formation, there is to be serious reflection and sharing on affective life and maturity, sexuality, celibacy and chaste love (Bologna 1998, n.90). The general chapter of Providence gave a fuller context for this (Providence 2001, nn.348-349) and the general chapter of Trogir endorsed it (Trogir 2013, n.142). Issues that are to be explicitly considered are homosexuality, the use of social media, pornography, and paedophilia (along with the province's guidelines concerning abuse).

Poverty

19. Relying on divine providence in imitation of Christ and the apostles, we live as poor men sharing all we earn and all we are given. As mendicants we live in simplicity and detachment, ready to move and to adapt for the sake of the preaching of the gospel. Living simply and even austerely as Jesus did, we grow in freedom and our preaching gains credibility. Evangelical poverty creates a solidarity among ourselves and with the poor, especially those closest to us. We observe it also by working hard at the tasks we have been given, and by our efforts to promote economic justice and a spirit of sharing amongst people.

Compassion

20. We seek God's mercy on coming to the Order and our formation ought to educate us in compassion. The theological, spiritual, apostolic and mystical traditions of the Order teach a wisdom of the heart which encourages us to sympathise with the sufferings and difficulties of people and bring them into our prayer. We are to be pastoral theologians and theological pastors, always aware, as St Dominic was, of those who suffer. We learn to bring to people the Word that heals, forgives, reconciles and renews by receiving and appreciating that Word in our own lives.

Study and contemplation

21. Study and contemplation go together for us. Although there is a *Ratio* for studies in the Order, intellectual formation is not a separate compartment isolated from the rest of our formation. Study is an essential part of our spirituality, of our form of religious life, and of our mission in the Church.

22. Our study begins and ends with the Word of God. For us, contemplation means seeking to understand the Word that is Christ and so be united with him as the Way of Truth that leads to Life (St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, III, prologue). Our study is always undertaken with a view to a deeper love of God and to evangelization, to understanding more profoundly the call of the Gospel and the needs of humanity. The brothers are to be introduced to *lectio divina*, a meditative study of the Scriptures and a practice that bears fruit in personal spirituality and in preaching.

Silence and cloister

23. ‘Silence is the father of preachers’ is a saying handed on in our tradition. Brothers need to be formed for solitude and silence so as to make good use of times for study and prayer, to free their minds from distractions, and simply to ponder the mysteries of the faith. The modern means of communication reach inside the cloister and inside our rooms. We need to be formed in wise use of the internet and especially the social media, appreciating how they can assist us but learning also how to avoid the negative effects they can have for brothers personally and for community life. Brothers in formation will be helped to see how our way of living needs the support of penitential practices (cf. LCO 52-55), the most important of which for us is study (LCO 83).

Personal prayer

24. St Catherine of Siena speaks of prayer as ‘the cell of self-knowledge’ and Sirach teaches us that ‘the prayer of the humble person pierces the clouds’ (35:17). Personal prayer is essential for the self-knowledge without which personal maturity is impossible. Initial and permanent formation will frequently consider the teachings and practices of prayer that are found in the traditions of the Order and the Church.

The sacred liturgy

25. ‘The celebration of the liturgy is the centre and heart of our life, the basic source of our unity’ (LCO 57). This refers not only to the Eucharist but also to the Liturgy of the Hours which structures our day and to which St Dominic was always faithful. Dominicans are formed to participate in the liturgy by participating in the liturgy. The liturgy draws us out of ourselves, to pray with Christ and the Church and so to grow in compassion for all. Through the variety of seasons and rites, celebrating the liturgy in its diversity, we praise God and our communion with Him is deepened. LCO 105 §II describes the Eucharist as ‘the source and summit of all evangelization’ while LCO 60 calls us to frequent reception of the sacrament of penance and reconciliation.

26. The liturgy is a privileged place for hearing the Word, receiving it in joyful celebration, and allowing ourselves to be formed by the power of its truth. A goal of formation is to bring the brothers to realise how our service of the Word of God brings together everything in our lives: we contemplate the Word of God in prayer and study, we welcome the Word and celebrate it in the sacred liturgy, we allow the Word to shape our lives through the other observances of conventual life, and we proclaim the Word through preaching.

The Rosary and other devotions

27. Devotion to Mary, the Mother of God, is at the heart of Dominican spirituality. In the Rosary we are with Mary, pondering the mysteries of the Word made flesh. Another essential resource for us is the example, the teaching and the prayers of the Order’s saints. In addition it is important to introduce brothers to the popular devotions that are valued by believers, especially to those associated with the Order.

Fraternity

28. A common fraternal life is part of any *sacra praedicatio*, part of our preaching. We see this in the apostolic brotherhood gathered around Jesus, and in the first Christian communities. Preachers are sent to bring to other places the shared life of prayer and charity they have experienced. Each community is ecclesial, a school of Christian life. Our appreciation of this fraternity must extend beyond our own community to include the other branches of the Dominican family as well as the community of the local Church.

Preaching

29. Dominican preaching requires and illuminates approaches to formation. It seeks to be prophetic and doctrinal, marked by an evangelical spirit and sound teaching (LCO 99 §I), open to dialogue and yet not afraid to be critical. Our formation prepares preachers who will be zealous like the apostles and creative like

the prophets. We are called to stimulate people's desire to know the truth (LCO 77 §II) and to help the Church to find new ways to that truth (LCO 99 §II). We seek to form men who will be imaginative in engaging with changing situations where new realities are coming to birth.

30. Initiation into the preaching of the province is to be continual and supervised, strengthening the passion of the brothers to preach the gospel. In initial formation the brothers are introduced to a range of apostolic activities, especially in contexts where people are seeking knowledge and truth, where people are suffering and seeking hope, and where there are opportunities for direct teaching and preaching. As well as learning to undertake these activities, they must also learn to work with others, with brothers and other members of the Dominican family, with priests and other religious, and with lay people.

Mission

31. While brothers belong to a particular province, and are formed for that province, their formation will never forget the universal character of the Order and its mission throughout the whole Church. It will be a formation in availability, adaptability and mobility in line with the universal missionary character of our vocation.

32. While the mission of preaching the Gospel is perennial, specific priorities for the Order's mission are identified from time to time, especially at general chapters (e.g., Quezon City, 1977; Avila, 1986; Rome, 2010). Part of the task of formation is to help the brothers to appreciate and to embrace these priorities, which ought also to give shape to the programmes of formation.

B. The process of integration into Dominican life

33. Our formation initiates us into the following of Christ along the way devised by St Dominic. We do it by living in the way described in Section A above. All of this constitutes the 'Dominican culture' into which we are initiated through the process of formation. While integration into Dominican life is progressive, it must include, in all stages and in appropriate ways, all the elements which make up our life.

Maturity

34. All aspects of formation require time. LCO describes the kind of maturity we need: physical, psychological and moral (LCO 27 §II). Such maturity is seen in a stable personality, the ability to make weighty decisions, and the acceptance of personal responsibility (LCO 216 §I). It means a good sense of personal autonomy combined with a sense of the other person and the interests of the community, the ability to find balance in a lifestyle that makes varied demands, freedom from addictive and compulsive behaviour, the ability to live with tensions and to deal with conflicts, being at ease with people no matter what their race, age, gender, or social position. Formation seeks to help brothers mature in all these ways. The work of Thomas Aquinas on human action, passions and virtues, offers a solid starting point for reflecting on psychological maturity and moral development. His work ought to give shape to our formation, in conversation with the best of contemporary thought and experience in these areas.

35. People mature also through making mistakes, learning how to continue in spite of them while often also learning important things from those mistakes. We 'seek mercy in the company of others' (Caleruega 1995 n.98.3): a mature person is one who can receive mercy and show it to others.

36. The experience of the Cross is at the heart of Christian life, a life lived in 'affliction and joy' (1 Thess 1:6). We need to be helped, at any stage of life, to integrate experiences of failure, disappointment and loss with faithfulness to our vocation. One task of formation is helping brothers to mature by letting go and moving on where this is what ought to be done. Formation helps the brothers to prepare themselves for paschal moments in the life of the preacher.

37. Formators and others are often called on to accompany brothers in times of crisis. This too is a necessary part of growth and maturing. There are times when it seems that the Lord is asleep as our boat is tossed around, but we can always call on him and on the help also of our brothers and sisters, to restore calm and be prepared for the fresh challenge that will come to us on the other shore. We ought to pray regularly for brothers experiencing difficulty, that God will reveal his presence to them and send to them a person able to help.

38. Initial formation continues over many years, and permanent formation for the whole of our lives, so it will at times feel tedious. This is another challenge and opportunity for maturing, to persevere in the daily living of our vocation, in regular observance, so as to live that vocation with constancy and depth (Providence 2001, n.355).

39. A basic human maturity is essential in those who are given particular responsibilities for formation as well as in those assigned to communities of formation. This is particularly necessary in order to provide positive role models for brothers in initial formation and to avoid any kind of exploitation of the brothers in formation by senior brothers.

40. Formators must work against a common tendency, especially in the years of initial formation, to infantilize brothers. On the other hand there is the contemporary phenomenon of an 'extended adolescence' along with a culture of dependence and entitlement in the younger generations. This presents new challenges for formation, particularly in regard to community life, poverty, and obedience. The nature of the freedom in Christ which St Dominic wanted his brothers to have can lead some to regress in how they respond to authority. The reasons for rules and expectations are to be explained and brothers are to be prepared to account for their behaviour.

41. To be a disciple means remaining faithful to the Word, abiding in the truth and so finding true freedom (John 8:31-32). There is a strength in our life because it is centred simply on the quest for truth: it gives us stability, doctrine to guide us, fraternal communion in the friendship of Christ, a freedom strengthened by obedience (LCO 214 §II).

42. Even before solemn profession brothers are to be educated in the function of Dominican government (Rome 2010 n.194). They are to be included in community meetings, participating in processes of discernment and decision except in matters for which solemn profession is required. They will see in practice that in our form of government, based on mutual trust and respect, listening and sharing with others are essential. Dominican government is responsible, participatory and consensual, it presupposes an evangelical freedom and an obedience that is not out of fear (Bogotà 2007 n.207, f).

43. Brothers will be reminded of the importance of friendship and that genuine friendship is never exclusive or inimical to community life. The gift of friendship is to be welcomed, whether it is between brothers or with people outside the Order. Good experiences of friendship help in the mature integration of a religious vocation. However any friendship, even when in conformity with the vow of chastity, has to be coherent with the exclusivity of our relationship with God.

44. A challenge for formation is to help the brothers to establish a new relationship with their families, from within the choice of a consecrated life and where the brother must help his family to understand the path he has chosen. Responsibilities towards one's family of origin can vary from culture to culture and sometimes create tensions with the responsibilities that come with profession. These issues need to be addressed as soon as possible in the course of initial formation so that family relationships do not become an obstacle to a brother's full integration into the community. We must acknowledge family responsibilities and how they are understood culturally, help brothers to meet those responsibilities, and at the same time not allow them to damage the kind of belonging our profession requires.

45. In some parts of the Order the programme of formation is shared with other members of the Dominican Family, particularly with the nuns and with the sisters. Even where this is not the case, our formation must also initiate the brothers into the life of the Dominican family. It is another context in which we learn how to

share life with others, women as well as men, religious as well as lay people, where we must practice dialogue, solidarity, and fraternal reconciliation.

46. Love of the Church is at the heart of our vocation. Integration into Dominican life is integration into the life of the Church: it is in this place and in this way that we live out our membership of the Body of Christ. We are at the service of the Church in ways appropriate to our charism and our mission is always to be related to that of the Church in a particular place.

C. The contexts of formation

47. There are different contexts for formation in the Order depending on levels of education, social and political situations, and religious and ecclesial circumstances. To be considered also are the size of novitiate and studentate groups, the age at which men are admitted, traditions and customs specific to each province, and even to different regions within the one province. Formation has the task of initiating into our way of life brothers of different cultures and mentalities, while simultaneously offering them the fullness of Dominican life thus opening them to a larger and consequently more catholic communion. Another consequence of this diversity is that formators and the formation communities are asked to be open to new possibilities.

48. Formation takes on specific modalities in the different stages of initial formation, in formation for a particular vocation within the Order, in formation for a particular ministry, and in permanent formation for the different stages of life.

49. Local and regional resources for education and human formation, whether in the Dominican family, in the local Church, organised by regional conferences of religious or in inter-congregational collaboration, can normally be used in support of a Dominican formation that is holistic and permanent. However, initiation into Dominican life ought to take place in a convent (cf. LCO 160-161, 180 §I, 213 §II). In areas where such formation, or inter-provincial collaboration, is not feasible for cultural, geographical, or other reasons, permission to establish exceptional models of formation should be submitted to the Master of the Order for approval.

50. Each person brings a unique personal background and history with him, a new way in which the grace of a Dominican vocation has been working. Formators need to be aware of the needs of each individual as well as the dynamics within groups and he needs to be wise and patient with the rhythm of development of each brother (Bogotá 2007, n.200).

51. In some contexts men are significantly older when entering the Order. Care needs to be taken to ensure that such candidates have sufficient flexibility and openness to adapt to Dominican life. Sometimes men join as priests or having been in a seminary or in another religious institute. After simple profession men who are already ordained priests remain in formation under the care of a master to continue their initiation into Dominican religious life and to prepare adequately for solemn profession. The *Ratio Formationis Particularis* will consider the age limit for the admission of candidates as well as adaptations that may be needed to receive older men and men who are already ordained.

52. Where the desire to join the Order follows on a conversion or re-conversion to the faith, it is important to help the person to be clear that his conversion and his vocation are related but are also distinct. It is essential that men experience the ordinary life of the Church for a number of years before applying to join the Order. This will help them to grow in the faith and to appreciate the grace of a call to be a preacher at the service of the Church.

53. In contexts where religious life and priesthood offer a higher standard of living than would be generally available, or gives a status within the society, formators must help brothers to purify their motivation in wanting to be Dominicans and to live as the evangelical counsels require.

54. There can be significant differences between cultures concerning questions of sexuality, sexual orientation, human intimacy and attitudes to women and men. It is necessary to speak about these questions in initial and in permanent formation and to base our attitudes and behaviour on what we learn in the gospels.

55. In regard to sexuality, the questions presented for formation are about learning to live chastely as well as about integration in the life of the community so as to participate joyfully in its preaching mission (cf. Timothy Radcliffe, Letter to the Order, 'The Promise of Life').

56. Each generation is to be won for Christ and likewise each generation brings something new to the Order, new experiences, new questions, new apostolic zeal. Formators must work to ensure that each generation of brothers is enabled to grow, to bring its gifts to the Order and gradually to share responsibility for the Order with the older brothers. They must also work to ensure that our traditions are passed on to the new generations and that younger brothers are disposed to receive and to learn from those traditions.

II. PERSONS INVOLVED IN FORMATION

A. *The community in formation, the community of formation*

57. As a *sacra praedicatio*, every Dominican community is a school for preachers and a community in formation. This is true of every community, not only of the communities of initial formation. Each one is to be a place where the permanent formation of the brothers is encouraged and facilitated.

58. While every member of the province shares in the responsibility of formation, brothers assigned to communities of initial formation have a particular responsibility (cf. LCO 161). With the superiors and masters of formation, they accompany the process of growth in Dominican life and apostolic zeal of those in formation. The solemnly professed brothers ought to have the ability and desire to be with those in initial formation, where all who are assigned are jointly responsible for the formation of the Order's newest members.

59. The first task of a formation community is to be a good Dominican community. The community will be challenged by the brothers in formation to renew its life, but it must also take seriously its responsibility to inculcate in the younger brothers the fundamental values of Dominican life (Section I A above). The most powerful witness and teacher of fraternity for the younger brothers is a formation community that is living and functioning well.

60. The community of formation ought to be composed of brothers who have a deep Dominican spirituality, with varied gifts and apostolic engagements, who respect and encourage intellectual life, are kind and open to dialogue, who trust each other, are emotionally mature, know how to listen, and are capable of reconciliation (cf. LCO 160, 180 §I, 215 and Bogotá 2007 n.216). Where possible, one or more co-operator brothers ought to be assigned in the communities of initial formation so that there is a living witness to this vocation for the brothers in formation and a support for new vocations to this precious vocation in the Order.

61. Initial formation presupposes a conventual life strong enough to receive and to form new members, well-prepared masters, and a sufficient number of novices or students. Where it is difficult for a province or other entity to sustain its own communities of formation, there needs to be collaboration between provinces, particularly in the same region.

62. It is important that where possible brothers are formed in their own entity but it is also important that they have the best possible formation. Where there are few vocations to a province consideration is to be given to sending new brothers to novitiates and studentates where they will have a good number of contemporaries. This is especially the case where there is a significant gap in age between the older brothers of a province and the brothers in formation. A very important part of formation is sharing life with one's peers who often have an important formative influence. Keeping a single novice in a novitiate, or too few students in a province, is to be avoided.

63. As part of the annual canonical visitation of the prior provincial (cf. LCO 340), each community of initial formation is to see whether the work of formation is in fact a primary and integral part of the community project, and whether the brothers of the community are collaborating well in that work.

64. After the annual visitation of the communities of initial formation, the provincial with his council shall review the environment in which formation is taking place as well as the implementation of the formation programme. They must ensure that the conditions required for a good formation community are present in both the novitiate and the studentate. Where there are difficulties the provincial council of formation must also be informed.

65. The prior provincial needs to be confident that any brother being assigned to a community of initial formation is committed to its purpose. When he has to confirm the election of a prior in a convent of initial formation, he will enquire to know if the elected brother really desires to interest himself and participate in the formation of brothers and in their integration into the community. He ought also to ensure that the elected brother understands the responsibility of the master of formation and how he needs to work together with him.

66. Brothers assigned in communities of initial formation are to be supportive of the masters but not try to substitute for them. If they have criticisms of the brothers in formation they are to bring these to the master or raise them at the conventual chapter. If they have criticisms of the master they are to bring these to the conventual prior or to the prior provincial. The prior of the formation community is to speak about these matters in the regular chapter at least twice each year.

B. Brothers in formation

67. Because of the nature of a religious vocation, each brother has primary responsibility for his formation, i.e. for his progress in the following of Christ who calls him along the way of St Dominic. He fulfils this responsibility under the guidance of masters and other formators (LCO 156). It is not just a question of sharing an intellectual understanding but requires an active participation, a willingness to learn, and a readiness to collaborate. Without mutual trust the process of formation cannot succeed.

68. The principle that each brother has primary responsibility for his own formation is not to be interpreted by masters or by the brothers in formation in a way that would prevent appropriate intervention and correction. 'Subjectively' the brother has primary responsibility for his formation and 'objectively' the community and the masters of formation have a duty to assist him in fulfilling this responsibility.

69. As he grows in self-knowledge, each brother explores how his own experience is to be interpreted in the light of salvation history, so that his life becomes woven into that of Christ, in whom he is incorporated by baptism, and into that of the Order, into which he is incorporated by profession (LCO 265).

70. Brothers in initial formation should accept the help of the masters particularly in the discernment of their vocation, which is presumed to be a Dominican vocation but may not necessarily be so. It is precisely this that must be examined and verified particularly in the time of preparation for the novitiate and during the novitiate itself.

71. Brothers in initial formation should willingly accept correction from the master, accepting that it is intended for their good. Without the ability to give and receive fraternal correction there is no progress in the Dominican life. Brothers in initial formation are to be introduced to some form of regular and mutual fraternal correction.

72. For his human and spiritual maturing, as well as for progress in Dominican life, it is of great help to a brother in formation to have a regular confessor and/or spiritual counsellor to whom he can with confidence open his heart.

73. If there is misunderstanding between a brother in formation and his novice master or student master, either or both have the right and duty to seek the advice of the conventual prior. If the situation proves too conflictual so that it seems irremediable, either or both have the right and duty to seek the advice of the prior provincial.

C. Those responsible for formation

74. The masters are to be men of faith and prayer, upright in their way of living, with the ability to receive others kindly, to listen well to them and to understand what is involved in human and Christian maturing (Bogotá 2007 n.200). They are to be men who love the Order, with a lot of experience of its life and apostolic work, and who in their own lives have integrated well the different components of Dominican life.

75. The relationship of the master with the brothers in initial formation is to be that of a witness to and teacher of our way of life, a brother who will help foster mutual knowledge and appreciation, and who will show respect for each one's freedom and dignity. He is to be respected for his personal dignity and for his community responsibility.

76. Masters are to be left free of other major responsibilities and devote themselves to the work of formation as their principal ministry. They need to give adequate time and attention to the individual brothers in formation as well as to the group of novices or students. The master of novices or students can in no case reside outside the community of formation nor is he to have other responsibilities that oblige him to be absent for too long or too frequently.

77. The master must always be present when the conventual chapter or council discusses the progress of a brother in his charge or a question affecting his area of responsibility. It pertains to the masters of formation in the first place to give information from such discussions to novices and students, to identify clearly areas that give rise to concern and to help the brothers to respond to the concerns that have been raised.

78. Brothers appointed as masters of novices or students are to be given adequate time, as specified by the provincial chapter, to prepare themselves for taking up this responsibility (cf. Trogir 2013 n.133).

79. The masters are to be supported in their work by the whole province. This support is given by superiors observing what the constitutions require (LCO 185; 192 §II; 209; 214 §III; 370 §II) as well as in whatever other ways are deemed helpful.

80. The formation of formators is a perennial concern at recent general chapters. Experience shows that regional meetings of formators are of great importance in helping formators in their work. Such meetings are to be supported and facilitated by the provincials of each region.

81. Formators are to be open to participating in courses and formation events organised by local churches, by other religious or by other branches of the Dominican family. For questions that require special competence, or are particularly delicate, they are not to hesitate to ask for the help or supervision of qualified persons and to participate in training sessions organized for this purpose.

82. Masters are to ensure that novices and students who ask or need it, receive the spiritual or psychological accompaniment their particular situations require. In these cases, their role as masters cannot be replaced by the spiritual director or the psychologist. On the contrary, respecting the legitimate autonomy and confidentiality of these, it is up to the master to hold together the different aspects that constitute the experience of formation, seeking the good of the brother in formation (cf. CIC 240 §§1-2).

83. Formators need to be well informed about current trends and pressures on young people and wise in their understanding of the implications for those who come to join the Order (Providence 2001 n.348). Sometimes the virtues needed for religious life have been neglected or even worked against in their previous experiences. Their understanding of the faith, and of a religious vocation, may be seriously incomplete and immature.

84. In discerning for admission to the novitiate and to profession, it is important to remember that not all deficiencies can be remedied in the course of formation. Some of the men who begin formation with us may not in fact have a Dominican vocation and prudent decisions must be made for their sake and for the sake of the Order. Where there is a serious doubt that cannot otherwise be resolved a decision is to be made in favour of the Order. It is essential that there be good communication between the relevant masters of formation whenever brothers in formation move from one community to another.

85. The masters must attend to the specific needs of co-operator and clerical brothers to ensure that all are being prepared for their distinctive roles in the Church and in the Order's preaching apostolate, and for playing their proper part in the life and government of our communities (Rome 2010 n.198; Dominican Co-operator Brothers Study, 2013).

85a. The socius for fraternal life and formation (LCO 425 §II) assists the Master and the provinces in regard to initial and permanent formation (cf Bologna 2016 nn.306-07). LCO 427-bis says: *Ad socium pro vita fraterna ac formatione in Ordine praecipue haec pertinent:*

1° adiuvere Magistrum Ordinis in omnibus quae pertinent ad vitam fraternam et ad formationem religiosam fratrum, sive permanentem sive initialem;

2° omnes provincias adiuvere ut provideant ad formationem religiosam fratrum et ad florentiam vitae fraternae;

3° quando oporteat, congregare simul magistros fratrum formationem initialem habentium sicut et promotores formationis permanentis unius vel plurium regionum.

4° facilius facere provinciis innovationem et formationem formatorum, sicut et augmentum et executionem pianificationum provincialium ad formationem permanentem spectantium.

D. The formation councils

86. A council of formation is to be established in each community of initial formation (cf. LCO 158). Where there is more than one community of formation in a province there is to be also a provincial council of formation.

87. The local council of formation will evaluate regularly the manner in which the brothers in formation are integrating into the community and the manner in which the community is welcoming them. It can point out to the formators points which need attention. It will also treat of every matter raised by one of the members of the council and agreed for discussion by the majority of the members (cf. Bogotà 2007 n.209).

88. The local formation council will always include the prior, the master, the sub-master if there is one, and at least one other member of the community. In a studentate community it will include the person responsible for studies locally and may include a representative of the brothers in formation. The way of choosing the member(s) from the community and the student representative will be included in the *Ratio Formationis Particularis*.

89. The master of novices or students is the president of the local formation council, and he shall convoke it at least three times in each academic year. Where the novitiate and studentate are in the same community, the *Ratio Formationis Particularis* shall determine which of the masters is to preside at the local formation council.

90. The composition and tasks of the local formation council (LCO 158) shall be included in the *Ratio Formationis Particularis*.

91. The provincial council of formation is to be convoked and chaired by the prior provincial or by another brother as determined by the *Ratio Formationis Particularis*.

92. The tasks of the provincial council of formation are: to articulate and evaluate the provincial vision of formation within the broader context of Dominican formation; to co-ordinate what is done in the communities of formation to ensure continuity through the different stages of formation; to address questions

and difficulties that arise in initial or permanent formation; to reflect on the policy of formation in the province; to maintain an appropriate connection with the formation activities of the Dominican family; and to be available to assist the prior provincial and his council as and when requested. It will also review regularly the policy and strategies for promoting vocations in the province.

93. The provincial council of formation will include the prior provincial, the masters of novices and students, the promoter of vocations, the regent of studies, moderators of studies, and the provincial promoter of permanent formation. It may include also the priors of the formation communities, a co-operator brother, other brothers and a representative of the student brothers. The *Ratio Formationis Particularis* shall specify the membership of this council, it shall say who is to convoke and preside at it, and it shall determine how the student representative is to be chosen.

94. The provincial council of formation will review regularly the programme of initial and permanent formation to ensure the unity and continuity that are essential in the formation process.

95. Councils of formation, both local and provincial, must remain attentive to social and cultural changes in their region and study the implications of these for vocations and for formation.

III. STAGES OF INITIAL FORMATION

A. The promotion and direction of vocations

96. In order to foster vocations we ought to strengthen our apostolic work with young people, encourage young friars to join in promoting vocations, invite the collaboration of the whole Dominican family, especially the prayers of the nuns, and encourage our communities to live visibly the rich dimensions of Dominican life (cf. Rome 2010 n.188).

97. The promotion of vocations is a task for every brother and for each community. We do it through regular times of prayer for vocations, through fidelity to regular observance and common life, through the apostolic witness of our communities, by discussing the Order and its mission with all who are interested, and by extending hospitality to those discerning their vocation.

98. Each province and vice-province shall appoint a promoter of vocations. Where possible this is to be the brother's primary task. He shall use all modern means of communication and information technology in carrying out his mission.

99. The promoter of vocations works to make the Order known and to inform people about its mission. The director of vocations accompanies more closely men who have indicated an intention to join the Order. In some provinces such direction or accompaniment takes the place of a postulancy or pre-novitiate. The promotion and direction of vocations may be undertaken by the same brother or the tasks may be shared. In either case the brothers concerned are to be allowed the time and resources necessary for their work.

100. The promoter and director of vocations must ensure that aspirants get to know a good number of the brothers and that a good number of the brothers gets to know them. The brothers will assess their level of human and spiritual maturity, help them to clarify their vocation and work with them to understand and deepen their motivation.

101. In order to understand something of how an aspirant's personality and Christian vocation have been formed, it is important that directors of vocations meet some members of his family.

102. The co-operator brothers are to be involved in determining how their vocation is promoted. Where a co-operator brother of the province is not available to help with vocations promotion or direction, brothers from other provinces may be invited to assist in this work.

103. Brothers promoting vocations will promote all the vocations in the Dominican family: friars, nuns and sisters, priestly and lay fraternities, and secular institutes (cf. Trogir 2013 n.148). In particular they will take care to promote explicitly the vocations of both clerical and co-operator brothers and will help aspirants to discern to which of these they are being called.

104. Regional meetings of superiors and formators provide a forum in which experiences in promoting and directing vocations can be shared as well as experiences in preparing brothers for the work of promoting and directing vocations.

105. The length of time a man ought to wait between his first contact and before applying to join the Order will vary according to individual circumstances and local customs. It depends also on the time and mode of preparation for the novitiate that a province has in place.

B. Preparation for the novitiate

106. How aspirants are helped to prepare for the novitiate varies across the Order. The goals of this period are to know the candidate well, to discern his motivation and to judge when he is ready for the novitiate. In some provinces the director of vocations prepares men for the novitiate which begins after a short postulancy. In others this period is institutionalised in a pre-novitiate (LCO 167 §III) which includes a first experience of communal living. This allows the brothers of the Order who live with the aspirants to make a judgement on the basis of living with them from day to day. It is important that aspirants have had an experience of living with others in a context other than that of their family.

107. The *Ratio Formationis Particularis* will articulate clearly what the province's goals are for this time of preparation. It is for the provincial chapter, or the provincial and his council, to determine the manner and duration as well as the place of the 'preparation for the novitiate' (LCO 167 §II).

108. Whatever form it takes, it is essential that postulancy or prenovitiate not take away from the novitiate, which must maintain its special character as the time of initiation into Dominican religious life (Trogir 2013 n.144).

109. The time of preparing for the novitiate will provide a gradual transition, allow time for spiritual and psychological adjustment, and help the aspirant to understand the necessary changes he must make when he enters religious life. Aspirants are helped also to reflect on the vocation of the priest and of the co-operator brother in the Order and to discern about this in their own case.

110. Those preparing for the novitiate are to be encouraged to get to know some communities of the province.

111. Criteria for admission to the Order are given in LCO 155 and 216 §I. Provinces in the same region are to work together to ensure consistency in applying these criteria.

112. Aspirants cannot be expected to have perfect motivation, nor to be ready in every way to begin formation in the Order. However, a desire to listen to God and to serve the Body of Christ through preaching must be clearly present (Trogir 2013 nn.139, 149).

113. The *Ratio Formationis Particularis* determines the membership and *modus operandi* of the admissions board (LCO 171-173).

114. The *Ratio Formationis Particularis* will provide guidance about the advisability and the role of psychological evaluation in the process of admission. This is a delicate matter and the rights of the aspirant must be respected (see Congregation for Catholic Education, *Guidelines for the Use of Psychology in the Admission and Formation of Candidates for the Priesthood*, 13 June 2008). The psychological evaluation can be extremely useful in guiding aspirants in their human and spiritual growth, and in guiding the

admissions board. However, it must be understood that the psychological advice does not usurp the work of evaluation by the admissions board. The responsibility of admitting aspirants remains with the province (LCO 171).

115. The brother or brothers responsible for preparing aspirants for the novitiate shall furnish a report to the admissions board. This report is to be sent to the prior provincial at the same time as the recommendation of the admissions board.

116. In addition to the report mentioned above (n.115), the aspirant is to be interviewed by the members of the admissions board. Inquiries should be made about the candidate's background up to now, about his academic performance and about any work experience. Letters of reference are to be sought from individuals with knowledge of the aspirant, and safeguarding and child protection requirements of church and civil law must also be fulfilled.

117. When a man has been accepted for the novitiate, the master of novices will verify that all the conditions required by our laws are fulfilled and that all the necessary documentation has been gathered (CIC 642-645; LCO 168-170). Local rules on disclosure of personal information must always also be respected. The *Ratio Formationis Particularis* will include a policy for the retention of documents.

118. When an aspirant has already been refused entry into one of our novitiates, he cannot be validly admitted to another without a written report from the provincial of the province that refused him. This report ought to explain clearly the reasons for the province's decision. It is to be submitted to the admissions board of the province to which he is now applying and be included in the board's report to the prior provincial.

119. In countries where young religious are bound to military or civil service the *Ratio Formationis Particularis* is to specify the conditions under which these services are to be fulfilled.

C. The novitiate and simple profession

120. The novitiate initiates brothers into our way of life, which is the following of Christ in the way devised by St Dominic, a way of life characterised by religious consecration, regular observance, poverty, common fraternal life, liturgy and prayer, study, and the ministry of the Word (LCO 2-153).

121. The novitiate ought to have something of the character of a 'desert experience' with many opportunities for solitude and prayer. It is a period of initiation in which the brother's entry into a new way of living ought to be clearly marked by rites of passage, particularly the rite of clothing with the habit. The novitiate ought to provide the conditions necessary for the brother to experience a new depth of encounter with God and with himself, as well as introducing him to the reality of common fraternal life and to the apostolic mission of the Order. The novitiate is above all else a time for reading the Bible, seeking to understand its meaning through prayer and study, while learning also about the conditions and needs of people in the world.

122. The master of novices is responsible for formation in the novitiate. He is helped by the local formation council and, possibly, by an assistant. The novitiate programme is established by him and is to be submitted to the prior provincial for approval. He should remember also the role of the formation community in assisting him in the formation of the novices (see LCO 181 and Part II, Section A above). He is to meet frequently with the novices, both individually and as a group.

123. Although study is an essential part of the novitiate, and a curriculum is given in LCO 187, these studies are not to be undertaken in an academic way. Brothers are to be allowed plenty of time to read and reflect in the areas identified in the novitiate curriculum, above all to read the Bible. All other studies are to be suspended for this year.

124. The novitiate aims at helping the novice to a mature discernment regarding his vocation (LCO 186). It is also the beginning of formation in our way of living, as the novices begin to internalise, through living them, the values and attitudes of St Dominic's apostolic charism.

125. This time of progressive apprenticeship in the different elements of our life will give priority to spiritual and community life as well as the development of a strong practice of prayer, both personal and liturgical.

126. Novices are to be given a practical initiation into the Church's liturgy and sacramental practice. The master of novices will instruct them about personal and liturgical prayer, and teach them how to integrate these in their daily living of our life. He will endeavor to instill in them a love for the Order's liturgical life as well as an appreciation of its crucial importance for forming and sustaining the Dominican preacher.

127. Dominican liturgy is that of a fraternal community sharing a life and mission that are centred on the Word of God. The master of novices will help the novices to see how the discipline of personal study is supported by the liturgical life of the community. The novices will be introduced to the Order's rich traditions of hymnody and plainchant, and to its traditions of devotional prayer, in particular to Mary, Mother of God (LCO 129).

128. While it is primarily a time for spiritual growth and the discovery of community life, the novitiate ought to include an introduction to the challenges of the apostolate. Novitiate formation is to be 'not just theoretical but practical, with an opportunity for some participation in the apostolic activities of the Order' (LCO 188). The apostolic priorities and orientation ordained by general chapters should guide the selection of these activities.

129. Integrated with this programme of formation and linked with it, regular meetings will permit the novices to discuss their life in the novitiate and will also initiate them into the practice of chapters (cf. LCO 7 §III).

130. The novitiate community and, more broadly, the whole province have their role to play in the integration and formation of novices, in ways which the master of novices and the prior provincial will take care to determine and recall. Nevertheless the task of discernment falls in a particular way to the master of novices (cf. LCO 186).

131. Brothers should realise that in making simple profession they are already committing themselves totally to Christ and to the Order. In a culture that values freedom of choice and changes of job it can be more difficult to impress on young men the definitive character of profession. They are to be helped to appreciate that Christ will sustain them in their profession when it is Christ who has called them to follow him along this way.

132. The criteria for admission to profession are the psychological, moral and religious maturity of the novice, the seriousness of his prayer life, his suitability for study, his disposition for apostolic work, his love for the gospel, his compassion for the poor, the sinner, and the un-evangelised, and his capacity to live the vowed life and the common life proper to our Order. Those who examine him and those who vote on him need to be confident that he understands the step he is taking and that he freely takes on the obligations of profession.

133. Profession is first made for one, two or three years, as determined in the statute of the province, and may be renewed as determined in the same statute. There must be at least three years, and there cannot be more than six years, of simple profession (cf. LCO 195 §II; 201 §I).

134. In provinces in which the statute allows a first profession for either one year or three years, these two possibilities are to be carefully considered between the master of novices and each novice (cf. LCO 195 §II). It must only be in exceptional circumstances that brothers make profession for one year and continue renewing it for single years.

135. The prior provincial needs to be satisfied that a novice asking to make profession has been properly informed about the vows and formed for living them. The brothers examining novices for profession must also be satisfied on this point.

136. A novice who has made perpetual or solemn profession in another congregation does not make simple profession at the end of the novitiate but a decisive vote of the conventual chapter and council is still required, on the basis of which he will either continue the period of probation, with the permission also of the prior provincial, or he will return to his own institute (cf. LCO 201 §II).

D. The studentate

137. In the years between simple and solemn profession, academic study occupies a privileged but not exclusive place in the formation of the brothers. It is a time of maturing, and of deeper integration into Dominican life as well as of continued growth in the faith.

138. While there is an appropriate emphasis on study during these years, the brothers are to be helped to integrate their intellectual formation with the other aspects of our form of religious life with which that formation is intimately connected. Spiritual and religious development remains the first priority during these years (LCO 213 §§I-II).

139. It is for the master of students to help student brothers integrate harmoniously the different demands being made on them. In respecting the stages of initial formation and the priorities which each involves, care must be taken that the overall character of Dominican life (the balance of its various elements and fundamental values) remains present. Study is not to be stressed to the detriment of the life of prayer; and any tension between community life and study on the one hand, and apostolic life on the other, is never to be resolved by the rejection of one or the other.

140. If the brothers do their studies outside an institution of the Order, it is fitting that, in their community, the specific character of Dominican study is to be presented to them. Supplementary courses in Dominican philosophy and theology, in particular the contribution of Thomas Aquinas, as well as in Dominican teaching about the spiritual life, are to be provided according to the requirement of the *Ratio Studiorum Generalis*.

141. The master of students is to give explicit guidance and formation through regular individual meetings with student brothers and through meetings of the studentate as a group. He is to remind them of the value of having a regular confessor and help them to find more intensive spiritual guidance or counselling support where necessary. He should remember also the role of the formation community in assisting him in his work (see Part II, Section A above), other brothers in the community always respecting his specific responsibility as master.

142. The *Ratio Formationis Particularis* will indicate whether the master of students acts also as director of pastoral formation, and, where this task is given to another brother, it is to say how he is to be appointed. It is up to the master of students to assure at the same time the necessary spiritual accompaniment and theological reflection to aid the student brothers to evaluate and deepen their experiences with a view to the integration of the apostolic dimension into their Dominican life.

143. This progressive integration is done through practical and well-defined apostolic experiences during the academic year, more intensive experiences during the school holidays, and including also the possibility of interrupting the cycle of studies (cf. n.149 below).

144. These apostolic experiences must ensure that the student brothers will have contact with the world of the poor, the exploited and the marginalised, gradually introducing them in this way to the frontiers of Dominican life and mission

145. The master of students is to be kept informed of the nature and demands of pastoral formation, particularly where pastoral commitments require a brother to be absent from community activities.

146. He will also ensure that the brothers have holidays and other free time. These should be for rest and enrichment, allowing them later to use more profitably the time devoted to study and to the apostolate.

147. Brothers in formation will be encouraged to develop their talents, to engage in sports and other physical recreation, to participate in cultural activities, to appreciate literature, music and art, and to be healthy in diet, sleep, etc.

148. Where possible, student brothers are to spend time in other convents of the province, in order to experience the life and ministry of a community other than the community of formation. This ought to help the student brother to integrate the different elements of our life in another setting. It also gives an opportunity to members of other communities to assess the progress of the brothers in formation.

149. Exchanges between provinces with a view to learning foreign languages, engaging in apostolic work, visiting convents and houses of particular interest, taking part in meetings between students of the same region etc., are to be encouraged and supported. Every brother in initial formation ought to have the opportunity to live in another culture and to learn another language. If it is deemed necessary for formation, studies may be interrupted for the sake of apostolic or other activity (cf. LCO 164; 225 §II). Such exchanges also help students to appreciate the universal mission of the Order.

150. To avoid all conflict concerning jurisdiction, the *Ratio Formationis Particularis* is to define clearly the role of the master of students in matters of responsibility such as permissions and dispensations, holidays and pastoral placements etc.

151. In preparation for the ministries of reader and acolyte, as well as for ordination as deacon and priest, there must be a proper education, practical as well as theoretical, about the liturgical duties these ministries involve, about the spirituality that ought to characterize those who exercise them, and about the apostolic commitments they entail.

152. The modalities for the institution of brothers as lectors and acolytes are to be given in the *Ratio Formationis Particularis*. These institutions take place between simple profession and solemn profession (LCO 215-bis).

Formation of co-operator brothers

153. Provinces must decide the arrangements for the post-novitiate formation of both co-operator and clerical brothers. Depending on local circumstances and the traditions of a province, there may be separate studentates for co-operator and clerical student brothers. This is to be specified in the *Ratio Formationis Particularis*. Whatever those arrangements may be all brothers are to receive the same human and spiritual formation up until solemn profession.

154. The *Ratio Studiorum Generalis* describes the intellectual formation necessary for a Dominican preacher. This formation is common to clerical and co-operator brothers. Clerical students also pursue the course of studies required by the Church for ordination. Co-operator brothers either follow the same programme of studies, or receive another theological and professional formation, depending on the role in the mission of the province that is envisaged for them. The regent of studies and the master of co-operator brothers are to organize a programme of formation for co-operator brothers in formation (LCO 217). This must always include the formation of co-operator brothers for lay ministry in the Church.

155. Care is to be taken to form the co-operator brothers to participate fully in the life and mission of the Order. A suitably qualified senior co-operator brother should be involved in their formation. He is to help them to know the history of this vocation in the Order and to follow Christ, according to their specific vocation, along the way of St Dominic.

156. In the years of formation the brothers are to be warned about the temptation of 'clericalism', not just in relating to people outside the Order but also in relating to non-ordained members of the Order.

157. Where the studentate community is being moved to another convent, or a new studentate community is being established, the Master of the Order must be consulted and not just informed.

E. Solemn profession

158. A brother can be admitted to solemn profession after three years of simple profession. With solemn profession a brother gains active voice and participates fully in the conventual chapter.

159. The master of students is to remind brothers that, in case of doubt or hesitation, they have the possibility of prolonging their time of simple profession, not however for more than three years (cf. LCO 201 §I).

160. In addition to the examination and vote of the conventual chapter and council, and along with the written report of the master of students, the prior provincial or his delegate is bound to have a thorough interview with the brother who is to be professed concerning the step he is going to take.

161. Clerical brothers remain under the authority of a student master until their initial formation is completed with their ordination to the priesthood (cf. LCO 221). At the same time, their relationship with him, and the character of the formation he gives, will change in line with their position in the community as solemnly professed brothers.

162. Co-operator brothers remain under the authority of a master until their formation is completed, either with solemn profession or with the completion of their institutional studies or professional training, whichever is later. Where their initial formation ends with solemn profession, the local superior or another brother appointed by him is to accompany them for the first two years after solemn profession.

163. In preparation for solemn profession, brothers are to be helped again to appreciate the obligation of praying the Liturgy of the Hours each day, even when they cannot be present for choral office.

F. Diaconate and priesthood

164. The mission of preaching is the specific mission confided to the Order by the Church. By our profession we are ‘dedicated in a new way to the universal Church, fully committed to preaching the Word of God in its totality’ (LCO 1, III).

165. The ministry of the word is intimately connected with the sacraments and finds its completion in them (cf. LCO 105). Thus there is a natural link between the Order’s mission of preaching and diaconal and priestly ministry in the Church.

166. In presenting brothers for ordination to the diaconate or to the presbyterate, the requirements of our constitutions and of the Church’s law are to be carefully observed (CIC 1031 §I; 1032; 1035-1036; LCO 246-248).

167. Aptitude for preaching within the context of the Sacred Liturgy is one of the essential elements to be considered in presenting brothers for ordination.

168. At his own request or at the decision of the prior provincial, and for serious and well-founded reasons (CIC 1030), a brother may remain a deacon for a period of time after the completion of his institutional studies.

169. Brothers who are deacons are to be given sufficient opportunities to exercise their proper ministry.

170. While there will be a natural sense of ‘graduation’ at the end of institutional studies, particularly where it coincides with ordination to the priesthood, our formation continues, not just in the years immediately following solemn profession or ordination, but throughout our lives.

IV. PERMANENT FORMATION

A. *General principles: community in / of formation, 'masters' of permanent formation, the brothers themselves*

171. From its foundation the Order is called to the proclamation of the Word of God, to preach everywhere the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (LCO 1, I). By our profession, we are consecrated to live the *sacra praedicatio* in its totality, something that becomes fully evident when the regular life of the brothers and their various preaching apostolates form a dynamic synthesis rooted in the abundance of contemplation (cf. LCO 1, IV).

172. To be a preacher is to be in constant dialogue with the Word of God through contemplation and study, prayer and fraternal life, constantly adapting to changing times and circumstances. We read in the Scriptures of encounters with God, where people, addressed by his Word, are called into friendship with God and to mission. We see that such an encounter requires a disposition open to conversion and unceasing renewal. For this reason the preacher is called to engage seriously in permanent formation.

173. It means for the brothers a particular form of continued renewal and maturing according to the different stages of their life, so that they may be true to what they preach in word and example. Through permanent formation we remain attentive and seek to understand the developments and concerns of the world, and to interpret the social and political reality of our time. Maintaining hope and sharing faith, we grow in human and emotional integration, and build a preaching community at the service of God's people (Trogir 2013 n.124). It is in renewing us constantly, through permanent formation understood in its broadest and deepest sense, that, marked by both the divine life (2 Peter 1:4) and by the human experiences in which we share, we can seek to find solutions to the questions with which we are confronted, whether at the personal or social levels.

174. Permanent formation inevitably concerns the whole person of the religious, his human, intellectual, spiritual and apostolic formation. The *Ratio Studiorum Generalis* gives some guidelines for permanent intellectual formation whereas this *Ratio Formationis Generalis* focuses more on permanent formation from the human, spiritual and apostolic perspectives. It is essential that these four main aspects of permanent formation remain in balance with each other. The end of permanent formation is to integrate the graces of conversion and of spiritual transformation offered by God and that concern the wellbeing and holiness of the whole person. The more intellectual dimension of acquiring new skills and of updating for the purpose of preaching or pastoral ministry is subordinated to this end.

175. As is the case with initial formation, permanent formation is the responsibility in the first place of the brother himself. At the same time, since initial formation is always under the guidance of a master, so too is permanent formation. By analogy we can say that a first 'master' in permanent formation is the community itself in which the brother lives.

176. Traditionally, each Dominican convent is a school of the *sacra praedicatio*. The 'master' of this school is the communion of the brothers united in one heart and one mind, intent on God (Rule of St Augustine). The quality of permanent formation in a community will reflect the strength of communion among the brothers and the sacrifices they make for engaging holistically with that formation. Mutual understanding and fraternal communion (cf. LCO 5) are rooted in sharing life together and sharing the Word of God together. This requires the human and spiritual maturity that ought to mark the witness of the *sacra praedicatio*. By participating fully in the life of the convent (regular chapters, community discussions, conventual preaching, community retreats, fraternal life, recreation, etc.) the brothers experience what Reginald of Orléans noted when he said that he 'had received more from the Order than he gave to the Order'.

177. In the local community particular responsibility for the permanent formation of the brothers rests with the prior, assisted by the conventual lector (LCO 88; 326-bis) and the conventual chapter (LCO 311).

178. In addition to what is mentioned in LCO, the conventual lector will

- present the community with a plan for permanent formation for the year,
- promote theological reflection on the community's concrete apostolic experience,
- encourage the brothers to take part in meetings and courses concerned with permanent formation, whether in their own priory or province, in the diocese or in other centres.

179. The programme for permanent formation is to be included in the community project for each year. It is to be assessed in the prior's reports to the prior provincial or to the provincial chapter, especially in the report at the end of his term (LCO 306).

180. In the province responsibility for permanent formation belongs to the Prior Provincial, assisted by the Promoter of Permanent Formation (LCO 89 §I, 89 §III, 251-ter) and by the Regent of Studies where academic study is concerned. They will be concerned to support the efforts of local communities and to arrange events for the province as a whole.

181. The *Ratio Formationis Particularis* will establish the general framework, specific objectives and concrete modalities for permanent formation in the province, taking into account the province's life and mission.

182. Provinces of the same region are encouraged to cooperate in offering workshops for permanent formation in the different languages and cultures of the Order.

183. The socius for fraternal life and formation will foster communication among the provinces to exchange experiences and resources for permanent formation. The general chapter will propose topics for discussion that will serve as a frame of reference for the whole Order.

B. Transition, first assignation

184. Experience shows that the first assignation at the end of his initial formation is one of the most important transitions a brother has to make. Brother Damian Byrne's letter on 'First Assignations' (May 1990) is often mentioned throughout the Order as a very important document. Superiors, having consulted formators, are to take care to assign brothers after their initial formation to communities and missions that are supportive of their vocation. The prior provincial must ensure, along with the superiors of the communities to which they will be assigned, that a suitable brother or qualified other person accompanies them for the first two years after the end of their initial formation. It is important to avoid the extremes of leaving a brother entirely alone and of putting in place a system of mentoring that would be oppressive.

185. There ought to be an annual meeting for the brothers of a province who have completed their initial formation in the previous six years. At this meeting they should reflect on the experience of integration in a community after initial formation, the challenges of apostolic ministry, and any other issue they consider relevant. Where a province has only a small number of such brothers they are to organize common meetings in cooperation with neighbouring provinces.

186. Brothers should not be expected to undertake pastoral or apostolic ministries that require specialist formation without being given the opportunity to undergo that formation. Brothers are to be prepared well for the specific demands of parochial and other pastoral responsibilities.

187. One of the tasks for the newly ordained Dominican priest is that of integrating his priesthood with his life and spirituality. Experienced brothers are to be willing to share from their experience in this matter. In a similar way experienced brothers ought to accompany younger co-operator brothers for the first two years after completion of their initial formation.

188. Older brothers need to be alert not just to the ministerial needs of younger brothers but to the experiences of loneliness, generational difference, and loss which can characterise the first years away from a supportive community of formation (Providence 2001, n.362).

189. The first assignation is not the only significant moment of transition in a brother's life. There are other such moments that come with changes of assignation, the different stages of life, changes in health or family circumstances, old age, and so on. The community ought to be attentive to these transitions and, through its programme of permanent formation, offer moments to discuss and reflect on them. We can say therefore that there are stages also in permanent formation.

C. Issues for permanent formation

190. Permanent formation is to be particularly focused on preaching. It ought, for example, to help the brothers to use well the modern media of communication (Oakland 1989 nn.56, 59-60).

191. There are to be regular sessions of permanent formation concerning the vow of chastity. These are to include a consideration of the province's guidelines concerning ministry and contact with young and vulnerable people. These sessions ought to consider also the question of professional and ministerial boundaries and other aspects of appropriate ethical behaviour (Rome 2010, n.199).

192. The liturgy is always the principal director of our spiritual lives, which are rooted in the Word of God. Communities ought therefore to reflect regularly on questions connected with the liturgy: its theology and history, its current practice, and especially its place in the spirituality of the Dominican preacher.

193. The ordinary accompaniment of each other in community life gives us the fraternal correction and encouragement we need for normal circumstances. But there will be times in the life of each brother when he needs, explicitly and concretely, the mercy he asked for on joining the Order. Each brother needs to be humble enough to seek help when it is necessary and the community kind and wise enough to give it. Invited to 'confess our sins to one another' (James 5:16), we ought at least to be sensitive to each other and to support each other in our weaknesses and vulnerabilities, as well as making frequent use of the sacrament of penance and reconciliation.

194. The senior brothers in a community ought to be a source of wisdom for the brothers. The community is to be mindful of their needs, and is also to ensure ways in which they may continue to participate meaningfully in its life.

195. Gatherings of the senior brothers of a province are encouraged in order to reflect theologically on the spirituality of aging as well as to address the particular matters that arise for them. Such gatherings ought also to include meetings with younger brothers in order to reflect together on generational differences and strengths.

196. The outcome of such gatherings of senior brothers, whose rich experience provides a certain vantage point for Dominican preaching, ought to be shared with all in the province and be discussed in local communities.

D. Identity and mission

197. The demands of conventual religious life and the demands of apostolic preaching can sometimes be in conflict. Brothers may, from time to time, come to prefer the consolations of one to the detriment of the other. Permanent formation must focus frequently therefore on the dynamic relationship between our common fraternal life and our preaching mission.

198. We must be willing, and helped, to reflect on the tensions generated by modern life and their implications for traditional ways of living. These are never simply outside ourselves, affecting other individuals and communities. They are tensions within ourselves and within our communities that need to be understood and to which we ought to respond. It means engaging not only with the questions put to faith by science and philosophy but with the questions put to ways of living and practising the faith.

199. Our form of government cannot work unless we continue to learn and practise the art of dialogue, listening to each one, being prepared to consider other points of view, being ready to help out, being prepared to take initiatives. 'Our preparation for the art of dialogue is never done once and for all, and everyone has to perfect it and learn it over and over again' (Bologna 1998 123, 3).

200. Permanent formation ought to help us have confidence in God and respect for others. Its final purpose is to bring healing, hope and renewal into our lives and the lives of all entrusted to our care.

APPENDIX

A. The purpose of the Ratio Formationis Particularis

- i. Each province is to draw up a new *Ratio Formationis Particularis*, adapting the general principles and filling out the basic structures given in this *Ratio Formationis Generalis*.
- ii. The *Ratio Formationis Particularis* makes concrete the norms given in the *Ratio Formationis Generalis* according to the specific needs and concrete situations of each province.

B. Preparing the Ratio Formationis Particularis

- iii. The prior provincial and his council will determine the way in which the *Ratio Formationis Particularis* is to be drafted and reviewed.
- iv. Each *Ratio Formationis Particularis* is to be submitted to the Master of the Order for final approval.
- v. The socius for fraternal life and formation will assist the provinces in the preparation of the *Ratio Formationis Particularis*.

C. Contents of the Ratio Formationis Particularis

- vi. The *Ratio Formationis Particularis* must:
 1. consider the age limit for the admission of candidates as well as adaptations that may be needed to receive older men and men who are already ordained;
 2. include the composition and tasks of the local council of formation as determined by the provincial chapter or by the provincial and his council (LCO 158);
 3. determine whether the local council of formation will include more than one representative of the community and a representative of the student brothers, and if so how these are to be chosen;
 4. where the novitiate and studentate are in the same community, determine who is to convoke and preside at the local council of formation;
 5. determine the membership of the provincial council of formation;
 6. if a representative of the student brothers is to be a member of the provincial council of formation, determine how this brother is to be chosen;
 7. determine who is to convoke and preside at the provincial council of formation;
 8. articulate clearly what the province's goals are for the time of preparation for the novitiate;
 9. determine the membership and *modus operandi* of the admissions board;
 10. provide guidance about the advisability and the role of psychological evaluation in the process of admission;
 11. include a policy for the retention of documents;
 12. in countries where young religious are bound to military or civil service, specify the conditions under which these services are to be fulfilled;
 13. define the role of the master of students in matters of responsibility (permissions, holidays, pastoral placements, dispensations, etc.);
 14. indicate whether the master of students is to act also as director of pastoral formation, and if not to determine how that director is to be appointed;
 15. determine the modalities for the institution of brothers as lectors and acolytes;
 16. specify where relevant whether there will be separate studentates for co-operator and clerical brothers;
 17. establish the general framework, specific objectives and concrete modalities for permanent formation in the province.

D. Notes for a contract when novices or students are formed in another province

vii.

1. Name of the province of affiliation (cf. LCO 267-268)
2. Name of the receiving province
3. Name of the brother
4. His date of birth
5. His date of profession
6. Copies of the identity documents of the brother as well as his blood group and any other relevant medical information
7. Next of kin contact information in case of emergency
8. A report from the admissions board / master of novices / master of students describing the brother's character and progress, and indicating any areas of concern
9. The length of time the brother is expected to be in the formation programme of the receiving province
10. Confirmation that the regent of studies of the brother's province is responsible for overseeing the brother's study programme. If this is done by a brother delegated by the regent, the name of this delegate should be given. What his province wants the brother to study should be communicated clearly to those responsible for intellectual formation in the receiving province.
11. A novice has only one master of novices and a student has only one master of students. Where a brother is entrusted to another province for part or all of his formation it means that the brother's province trusts the formation programme and personnel of the receiving province (cf. LCO 162, 191-192, 196-198, 202, 206).
12. Indicate how often each year the brother will be visited by his own provincial or regent of studies (cf. LCO 340)
13. Indicate when his own provincial will receive from the master of novices the two reports on a novice's progress (cf. LCO 185)
14. Indicate when his own provincial will receive from the master of students the annual report on a student brother's progress (cf. LCO 209, 214 §III)
15. Indicate when his own provincial will receive from the local moderator of studies the annual report on the brother's academic progress (cf. LCO 209)
16. Clarify the rights and obligations that go with the kind of assignation the brother receives (cf. LCO 208, 270 §§III-V, 271 §§III-V, 391.6, Appendix 16)
17. Indicate where the brother will spend the time between academic terms, especially the feasts of Christmas and Easter, as well as the summer break
18. Indicate how the pastoral placements of the brother are to be arranged and who is to be responsible for directing them
19. Indicate what the arrangements are for the brother's *ad honesta* and other personal financial needs
20. Say who is to give permission for extraordinary expenses
21. Clarify what is to happen with money earned by the brother (cf. LCO 548.5, 600)
22. Clarify the situation regarding health insurance
23. Indicate how often each year the brother may return to his own province
24. This contract accompanies the assignation of the brother and does not replace it

PARTICULAR PLAN OF STUDIES
PROVINCE OF THE MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS
(WESTERN DOMINICAN PROVINCE, U.S.A.)
(Ratio Studiorum Particularis)

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Ratio Formationis Studiorum
PARTICULAR PLAN OF STUDIES
PROVINCE OF THE MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS
WESTERN DOMINICAN PROVINCE, U.S.A.—September 2019

CONTENTS

I. PROLOGUE	<i>page 1</i>
II. INSTITUTIONAL FORMATION	2
A. Novitiate	2
B. Studentate	3
1. General Principles and Essential Elements	3
2. Intellectual Formation of Clerical Brothers	5
a. The Philosophy Program	9
b. The Theology Program	11
3. Intellectual Formation of Cooperator Brothers	13
III. COMPLEMENTARY STUDIES	14
IV. THE PLACE OF STUDY IN PERMANENT FORMATION AND ADDITIONAL STUDIES	17

Ratio Studiorum Particularis

PARTICULAR PLAN OF STUDIES

WESTERN DOMINICAN PROVINCE, U.S.A. – September, 2019

I. PROLOGUE

1. As the Order of Friars Preachers, “we have as our special function the prophetic office by which the Gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed everywhere both by word and example, with due consideration for the conditions of persons, times, and places, so that faith is awakened or penetrates more deeply all life in the building up of the body of Christ” (*Fundamental Constitution*, V). In order to fulfill this mission, assiduous study must be fostered during initial formation and remain an integral part of each friar’s life. This Particular Plan of Studies (*Ratio Studiorum Particularis* or *RSP*) adapts and applies the General Plan of Studies (*Ratio Studiorum Generalis* or *RSG*) of the Order to the reality of the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus (Western Dominican Province). The ethnic, cultural and social diversity of the people living in the western United States calls for an apostolate that is manifold and flexible, appreciative of the various expressions of the Word of God, and simultaneously aware of the single-hearted unity of Christ, a unity which directs us toward God the Father, in the Holy Spirit, with charity, justice, and peace. Our aim is to form preachers of the Word in the spirit of St. Dominic, who with his first brothers was described by Pope Honorius III as having given themselves “to the proclamation of the Word of God, preaching the name of our Lord Jesus Christ throughout the world” (*Fundamental Constitution*, I). The primitive constitutions expressed this ideal with equal clarity: “Our Order is known to have been founded initially precisely for the sake of preaching and the salvation of souls, and all our concern should be primarily and passionately directed to this all-important goal” (*Primitive Constitution*, prologue).
2. In order to realize this goal, Dominic established a way of life for his brothers which embraced the evangelical counsels, personal and liturgical prayer, communal living, regular observance, and assiduous study of the Word of God (*Fundamental Constitution*, IV). Here was the “school” in which the preacher was not simply instructed in the verbal mechanics and art of speaking, but nourished in the grace and substantive thought that makes for authoritative preaching after the manner of Jesus himself (Matt. 7:29). Further, Dominic envisioned this school as enduring through the life of the friar, who, like Dominic, “at home and on the road” is to be continuously diligent in the divine office and prayer, in the celebration of the Eucharist, and in study “by day and by night” (*LCO*, 56; *Primitive Constitution*, dist. I, 12).
3. Clearly, then, one of the essential elements of our preaching is study. Dominic felt study to be so important to the life of the preacher that he substituted it in place of the traditional manual labor of the monk – “no small innovation” in the history of religious life (*LCO*, 76).

In accord with Dominic’s example, “study belongs to the contemplative dimension of our Dominican life, a vital part of its cognitive aspect. And yet, while drawn first toward contemplating God and God’s works, theological wisdom comes to share with the Spirit’s gift of wisdom the love of God and of God’s works, a holy joy in the contemplation of their fullness as well as a holy sorrow at any wounding of their being.” (*Acta Capituli Generalis*, Providence 2001, no. 105). Study is to be intense and constant, driven by the desire to proclaim the Word. It is to aim “principally, ardently, and with the greatest care at what can be useful for the souls of our neighbors” (*LCO*, 77 §I). Accordingly, the Order follows the “innovative audacity of St. Dominic, who encouraged the brethren to be useful to souls through intellectual compassion, by sharing with them the *misericordia veritatis*, the mercy of truth,” recognizing that, “though God’s mercy and compassion are made available to the world in a multitude of ways, by the Dominican charism it is available through study and the consolation of truth” (*ACG*, Providence 2001, 106-107). We immerse ourselves in the study of truth that we might become effective preachers, for “to preach or to teach, nourished by assiduous study, is rightly seen as a work of charity and as an expression of our Dominican prophetic mission” (*ACG*, Bologna 2016, 58); and we preach in order to inspire in others (and ourselves) a love for the truth, the fullness of which is the person of Jesus Christ.

4. We must also remember that Dominic established an Order of Preachers. He had in mind not the lone and isolated evangelical, but a community of preachers in which each participated according to the gifts and talents received. As our Constitutions state: “The ministry of preaching is a communitarian task, and it pertains primarily to the whole community; thus, in the beginning of the Order a convent was called ‘Holy Preaching’ (*sacra praedicatio*)” (*LCO*, 100 §I; cf. *ACG*, Bologna 2016, 66-67). The members of the community founded by St. Dominic have shared with one another and with the world the fruits of their contemplation and study, building over eight centuries “an intellectual tradition which is... alive and has an important contribution to make today. It rests upon fundamental philosophical and theological intuitions: an understanding of morality in terms of the virtues and growth in the virtues; the goodness of all creation; a confidence in reason and the role of debate; happiness in the vision of God as our destiny; and a humility in the face of the mystery of God which draws us beyond ideology” (*ACG*, Providence 2001, 115). The norms which follow reflect a grateful appreciation for that tradition and are meant to assist in the formation of a new generation of Friars Preachers.

II. INSTITUTIONAL FORMATION

A. Novitiate

5. Dominican life is traditionally seen through the integrated elements of prayer, study, and community life, which together form the ground and substance for the preaching apostolate. In this province, both clerical and cooperator brothers begin this process of integration in a common one-year novitiate. The formation program is governed by the Constitutions of the

Order (*LCO*, 177-178), the *Ratio Formationis Generalis* or *RFG*, the *Ratio Formationis Particularis* or *RFP*, and the *Acts and Statute* of the province (*Acts & Statute*).

B. Studentate

6. The habits begun during the novitiate for integrating prayer, study, community, and ministry are to be nurtured and developed during the initial formation program. During this period, they are “to be led gradually to the fullness of the life and apostolate” of the Order (*LCO*, 154; cf. *RFG*, 13, 33). The four principal dimensions to the initial formation of student brothers are the human, the spiritual, the intellectual, and the pastoral (*ACG*, Rome 2010, 185; *RFG*, 4). Each dimension should support the others, forming a single, harmonized whole. That the unity of these four dimensions might truly be fruitful for the student, those responsible for the human and spiritual formation of the brothers are to work closely with those who oversee their intellectual and pastoral formation. The faculty should have a fraternal concern for the human and spiritual well-being of the student brothers. Similarly, those in charge of human and spiritual formation should be attentive to their intellectual and pastoral development.

B.1. General Principles and Essential Elements

7. The human and spiritual development begun in the novitiate is to continue in the studentate under the direction of the master of students. Such development requires greater freedom and responsibility on the part of the individual friar for his own formation as he continues to develop and integrate a life of contemplation with study and ministry. It also involves a larger role in the governmental aspects of the community (*RFP*, 55).
8. Because of the essential role of intellectual formation to the ongoing maturation of the student brother, those in charge of formation should see that ample segments of time are provided for study and that an atmosphere of silence (the *sanctissima lex* of the older Constitutions) is maintained, without which fruitful study and contemplation would be impossible.
9. Coupled with human and spiritual formation, intellectual and pastoral formation is the primary work of a Dominican student. Study and contemplation are to be seen as integrally related to each other, bearing fruit in preaching. By the completion of their intellectual formation, students must be dedicated and capable of independent study (*LCO*, 228 §II). They are also to be ready for apostolic ministry, having not only pastoral skills but a theological understanding of the apostolate, which concerns the governance and vocation of the people of God, the mission of the Church, and the offices proper to both the laity and the clergy (*Lumen gentium*, 12, 18-29, 30-38).
10. *Responsibility*: Students are to be encouraged and supported in their academic and pastoral training by all who are charged with their formation. The primary responsibility for organizing and overseeing the initial formation programs rests with the respective formation

directors. They are helped in their work by the conventual chapter, conventual council, and local council of formation (*LCO*, 158; *RFP*, 114–116, 124), with the provincial council of formation providing guidance on formation policies and coordination of formation programs (Statute [2019], 47). The regent of studies has the particular duty to ensure that this *Ratio* is observed at the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology, our center of studies, acting in accordance with the structures of that institution (*LCO*, 93 §I.2). The master of students shall encourage the brothers in their life of study through his teaching and example, and shall help them persevere in it so that they come to view it as an essential part of their Dominican vocation (*RFG*, 10). At the same time, each friar in the province shall also have a special concern for our novices and student brothers and cooperate with the formation directors in this work. Directors should periodically invite brethren from outside the formation communities to participate in programs, hospitality, workshops, retreats, etc., that will facilitate the young friar's ability to take on the responsibilities demanded of him in non-formation communities. Cordial and cooperative interaction between the *studium* and the province is essential to the ongoing life and health of the province.

11. *Preaching*: In addition to the formal preaching courses at DSPT, formation directors will foster opportunities for the clerical and, where appropriate, cooperator student brother to share the fruits of his study and contemplation in liturgical and apostolic settings in and through preaching. Students preach in the formation community at Saturday and Sunday vespers and in our parishes and Newman centers on Rosary Sunday and during the residency year, according to the discretion of the local pastor, in conformity with the liturgical norms of the Church (*RFP*, 58).
12. *Chastity*: To encourage a proper, healthy development of the affective life (*LCO*, 27 §III), those in formation shall be given unambiguous instruction in what the chaste, celibate life is and requires; for details, see the *RFP* (41-43 and Appendix).
13. *Ministry*: In addition to the DSPT Pastoral Field Education Program, student brothers participate in a variety of apostolic ministries during their initial formation. Their ministry must be supervised and integrated into their overall formation program. Where appropriate, they are to be given academic credit for their work (*RFP*, 60-64, 68).
14. *Hospital Chaplaincy Internship*: All Western Province student brothers are required to spend one summer in a program, approved by the master of students in consultation with the regent of studies, introducing them to hospital chaplaincy, including pastoral ministry to the sick and dying and their loved ones. The rationale and goals of this requirement may be found in the *RFP* (67).
15. *Residency Year*: During the residency year, a student brother lives in a Dominican community outside the *studium* while engaging in an extended period of full-time supervised ministry. This provides both the student brother and the province the opportunity to evaluate his vocation in a different environment. Normally, this year occurs upon completion of the first

two years of simple profession (*RFG*, 148). Communities that participate in the residency program shall offer fraternal support and ministerial supervision to residency students, supporting all the elements of formation, including the human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral dimensions. These communities shall ensure that there is an adequately prepared supervisor who can provide support and documentation such that student brothers may earn academic credit through DSPT, wherever possible, for their engagement with the residency program. Since study is to remain an essential and regular component of every friar's life, the residency student's intellectual development is to be supported and encouraged by the local community (Statute [2019], 67). Further details concerning the rationale, goals, and structure of the residency year may be found in the *RFP* (69-77).

B.2. Intellectual Formation of Clerical Brothers

16. *The Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology*: The initial intellectual formation of clerical students is implemented primarily through the philosophy and theology curricula of the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology (DSPT, 2301 Vine Street, Berkeley, California), a component entity of St. Albert's College Corporation. DSPT is the principal center of studies of the Western Dominican Province. As an institution of the province, it follows the rules and regulations of the *Code of Canon Law (CIC)*, the *Book of Constitutions and Ordinations of the Friars of the Order of Preachers (LCO)* and the *Acts and Statute* of the Western Dominican Province (*Acts & Statute*). DSPT is a member school of the Graduate Theological Union (GTU), a consortium of theology schools (with an extensive, shared, doctoral-level research library for theology, the Flora Lamson Hewlett Library) which has a cooperative agreement with the University of California at Berkeley and its comprehensive research library system, sharing common physical and academic resources (including libraries), while preserving their individual identity and traditions. DSPT is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) and by the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS) to grant the degree of Master of Divinity, and Master of Arts degrees in philosophy and in theology. The chancellor (the prior provincial of the Western Dominican Province), the vice-chancellor (the regent of studies of the Western Dominican Province), and the board of corporate members (the provincial council of the Western Dominican Province) govern the school in accordance with its statutes and bylaws. The chief executive officer of DSPT is the president, who, as its moderator (*RSG*, 56), has overall responsibility for its leadership, institutional direction, administration, and academic life. The details of the governance structure of DSPT are found in its statutes and bylaws. The regent of studies, in consultation with the officials of DSPT as an entity of the province, is responsible for ensuring that DSPT provides the academic program required in this *Ratio*. The internal structure and curriculum of DSPT, however, as well as its relation to the GTU and the University of California (UCB), is the direct responsibility of the faculty and administration of the School, under the authority of the chancellor and board of trustees (*RSG*, 55). Details regarding degree program requirements, including course requirements and descriptions, and the academic calendar, are available through the DSPT website.

17. *Council of Professors*: The council of professors (the corps of professors or *coetus professorum*; *LCO*, 237 §I; *RSG*, 59-60) of the center of institutional studies of the province comprises the members of the Western Dominican Province who are administrators or members of the regular faculty of the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology. This includes members who are on sabbatical but not those who are on leave of absence. All members of the council of professors participate with full right (*pleno jure*; *LCO*, 237 §I). The council of professors is convened by the president; when the president is not a Western Province Dominican, it is convened by the DSPT academic dean.
18. Since DSPT is governed by its own proper statutes and bylaws, members of the council of professors participate in the governance of the school only according to their individual roles as professors or administrators as stipulated in the DSPT statutes and bylaws.
19. The council of professors' particular duty is to examine and to vote on the *Particular Plan of Studies (RSP)* of the province. It may also be convened, as necessary, to promote all that pertains to study as a central element in the integral formation of the brothers (*LCO*, 237 §I), to discuss the progress of the students, and especially to make suggestions regarding complementary studies (48, below; Statute [2019], 29).
20. Other members of the DSPT faculty participate in the governance of the school in accordance with the DSPT statutes and bylaws. All members of the DSPT faculty are evaluated regularly, as outlined in the DSPT statutes and bylaws. While students collaborate with the faculty and take part in the governance of DSPT according to the DSPT statutes and bylaws, no students participate in the council of professors (*LCO*, 237 §I).
21. The academic program provides a thorough grounding in the Dominican intellectual tradition, especially the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas in the context of the contemporary ecumenical, interreligious setting of the Graduate Theological Union and in the academic environment of the University of California at Berkeley. The rich heritage of holiness and theological genius bequeathed to the Order by St. Thomas Aquinas serves as the intellectual basis for engaging contemporary philosophical and theological issues. The teaching and method of St. Thomas Aquinas serve as aids to our students in evaluating contemporary trends of thought and constitute vital contributions to the theological enterprise of the GTU.
22. The Thomistic heritage is therefore presented in an integrated fashion, with its principles always in dialogue with contemporary thought. In our approach, philosophical and theological studies are not isolated from each other. In philosophy, themes of interest to theology are integrated into the program of studies, while in theology, there is a consistent and repeated examination of the ways in which philosophical thought enters into both expressions of faith and the world to which the Gospel is to be proclaimed. Nevertheless, the autonomy and particular method of each discipline is maintained (*RSG*, 18).
23. Methods of instruction normally include the lecture, lecture with discussion, and seminar;

other methods, such as tutorials, directed reading courses, distance learning systems, etc., may also be employed, as needed (*RSG*, 15). Courses in pastoral or practical theology usually employ other methods in addition to these (e.g., practice sessions, supervised field work, etc.). Student progress is assessed through various means suited to the subject matter, including written and oral exams, practical exams, reflection papers, essays, presentations and other projects, research papers, and, for the Master of Arts program in which the student is enrolled, a capstone or comprehensive examination, a colloquium with research paper, or a thesis with defense.

24. The student's intellectual progress and integration, including his academic work at DSPT, are monitored regularly by the regent of studies. The diaconate exam, priesthood exam, and faculties exam provide the means by which the province assesses each student's integration of theological learning and practical (i.e., pastoral and apostolic) application of that learning (*RSG*, 89); they also are means by which the province assesses its formation program and DSPT assesses its Master of Divinity program.
25. In preparation for presbyteral ordination, all clerical candidates shall receive two years of philosophy and four years of theology as outlined below. Normally, one year of theology study is completed in another center of studies of the Order (Acts [2019], 100; *RFG*, 149; *ACG*, Bologna 2016, 245 §4, 247 §2). During institutional formation, students complete a Master of Divinity degree (M.Div.) or a degree at least equivalent to it, and a Master of Arts degree (M.A.) in philosophy or theology (Statute [2019], 70). If the completion of the M.A. degree requires some additional time after ordination, the provincial and the local superior shall ensure that such time is provided during the first year of assignation.
26. In preparing students for ministry of the Word of God as it pertains to the presbyteral office, the program of studies aims to develop in them (*RSG*, 12-23):
 1. Academically:
 - 1) A comprehensive and integrated knowledge of philosophy, both historical and systematic, with an ability to understand and apply its principles and methodology within theology;
 - 2) A broad knowledge of the fundamental areas of biblical, historical, dogmatic, moral, and pastoral theology, as well as the ability to communicate that knowledge orally and in writing, and to begin to integrate the various parts of it into a broader theological vision;
 - 3) A capacity to recognize and respect the Church's historical and contemporary unity and diversity, while engaging the theological tradition critically and respectfully;
 - 4) An ability to see the relevance of the past and bring it into dialogue with the present, and in particular to integrate contemporary theological issues with the tradition of the Catholic Church, especially the theological tradition stemming from St. Thomas Aquinas;

- 5) An understanding of law and authority which is rooted in the intellectual tradition of the Dominican Order, and is thus able to interpret and apply law in view of the common good;
- 6) An awareness of and appreciation for the thought of religious traditions other than Roman Catholicism.

2. Apostolically:

- 1) The ability to integrate personal faith and the study of philosophy and theology in the context of apostolic ministry;
- 2) The ability to preach the Word in a way that integrates philosophical and theological insight, an awareness of contemporary thinking, practice, and culture, and a developed pastoral sensitivity;
- 3) The ability to plan and lead communities in celebrations of prayer and liturgy;
- 4) The ability to lead a Christian community and to work collaboratively with other friars, with members of the Dominican family, and with laity, religious, deacons, priests, and bishops;
- 5) The ability to assist the laity in their formation as apostles in the world;
- 6) The ability to promote and foster the vocation and spiritual life of the Christian community;
- 7) The ability to counsel individuals and groups with insight and sensitivity and to refer situations as needed;
- 8) A sensitivity to religious, cultural, and ethnic diversity.

27. It is expected that, by the completion of their academic program, students will:

- 1) Manifest a broad knowledge of the scriptural foundation of theology;
- 2) Show an appropriate knowledge of theology in the Catholic tradition (including history, dogma, and moral theology), especially the tradition stemming from St. Thomas Aquinas;
- 3) Be effective communicators, orally, in writing, and by use of newer media (e.g., digital technologies, etc.; see *ACG*, Bologna 2016, 152);
- 4) Be able to bring the philosophical and theological tradition into faithful and creative engagement with contemporary developments in scholarship and culture, in mutual enrichment, while maintaining an appropriate respect for the authority of the Church;
- 5) Manifest a basic knowledge of and proper respect for forms of religious thought other than Roman Catholicism;
- 6) Show competence in research methodology, library skills, and academic writing;
- 7) Be able to integrate their pastoral and theological formation;
- 8) Demonstrate a knowledge of the factors that enter into good preaching and effective

communication of the Word of God;

- 9) Show a knowledge of the principles of effective pastoral counseling (particularly the nature and importance of professional boundaries) and understand the circumstances under which referral to other forms of counseling is appropriate;
- 10) Understand the principles of governance of the Christian community;
- 11) Understand and be committed to the practice of collegial ministry;
- 12) Be appropriately sensitive to and respectful of religious, cultural and ethnic diversity.

a. The Philosophy Program

28. Salvation is offered to humanity in the person of Jesus Christ who, through the Incarnation, has sanctified once and for all human existence. Those who preach this salvation must therefore acknowledge as indispensable the importance of a thorough understanding of the human situation in the world. The fundamental tools for this understanding include philosophy and the human sciences, especially history, psychology, and other sciences that directly relate to the human condition.
29. In his study of philosophy, each student brother should attain a historical and systematic understanding that is both comprehensive and integrated, developing skills for academic research and effective communication. In this study, the philosophical insights of the Thomistic tradition are emphasized. They are to be related and integrated with contemporary trends and issues in philosophy and the sciences, particularly the human sciences. Care must be taken not to present Thomistic philosophy in an isolated fashion. Philosophy courses should be taught in such a manner that they will be seen both as a value in themselves and as means to the deeper understanding of theology.
30. The faculty should integrate into their courses aspects of pertinent scientific disciplines (e.g., for the philosophy of nature: the physical sciences; for ethics: psychology, sociology, political theory, and economics). Where feasible, they should invite outside experts to supplement their lectures.
31. All clerical students must have a mastery of the study of philosophy as reflected in the following curriculum. This curriculum is normally fulfilled by completing individual courses as listed; in particular cases, it may be fulfilled by covering the equivalent material in another way, with the approval of the regent of studies. This requirement is usually fulfilled in the first two years after the novitiate and may be integrated with initial courses in theology.

PHILOSOPHY

Logic	3.0	units
Philosophy of Nature	3.0	units
Philosophical Anthropology	3.0	units
Metaphysics	3.0	units
Theory of Knowledge	3.0	units

Ethics	3.0 units
Ancient Philosophy	3.0 units
Medieval Philosophy	3.0 units
Modern Philosophy	3.0 units
Contemporary Philosophy	<u>3.0 units</u>
Total:	30.0 units

DSPT may fulfill its obligation to provide this curriculum by offering individual courses as listed, or, with the approval of the regent of studies and the council of professors, by covering the equivalent material through another set of courses.

32. Clerical candidates who enter the Order with a strong academic background in philosophy may be exempted by the regent of studies (in consultation with the dean of DSPT) from some or all of the above courses. At the discretion of the regent of studies, such a student may pursue either an M.A. degree in philosophy or begin theology studies.
33. *Introduction to Theology and Ministry*: During their first two years of study, students normally take the following introductory courses. This curriculum is normally fulfilled by completing individual courses as listed; in particular cases, it may be fulfilled by covering the equivalent material in another way, with the approval of the regent of studies:

INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY AND MINISTRY

Introduction to Old Testament	3.0 units
Introduction to New Testament	3.0 units
Pastoral Counseling and Ethical Issues in Ministry	3.0 units
Field Education: Introduction	<u>1.5 units</u>
Total:	10.5 units

DSPT may fulfill its obligation to provide this curriculum by offering individual courses as listed, or, with the approval of the regent of studies and the council of professors, by covering the equivalent material through another set of courses.

34. *The Human Sciences*: Before ordination, clerical candidates are to have acquired an introductory knowledge of certain human sciences that allow for an effective formation as a minister of the Word of God, including English language skills, public speaking, and pedagogy, as well as political theory, economics, sociology, and psychology. The undergraduate education completed before entrance into the Order may provide the basic awareness required in these areas. However, wherever a student evinces lacunae in such areas, the master of students, in consultation with the regent of studies, shall determine how the student may acquire the needed knowledge or skill (e.g., by workshops, tutorials, apostolic assignments that include an integrated learning element, etc.).
35. *Spanish*: Because clerical candidates must demonstrate proficiency for celebrating the sacraments in Spanish (Statute [2019], 65, 69), each student shall normally begin the study of this language during the first two years. By the end of his initial formation, the student will have completed an introductory level Spanish course, an intensive summer course (normally, in a Spanish-speaking country), and, if possible, either a summer of ministry or a

year of theology studies in a Spanish-speaking country. Further details shall be determined by the master of students, in consultation with the regent of studies.

36. *Latin and Other Languages*: By the end of their philosophical studies, students of the province shall have attained at least a basic knowledge of Latin, that is, allowing them, for liturgical texts, to “pronounce the words correctly and understand their meaning” (cf. *Universae Ecclesiae*, 20; *CIC*, 249), and to translate ecclesiastical and Dominican texts, including the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas, with the aid of a dictionary. To achieve this goal, students are normally to enroll in an intensive summer program. Students shall be dispensed if they can demonstrate a sufficient competence in Latin (Statute [2019], 66). In addition, students shall be encouraged to learn the foreign and ancient language(s) which are needed for their study. Provisions shall be made for this study, especially during the summers (*RFG*, 149; *RFP*, 66). Other details regarding the type, duration, and scheduling of language study shall be determined by the master of students, in consultation with the regent of studies.

b. The Theology Program

37. At the summit of all our study stands theology, which ponders the living God, reflected in the works of creation and revealed through the power of the Spirit in the Incarnate Word, expressed in Sacred Scripture and the Tradition of the Church. Our students are to be led to a love of this study in and for itself, but also that they might thereby bring the depth and breadth and height of God into the lives of others through their preaching in a variety of apostolates. Through the integration of their theological studies with their life of prayer, they see ever more clearly that they are to preach God and not simply preach about him.
38. The theology program comprises four years of theological study divided into the following general categories: Sacred Scripture; systematic theology (dogmatic and moral), history of the Church; and pastoral theology. With the “Introduction to Theology and Ministry” courses as pre-requisites (10.5 units total, listed in number 33 above), the theology program is adequately reflected in the following curriculum. This curriculum is normally fulfilled by completing individual courses as listed; in particular cases, it may be fulfilled by covering the equivalent material in another way, with the approval of the regent of studies:

SACRED SCRIPTURE

Pentateuch	3.0 units
Prophets, Wisdom, or a thematic offering	3.0 units
Synoptic Gospels	3.0 units
Johannine Gospel and Literature	3.0 units
Letters of Paul	<u>3.0 units</u>
Total:	15.0 units

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY: Dogmatic Theology

Theology: Nature & Method	3.0 units
The One Creator God	3.0 units
Trinity	3.0 units

Historical Development of Christology	3.0 units
Contemporary Christology	3.0 units
Sacraments I	3.0 units
Sacraments II	3.0 units
Ecclesiology	3.0 units
Theological Anthropology	<u>3.0 units</u>
Total:	27.0 units
SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY: Moral Theology	
Fundamental Moral Theology	3.0 units
Catholic Sexual Ethics	3.0 units
Catholic Social Teaching	<u>3.0 units</u>
Total:	9.0 units
HISTORY OF THE CHURCH	
Ancient and Medieval History	3.0 units
Reformation and Modern History	<u>3.0 units</u>
Total:	6.0 units
PRACTICAL THEOLOGY	
Field Education: Advanced	4.5 units
Liturgy	3.0 units
Foundations of Preaching	3.0 units
Liturgical Preaching*	3.0 units
Canon Law	3.0 units
Confessional Ministry	1.5 units
Liturgical Celebration	<u>1.5 units</u>
Total:	19.5 units
ELECTIVE COURSES**	12.0 units
GRAND TOTAL	91.5 units

DSPT may fulfill its obligation to provide this curriculum by offering individual courses as listed, or, with the approval of the regent of studies and the council of professors, by covering the equivalent material through another set of courses. As with each listing of “units” in this document, it is to be understood that each unit comprises approximately 42 hours of study, normally fulfilled through attending one hour per week of classroom time, and an average of at least two hours per week of study outside of classroom hours, during a 14-week semester; an equivalent amount of time in supervised academic activity (e.g., reading, research, and writing, for a directed reading course) may be substituted, with the permission of the regent of studies.

*For Liturgical Preaching, a course in preaching via electronic media may be substituted.

**For those completing a M.A. in philosophy, philosophy electives may be substituted.

39. To allow students a broader experience of the Order (*RFG*, 149; *RFP*, 86; and Acts [2019], 100), a year of study outside the Western Dominican Province is part of the normal formation program. For clerical students, this usually occurs during the third year of theology (or any time after solemn vows). In preparation for this year of study outside DSPT, the student must consult with his academic advisor, the DSPT academic dean, and the administration of the school where the year will be spent to ensure that the expectations of the DSPT academic

program will be met. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all requirements are met.

40. *Administrative Training:* Before ordination, students are expected to obtain a basic familiarity with the management of a pastoral institution, particularly in its financial aspects. The fulfillment of this requirement may occur during the residency year, through formal coursework, or through workshops, presentations, or guided reading.
41. *Examinations for Orders and Confessional Faculties – Timing and Examiners:* Prior to the reception of Orders, and following the examination *De moribus*, each student brother is to be examined on the nature of the Order about to be received. The examiners are the regent as chairman, or one delegated by him, and two other friars to be appointed by the regent of studies from a list of nominees established by the Provincial Chapter (LCO, 248, I) or in its defect proposed by the intellectual life commission (ILC). Examiners are to represent pastoral as well as academic ministry. During the last year of theological studies, the student, under the guidance of the regent of studies or one delegated by him, will take particular care to prepare himself for the examination for faculties for confessional ministry (LCO, 251 §I; RSG, 91-93). This examination is normally to take place at least three months prior to ordination. The examiners are the regent as chairman, or one delegated by him, and two other professors named by him.
42. *Examinations for Orders and Confessional Faculties – Outline, Results, and Reporting:* The content of these exams, and the competencies to be examined in them, are to be outlined by the regent of studies, in consultation with the council of professors and DSPT regular faculty. After a candidate's examination, the regent of studies will prepare a brief report (assisted by the chairman, if the regent of studies was not present), indicating whether the candidate has passed and whether there are any particular subject areas or skills for which the candidate needs further development (even if the candidate has passed the exam), sending it to the prior provincial, to the master of students, and to the academic dean of DSPT. The report will provide documentation to indicate the student's progress, to address any particular needs of the student, and to assist assessment of the formation program. The regent of studies will be responsible for assisting those candidates deemed to need further development in any of the subject areas or skills examined, arranging for any needed help from formators, professors, etc.

B.3. Intellectual Formation of Cooperator Brothers

43. Cooperator brothers are called to religious life and ministry by the grace of God to participate in the charism of the Order of Preachers: namely, to evangelize others through a diversity of ministries, and to follow Christ in the way of St. Dominic through a life of prayer and mutual service.
44. Each cooperator brother is to receive (1) a religious and theological formation for his own

development as a Dominican friar, and (2) the specialized training required for his particular ministry. The program for the cooperator brothers shall normally consist of an extended period of initial formation, consisting of formal philosophical, theological, and specialized studies, as well as one year of residency. The formation in philosophy and theology may be just as extensive and intensive as that received by the clerical brothers, since cooperator brothers also offer a contemplative, religious witness to the Word of God, preaching implicitly by their way of life and explicitly in their ministries. However, due to the wide variety of potential forms of apostolic engagement for the cooperator brother in this province (*RFP*, 105), care must be taken to ensure that his formal education be suited to his vocation and that his initial formation not be unduly prolonged. Depending on the eventual ministry planned for the cooperator brother, and taking into account his previous professional training and experience, his formation may include studies resulting in a certificate, professional license, master's degree, or doctoral degree (*RFG*, 154; *RFP*, 105-109).

45. The regent of studies in consultation with the master of students and with the individual brother will decide the setting and content of the period of initial philosophical and theological formation. The course of studies should allow the cooperator brother to be conversant in philosophy and to recognize its role in theology. It should give the brother a significantly broad knowledge of Scripture, Church history, systematic theology (dogmatic and moral), liturgy, and theology of the apostolate (field education). During this period, the prior provincial, in consultation with the master of students, the regent of studies, and the individual brother, will determine the brother's future specialized ministry, for which the regent of studies, in consultation with the master of students, will develop an appropriate plan of studies.

III. COMPLEMENTARY STUDIES

46. Complementary studies, formal programs resulting in a master's degree, a license, or a doctorate, normally undertaken after institutional studies, are intended to help the brothers specialize, and to make them more competent in pastoral work, academic work, or whatever is entrusted to them, according to their own capacities and interests, and according to the plans of the province (*RSG*, 25-27; *LCO*, 107, 238, and 244 §I). To provide a sufficient opportunity to develop a priestly or ministerial identity, a brother should serve in full-time ministry for at least two years before being approved for advanced studies. The application procedure for complementary studies is outlined in the province's Guidelines for Complementary Studies and Ongoing Formation Programs (GCSOFP) in the Province Policy and Procedures Manual.
47. *Provincial Responsibility and Planning:* The prior provincial has ultimate responsibility for approving the brethren for complementary studies and for directing them in that pursuit. He is assisted in this duty by the regent of studies and the ILC (*LCO*, 89 §I.1; 89 §II; *RSG*, 25). The prior provincial, the regent of studies, and the ILC should cooperate with the DSPT's

long-term planning for its needs, including the preparation of future professors or administrators; the regent of studies should ask DSPT officials for the relevant planning documents whenever they may be available. The plan for complementary studies of brothers will estimate the number and the concrete proportion of brothers who will carry out complementary studies, as well as the disciplines to which they will devote themselves. It will be submitted to the Master of the Order and will be updated within three months after each provincial chapter. The implementation of this planning will be included in the annual report of the regents of studies (Cf. ACG 2019, Biên Hòa, 328).

48. *Candidates for Complementary Studies:* Friars who have the aptitude and desire for higher studies are encouraged to pursue higher degree programs to advance the mission of the province, while being reminded that it is the province that calls them to a particular program of studies (*RSG*, 25). These programs normally presuppose completion of institutional studies and two years of pastoral ministry (Acts [2019], 49; *RSG*, 26). A friar desiring to undertake advanced studies must first notify his local superior and consult with the regent of studies. The applicant may then contact the prior provincial to inform him of his hope to apply for complementary studies; with the permission of the prior provincial, the friar may apply to the intellectual life commission, which evaluates the application and makes a recommendation to the prior provincial. If the friar applies for studies within five years of leaving DSPT, the regent of studies shall consult the council of professors regarding the applicant's aptitude and suitability for complementary studies, including overall academic ability, capacity for integrative thinking, intellectual humility, capacity for self-direction, ability to collaborate, professional comportment, capacity for learning and using modern or ancient languages, and his aptitude for eventual teaching, publishing, or other academic responsibilities. The regent of studies shall also consult the other members of the DSPT regular faculty (Statute [2019], 29). The consultation with professors whose expertise is in the applicant's proposed field of study is to be particularly noted. In addition, the regent of studies may consult others, particularly those with knowledge of the applicant and the applicant's proposed field of study. The regent of studies shall report his findings to the intellectual life commission, to the prior provincial, and to the friar himself (Statute [2019], 29). Final approval is given by the prior provincial. The application's approval or disapproval, in itself, neither ensures the applicant's eventual candidacy for service at DSPT or any other apostolate, nor precludes him from such candidacy.

49. *Financing Complementary Studies Programs:* Expenses for the cost of approved complementary studies programs shall be borne by the budget for complementary studies (for expenses not covered by fellowships, assistantships, tuition waivers, etc.). Funding for all educational programs is part of the overall province budget, and the proposed complementary studies budget must be approved by the economic council of the province as well as the provincial council. However, the friar applying for and engaged in complementary studies, with the assistance of the regent of studies and the intellectual life commission, is encouraged to seek grants, fellowships, assistantships, tuition waivers or reductions, donations and any other

resources that will help defray the cost of the program.

50. Application Procedure for Complementary Studies:

- 1) A friar interested in complementary studies (a higher degree program) first notifies his local superior. He then consults with the regent of studies regarding the various options that are available to him.
- 2) The applicant then contacts the prior provincial to inform him of his plan to apply for complementary studies. If the prior provincial determines, given the needs of the province, that it is possible for the friar to be freed from ministry for the particular program, the prior provincial notifies the brother in a letter with a copy to the regent of studies. The standard form of this letter makes it clear that the prior provincial is giving permission only for the process of application to go forward and not for the program as such. Meanwhile, the regent of studies consults the faculty at DSPT about the applicant (if desiring to undertake advanced studies within five years of leaving the school). The regent reports his findings to the intellectual life commission (ILC), the prior provincial, and the applicant himself.
- 3) After formulating a concrete plan and consulting the prior provincial, the applicant completes the application (available from the regent of studies), sending it to the regent of studies by October 15 of the year before the fiscal year in which the academic program is to begin.
- 4) The regent of studies will acknowledge receiving the friar's application, advising him on any materials or information that might be lacking in the application, and informing him of the date of the next ILC meeting.
- 5) The regent of studies will present the application to the ILC for its recommendation. He will then give this recommendation with pertinent information regarding the basis for the commission's decision and any supplemental suggestions in writing to the prior provincial with a copy to the applicant. Final permission is given by the prior provincial.

IV. THE PLACE OF STUDY IN PERMANENT FORMATION AND ADDITIONAL STUDIES

51. Because every preacher is to be in constant dialogue with the Word of God, summoned by the Word to conversion and renewal, every friar is called to permanent (ongoing) formation for his entire lifetime (*RFG*, 171-200, esp. 172; *RSG*, 28-29). The purpose of permanent formation is “the renewal and maturing of the brethren in accordance with the different stages of their life, so that they can be prepared to proclaim the Word of the Lord to the people who are marked by the circumstances of the modern world” (*LCO*, 251-bis). Although the *habitus* of study is to be an integral part of every friar’s religious observance (*RSG*, 28), extended periods of time dedicated to study are to be given a high priority, particularly in light of the requirement for “additional studies”.
52. *Additional Studies*: Brothers should have the opportunity to pursue two additional years of study after institutional formation, without necessarily aiming towards academic degrees, in order to have a greater expertise for their apostolic work, to broaden their knowledge in a given field or to develop greater competence in the pastoral or administrative realm. This expectation can be satisfied by a formal program of complementary studies resulting in an academic degree. (*RSG*, 24). The application procedure is analogous to that foreseen for complementary studies (*RSP*, 50).
53. *Sabbaticals*: Friars are encouraged to make use of sabbaticals to renew their own spiritual life and ministry (*ACG*, Bologna 2016, 252). Ordinarily, a friar who is a professor follows the guidelines of his academic institution (whether DSPT or another) regarding the timing, nature, and funding of any sabbatical. Any other friar may request a six-month sabbatical after every six years of ministry or a twelve-month sabbatical after every twelve years of ministry. Criteria for evaluating a friar’s application for a sabbatical include the friar’s interests and needs; the sabbatical’s relation to the mission and needs of the Order, province, and the local community; the friar’s availability and the availability of replacement personnel; the overall quality of the sabbatical and its potential benefits; the length and quality of the friar’s previous service; the plans for the friar’s future service to the province; budgetary constraints for a given year; and the date of application. Within one month after the completion of a sabbatical, the brother should submit a written report, evaluating his sabbatical and describing his sabbatical activities, to the promoter of permanent formation, who will share this with the intellectual life commission. The province provides financing for sabbaticals through the budget of the promoter of permanent formation. Procedures for sabbaticals may be found in the *Ratio Formationis Particularis*, 141-148.
54. *Short-Term Programs*: Brothers should avail themselves of local resources offered in continuing education, such as workshops, lectures, seminars, and conventions that are helpful to their ministry. Normally, the ministry to which the friar is assigned or the local community pays the expenses for these short-term programs. When local funding is not available, a

request can be made to the promoter of permanent formation. Procedures for short-term programs may be found in the *Ratio Formationis Particularis*, 149-152.

55. *Specialized Training:* When brothers are in need of training for ministries or apostolates to which they have been newly assigned (whether in the first assignment or later assignments), the prior provincial, the friar's local community, and the friar himself should cooperate to ensure that every reasonable opportunity be taken that he may receive such training in a timely manner, be it administrative, pastoral, financial, managerial, linguistic, cultural, or other specialized training.

PARTICULAR PLAN OF FORMATION
PROVINCE OF THE MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS
(WESTERN DOMINICAN PROVINCE, U.S.A.)
(Ratio Formationis Particularis)

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Ratio Formationis Particularis
PARTICULAR PLAN OF FORMATION
PROVINCE OF THE MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS
WESTERN DOMINICAN PROVINCE, U.S.A.

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	<i>page 2</i>
II. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF INITIAL FORMATION	2
III. STAGES OF INITIAL FORMATION	4
A. Pre-Novitiate	4
B. Admission of Candidates	5
C. Postulancy, Novitiate and Simple Profession	6
D. Studentate	8
E. Solemn Profession	19
F.1 Particular Aspects of Initial Formation for Clerical Student Brothers	20
F.2 Particular Aspects of Initial Formation for Cooperator Student Brothers	23
IV. PERSONS INVOLVED IN FORMATION	24
A. The Community of Formation	24
B. Those Responsible for Formation	25
C. The Formation Councils	26
D. Other Formators	27
V. PERMANENT FORMATION	28
A. General Principles	28
B. Transition, First Assignment	29
C. Promoter of Permanent Formation	30
D. Sabbaticals	31
E. Short-Term (Continuing) Education Programs	33

Ratio Formationis Particularis

PARTICULAR PLAN OF FORMATION

WESTERN DOMINICAN PROVINCE, U.S.A.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The *Ratio Formationis Particularis (RFP)* of the Western Dominican Province (WDP) has several goals:
 - 1) to interpret and apply the general principles of initial formation for religious and priests as given in the documents of the Church (in the *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis ("The Gift of the Priestly Vocation,"* Congregation for the Clergy, 2016), the *Program of Priestly Formation* (Fifth Edition; United States Conference of Bishops: Washington, D.C., 2006) (*Program of Priestly Formation*)), the Order (in the *Constitutions (LCO)*, *Ratio Formationis Generalis (RFG, 2016)*, and the *Ratio Studiorum Generalis (RSG, 2017)*), and the province (in the *Acts* of our provincial chapters, and the *Ratio Studiorum Particularis (RSP, 2019)*);
 - 2) to present a common vision of goals in the Western Dominican Province for initial and permanent formation;
 - 3) to guide those charged with overseeing the initial formation program;
 - 4) to develop a common sense of responsibility in all the friars of the province for achieving the goals of the initial formation program;
 - 5) to guide those who are in the initial formation program through a process of discernment, growth, and transformation in the Dominican way of life;
 - 6) to present the norms and ideals of permanent, life-long formation for all friars of the Western Dominican Province.

II. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF INITIAL FORMATION

2. A program of initial formation must provide for new members of the Order the means for discerning a possible call to our way of life, and if so called, for becoming progressively integrated into that life (*RFG, 13*). Because it must guide the discernment and transformation of the entire person, the program should provide for these general aspects (see *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, Chapter V, I):
 - 1) proper human formation, including psychosexual development and the skills and habits required for good physical health;
 - 2) proper spiritual formation through in-depth spiritual discernment and the development of a healthy and vigorous prayer life.
 - 3) proper intellectual and academic formation (detailed in the *RSP*);

- 4) proper pastoral formation (*RFG*, 142-145).
3. In addition to these general aspects, the initial formation program must also transmit to new brothers particular elements and fundamental values of the Dominican life in general (*RFG*, 2, 33), and of our province in particular. They include:
 - 1) a zeal for preaching the Gospel;
 - 2) respect for and commitment to the common life;
 - 3) study with a view towards evangelization, that is, the service of the Gospel;
 - 4) Gospel values for community living, e.g., mutual forgiveness and support;
 - 5) a perpetual evangelization of one's own life and heart through contemplation of the Word;
 - 6) a respect for the diversity of cultures in the western United States, and an appreciation of the circumstances in which we preach the Gospel;
 - 7) a flexibility and openness to different styles of spirituality and ways of thinking;
 - 8) a mature level of interpersonal and collaborative skills, particularly in working with women and the laity;
 - 9) skills and virtues pre-requisite for embracing the challenge of leadership.

In embracing the various aspects of Dominican life, a brother may find a certain tension among them, accompanied by the temptation to emphasize some to the detriment of others. He is called, however, to live Dominican life in its full integrity and thus to "find balance in a lifestyle that makes varied demands . . ." (*RFG*, 34).

4. The primary responsibility for initial formation lies with each individual candidate (*LCO*, 156; *RFG*, 8), a responsibility exercised and actively guided by those masters entrusted by the province to oversee the process (*LCO*, 156; *RFG*, 68). They are the ones who will work most closely with new brothers. The formation community also plays a key role in the friar's development. Ultimately, the entire province shares in this work. Local communities provide a setting and example for those who aspire to enter the Order, as well as for those who are in initial formation. Thus, it is important that their own community life, prayer, hospitality, collaborative ministry, and apostolic preaching live up to the ideals of the initial formation program: "The most powerful witness and teacher of fraternity for the younger brothers is a formation community that is living and functioning well" (*RFG*, 59). Individual friars provide example through the way each pursues his own ongoing (permanent) formation, the life-long task of becoming a disciple (*RFG*, 3).
5. The goal of initial formation is the progressive integration of the brother into the life and ministry of the Order through the province (*LCO*, 154). Each student brother is encouraged to develop his particular interests in and talents for the apostolate, while recognizing that individual initiatives are to contribute to the overall mission of the province and the Church.

III. THE STAGES OF INITIAL FORMATION

A. Pre-novitiate

6. Through the pre-novitiate program, the candidate is gradually prepared to enter the novitiate (*LCO*, 167; *RFG*, 106). Where possible, he meets regularly with the nearest Dominican community, which welcomes him for occasional meals, recreation, common prayer, and other activities which will enable an experience of community life. Candidates are encouraged to participate in vocation weekends organized by the promoter of vocations. At his discretion, candidates visit St. Albert the Great Priory in Oakland for several days, participating in the life of the community. During this visit they should experience the liturgical life of the priory, meet the student brothers, join them for classes when possible, and meet with formation superiors in a relaxed atmosphere to learn more about the Order. This is done during recreation periods, meals, and while attending classes. Candidates are also encouraged to visit the novitiate community at St. Dominic Priory in San Francisco.
7. Communities, including houses of formation that host vocation candidate visits, should be reminded by the promoter of vocations that the candidates are new to the common life. Propriety and prudence should be remembered when it comes to speaking with the candidates about the life as well as in casual conversation in the community.
8. The candidate is encouraged to have a spiritual director to help him reflect on his potential vocation. The name of this person should be made known to the promoter of vocations.
9. The candidate is to be given literature on the charism, ministry, and history of the Order, along with suggested readings in the areas of spirituality, community life, celibate chastity, and vocational discernment.
10. When necessary, the candidate is asked to participate in local religious education classes or other catechetical programs which are offered in his local area.
11. To determine a candidate's health and emotional stability, the screening process includes a thorough psychological evaluation with both oral and written components. The psychologists will be selected by the admissions board (*RFG*, 114). The age limit for application is normally 35 years old. However, exceptions may be made on an individual basis.
12. Before entry into the novitiate each clerical candidate will have completed a bachelor's degree. Exceptional cases shall be presented by the admissions board to the prior provincial for consideration.

13. Clerical candidates are also encouraged to study Latin and Spanish (Acts [2019], 87).
14. Before beginning the novitiate, there is a period of orientation when the candidates come to know each other and begin to learn something of the practical dimensions of community life. The candidates thus begin to form their own community.
15. The candidates have a retreat of at least five days led by a Dominican of the province. The retreat director, through talks and discussions, should share Gospel views of religious life, community life, and the vows.

B. Admission of Candidates

16. An autobiography is submitted to the promoter of vocations, who distributes it to the members of the admissions board.
17. Once a candidate is firm in his decision to seek admission to the province, each member of the admissions board privately interviews the candidate.
18. The promoter of vocations notifies the candidate after the interviews if the admissions board wishes to continue with the application process. If the response is favorable, then the candidate submits the following:
 - 1) the completed application form;
 - 2) a baptismal certificate issued within the past six months;
 - 3) a confirmation certificate (if separate from the above);
 - 4) complete official transcripts of all college and post-graduate work, a copy being sent to both the vocation office and DSPT;
 - 5) completed medical (including tests for tuberculosis and syphilis), dental, and optical exam forms;
 - 6) five letters of recommendation;
 - 7) a completed Legal Release and Informed Consent Request Form for psychological evaluation;
 - 8) a summary evaluation report from a psychologist or psychiatrist (see (11) above);
 - 9) security background, credit and social media checks.

All documentation, at this as well as at all later stages of initial formation, is treated in accordance with the province's *Record Management and Retention Policy* (q.v.).

19. An applicant must also meet the following requirements:
 - 1) completion of a bachelor's degree, if a clerical candidate;

- 2) no more than the maximum monetary limit on educational loans (as determined by the provincial Statute).
20. The admissions board meets to review the documents and make a judgment on the suitability of the candidate (*LCO*, 173, §I). The promoter of vocations presents the documents and the admissions board's recommendation to the prior provincial "to whom it ultimately pertains to decide about the admission of a candidate" (*LCO*, 173, §II).
21. Each accepted candidate is expected to be responsible for personal health insurance coverage during the novitiate year. Upon profession of simple vows, the friar is then added to the province health care plan.
22. Unless it would cause an undue burden, each candidate is expected to contribute \$1,700 towards the costs of the novitiate year.

C. Postulancy, Novitiate, and Simple Profession

23. The novitiate for the Western Dominican Province is established at St. Dominic Priory in San Francisco, California.
24. The new postulant class each year arrives at St. Dominic Priory on a date determined by the master of novices, approximately two weeks before the vestition ceremony, which normally takes place the last Thursday of the month of August (Statute [2019], 13). The days leading up to the vestition are a time of orientation for the postulants, including a period of retreat lasting five full days (*LCO* 178, §1).
25. *Vestition*: The full habit is given at the beginning of the novitiate year, according to the rite of the Order (*RFG*, 121; Statute [2019], 58). During this year the novices regularly wear the habit, habituating them to its use.
26. *Goals*: The goal of the novitiate year is to initiate each novice into the ideal of Dominican life and the way it is lived in the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus, while helping him to discern his own vocation. This is accomplished through a program of prayer, common life, spiritual direction, non-academic classes, visits to province communities, ministry, and regular individual conferences with the master of novices.
27. *Community*: The novice is to participate in the Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Hours, and recreation and meals with the whole conventual community. The master of novices also establishes times for the novitiate community to gather by themselves for prayer, adoration, and recreation, and so develop a sense of their own community within the larger community.

28. So as to observe the structures and decision-making procedures which affect the life of the community, novices may be invited to the monthly meetings of the conventual community at the discretion of the Prior with the consent of the conventual chapter.
29. *Prayer and Study:* While the novitiate should preserve a non-academic character, the novices should experience study as an integral part of regular observance (*LCO*, 187). Above all else, it is a time for reading Sacred Scripture, seeking to understand its meaning through prayer and study. Practical training should include an introduction to contemplation and practices of prayer, to the practice and spirituality of preaching, as well as to the fundamentals of public reading and speaking (*LCO*, 188).
30. *Evangelical Counsels and Spiritual Life:* Special attention shall be given to the evangelical counsels, reflecting on each of them from a theological, spiritual, and practical perspective. In particular the novices are to be educated on how to develop a mature, integrated celibate sexuality. Additionally, the master of novices should ensure that novices are instructed in the dangers posed to religious life by addictions, especially alcoholism and pornography. The novices should be directed toward a realistic ascetical practice that promotes virtuous living and the freedom of the interior life. This practice should also take account of issues raised by the use of technology.
31. *Behavioral Expectations:* Postulants and novices are expected to follow the guidelines for behavior described in no. 41 below.
32. *Ministry:* The novices have a regular day of ministry each week, the day and varieties of ministry to be determined by the master of novices, in keeping with the apostolic priorities and orientation ordained by general chapters. Where possible, the novices carry out these ministries in pairs or groups and wear their habits in order to fully experience ministry as a Dominican friar. During the month of June, novices are ordinarily engaged in ministry five days a week.
33. *Spanish:* During the Novitiate year the novice brothers will be given an initial introduction to Spanish language and culture, introducing them to their importance in the ministries and liturgical life of the Province (Statute [2019], 61).
34. *Visits:* The master of novices is to organize a visit to various Dominican communities in the province. This experience allows the novitiate community an opportunity to observe local life and ministry, while allowing other members of the province to share in the work of formation (*RFG*, 58) through formal and informal discussions with the novices.
35. *Evaluation:* The chapter of the novitiate formation community discusses the progress of each novice at the midpoint of the novitiate year. The master of novices gives each novice feedback from this discussion so that serious concerns may be addressed and positive

encouragement may be given. Since Dominican life entails personal responsibility, a special emphasis should be put on determining the novice's self-motivation in the living of the rule. He should not require excessive prompting or supervision.

36. A chapter to consider petitions for simple profession is ordinarily scheduled for the last week of May. The prior provincial, after consulting the master of novices and prior of the community, selects three solemnly professed friars from the formation community to examine each novice individually during the first week of May. In the examination the novice is questioned about the obligations of our profession, the evangelical counsels and "the human and spiritual motives drawing him to consecrate his life to God through profession in the Order" (LCO, 191 §II). Prior to this examination, each novice is given written evaluations by the professed friars in the community and his own peers.
37. *First Profession (Simple Vows)*: Each novice initiates the process of approval for first profession by petitioning the prior provincial in writing. The letter should state the brother's freedom in making this request (*RFG*, 131-132; *CIC*, 656), and briefly outline his growth and development in the novitiate. A copy of this petition is given to the chapter and council of the novitiate community. First profession is on the last Saturday of August or a year and a day from vestition (Statute [2019], 13).
38. Normally first profession in our province is made for two years, followed by a renewal of profession for three years (*LCO*, 195; *RFG*, 133; Statute [2019], 59). After consultation with the master of novices and prior provincial, a novice may request to make profession for one year at a time. Such a request may also be initiated through the recommendation of the priory chapter or council.

D. Studentate

39. *General Considerations*: After first profession, the brother continues his initial formation, which directs his discernment and seeks to examine and verify his call to the Dominican Order (*RFG*, 137). Under the guidance of the master of students, each brother develops his personal response to God's invitation; he seeks to understand the place of his own personal gifts and talents in connection with the charisms and apostolic necessities of the Order.
40. During initial formation, the brother integrates his knowledge of the Order into a connatural and affective understanding of Dominican life. The brother not only seeks to adapt to our way of life, but also wills to be transformed by it. To facilitate this process, the candidate must be open to deep and intense self-exploration. In particular, he will be challenged to:
 - 1) develop an openness to new experiences of community life, prayer life, ministry, authority, etc., and be willing to learn from them;

- 2) learn to offer and receive fraternal correction in a spirit of charity (RFG, 193; cf. no. 45 below);
 - 3) learn the art of personal reflection through personal private prayer, spiritual direction, counseling, retreat work, journaling, etc.;
 - 4) develop a commitment to appropriate and variable levels of self-disclosure with peers, older friars, superiors, and formation leadership;
 - 5) develop the ability to integrate information about Dominican life into a practical experience of that life;
 - 6) undergo a gradual and continual process of integration into the life of the Order, so that he is ready to assume all of its common responsibilities by the time of his solemn profession.
41. *Behavioral Expectations:* Because Roman Catholic religious are public representatives of the Church and the Order, student brothers are expected to adhere to certain norms which govern appropriate social behavior. The directives of the Western Dominican Province and the U.S. Bishops safeguard the friar and those to whom he may minister (*Safe Environment Policy: Minors and Vulnerable Adults; Policy on Relationships with Adults; Minors' Policy for St. Albert Priory. See also nos. 42-49 below*). Each cooperator and clerical student brother is expected to know and comply with these directives. Student brothers who have questions or concerns about these matters are encouraged to discuss them with the master of students.
42. Initial formation is meant to direct and guide the student brother in developing a healthy commitment towards psychosexual maturity and celibate chastity. It also provides helpful insights for the development of healthy intimate relationships within the Order. (Statute [2019], 63; cf. also *Pastores Dabo Vobis* and *USCCB Program for Priestly Formation*). The following directives apply to each student brother in initial formation, regardless of sexual orientation, previous life experiences, or present psychological or emotional state.
43. Even though the student master is responsible for the guidance and direction of the student brothers (Statute [2019], 63; *LCO*, 27 §III, 29), each student brother is personally responsible for developing a clear and mature understanding of his own sexuality in light of the psychosexual makeup of the human person (*LCO*, 27 §II; *RFG*, 67). He must also understand its relationship to living celibate chastity, and its role in a fruitful ministry. Each student brother is called to make a heart-felt commitment to living celibate chastity.
44. Student brothers are to develop a broad range of healthy friendships with men and women, all the while observing proper psychosexual boundaries (*LCO*, 26 §II, 28 §II; *RFG*, 43).
45. Student brothers are responsible for supporting one another in living celibate chastity; moreover, they should model and encourage one another in appropriate religious deportment (*LCO*, 29). This support includes developing healthy intimate friendships between student

brothers, offering fraternal correction with charity, and sharing concerns in confidence and honesty. To this end, student brothers should charitably and discretely express their concerns regarding the sexual behavior of another student brother directly with the brother himself, and then the student master (Mt. 18:15-17a). Since gossip has no place within the Christian community, student brothers shall be mindful of the justice due a brother's reputation and dignity (*Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 73, a. 2).

46. The following behaviors are inconsistent with celibate chastity: sexualized conversation which objectifies another person, flirtatious or seductive behavior, immodest dress, dating, visiting pornographic bookstores or internet sites, viewing pornographic media, or visiting so-called pick-up bars. If a student brother persistently engages in any of these activities, the student master must meet with him to discuss his capacity to live celibate chastity and his suitability for religious life.
47. Under no circumstances may a student brother ever engage in sexual activity with another person. Sexual activity is not limited to genital or anal intercourse or oral sex, but also includes intentionally touching another person's intimate body parts (including genitals) or the clothing covering the immediate area surrounding those body parts. It also includes intentionally touching the erogenous zone of another (this includes, but is not limited to the thighs, buttocks, pubic region, breasts or chest), or being touched by another person in any of these areas for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification (*Safe Environment Policy: Minors and Vulnerable Adults*, IX, D). Such behavior is a serious transgression against the vow of celibate chastity. In the case of a simply professed friar, if it is determined that the requirements of celibate chastity are too great a burden for him and that his growth and development would be best realized outside of religious life, the student master shall recommend to the prior provincial that the student brother be dismissed from the Order.
48. As stated in province policies, any form of sexual abuse, exploitation, or harassment is expressly forbidden. Any such behavior will be addressed according to the procedures of those policies (*cf. Safe Environment Policy: Minors and Vulnerable Adults; Policy on Relationships With Adults; Minors' Policy for St. Albert Priory; DSPT Policy Against Sexual Harassment*).
49. All student brothers must be knowledgeable of and comply with California law regarding the reporting of the abuse of minors. This law, the *Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act* [Penal Code Sections 11164, et seq.], requires that all clergy report the sexual abuse of minors to the proper child protective authorities (the seal of confession being respected). Other ministers, though not required by law, are morally bound to report such abuse. Questions on this matter should be directed to either the master of students or the prior provincial.
50. *DSPT Expectations*: As DSPT is a ministry of the Western Dominican Province, student brothers who attend our school function as representatives of the province. The student brothers' presence at DSPT provides a wonderful opportunity for them to be welcoming and

friendly; they are expected to participate regularly in DSPT events. It is also one of the first experiences a student brother has in engaging with the laity, and in working with them in a collaborative manner.

In this light, a student brother attending DSPT assumes the same behavioral responsibilities that all friars do at any of our provincial ministry sites (cf. *Student Handbook*, Appendix 1).

Friendships with lay students at DSPT may enrich a student brother's formation, if they are seen in the proper context. The student brother is always the primary person responsible for understanding and maintaining appropriate boundaries between himself and the lay student. The student brother will want to remain ever conscious of his personal commitment to living celibate chastity, remembering that the lay student has not necessarily made the same conscious choice. Therefore, the student brother will always be aware that his actions, regardless of his own personal intentions, could be interpreted by a lay student to mean something other than what the friar intends. At social functions sponsored by DSPT, any student brother will want to be aware of his behavior, including his consumption of food and alcohol.

51. *Freedom and Responsibility*: Authentic freedom begins with a brother's recognition that the primary responsibility for formation lies in his own cooperation in the formative process (*LCO*, 156; *RFG*, 8). Over the course of his initial formation, each brother should develop a sense of responsibility and learn to use his freedom wisely, deepening his spiritual life as well as his commitment to community life and ministry (*RFG*, 15, 34).
52. *Individualized Direction*: The student brother receives individual direction through regularly scheduled conferences with the master of students. At the beginning of each academic year, the student brother sets down in writing his own spiritual, personal, communal, academic, and ministerial goals. In consultation with the master of students, he shapes these goals in view of his own present needs and future ministerial hopes, the ministerial needs of the province, and the general goals of the formation program. The student brother's goals and progress are normally reviewed with the student master twice during the academic year (*RFG*, 141).
53. *Spiritual Development*: The development of the student brother's spiritual life remains the first priority during initial formation (*RFG*, 138; *LCO*, 213, §§I-II). While it might not be possible to formally articulate a "Dominican spirituality" as such, four fundamental characteristics can be described (compare *Fundamental Constitution*, no. IV). These fundamental characteristics are:
 - a) **EVANGELIZATION**: sharing in the mission of Jesus Christ to spread his gospel, specifically through preaching, teaching, and writing;
 - b) **COMMUNITY**: evangelical preaching as a "communitarian task, as it pertains primarily to the whole community, thus in the beginning of the Order a convent was

called *sacra praedicatio*" (LCO, 100, §1);

- c) PRAYER: liturgical worship and common prayer as expressions of communal identity, designed to establish a fundamental relationship with the Word of God, and private prayer and contemplation as essential to the grounding of each friar;
- d) STUDY: especially the study of scripture, forming an ascetical practice, spiritual discipline, and the foundation for every good ministerial work (RSG, 7, 12).

The student brother is expected to gradually adopt these four characteristics as a way of life. An important tool to develop these qualities is spiritual direction. Normally, student brothers are expected to have a spiritual director, to be approved by the master of students (USCCB *Program of Priestly Formation*, 127, 129). The clerical candidate shall select a spiritual director who is a religious priest, ordinarily a Dominican (Statute [2019], 51).

54. *Counseling*: Because one of the important aims and goals of initial formation is to encourage healthy human development, there may be times when either a student or his formators realize that counseling would be a beneficial tool. In such cases, the individual is encouraged to seek the professional assistance of either a licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, social worker, or a marriage and family therapist (USCCB, *Program of Priestly Formation*, 80, 105). There are at least four possible reasons for considering such services: to effectively address a personal issue; to heal from a past trauma; to encourage growth and development; and to help the student brother and his formators discern his vocation to the Order and to public ministry in the Church. Any brother seeking professional assistance may ask for a list of recommended professional counselors (available from the student master) and choose his own counselor. There are occasions when the student master or the prior provincial strongly recommends psychiatric evaluation and/or psychotherapy.

Situations which may warrant mandated evaluation and reporting include serious and/or grievous behavior on the part of a brother, e.g. evidence of any kind of addictive behavior or illegal activity, sexual misconduct or abuse, or any kind of seriously disruptive or incapacitating psychological illness. The brother must sign a written release of information form before any testing begins. When considering mandated psychological evaluation and reporting, it is helpful to remember that the public nature of the priesthood necessitates a willingness to be held accountable to appropriate scrutiny. Mandated reporting is meant to protect both the individual and the Church. If it is determined that long-term therapeutic intervention is necessary, the prior provincial shall discuss with the student brother whether or not, for the best-interest of all involved, this work be done within or apart from the Order (*Program of Priestly Formation*, 105).

55. *Community*: Each student brother is encouraged to develop a love of and responsibility for community life. He must be attentive to elements of common life such as community prayer, meals, and recreation, and commit to the cultivation of deeper relationships of trust and communication which enhance the fraternal life. To this end, each student brother is

expected to fulfill the following:

- 1) participate in the liturgical life of the priory, including Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours;
 - 2) participate in the common life of the priory, including recreation, meals, and the upkeep of the priory;
 - 3) attend monthly priory meetings, where he shall enjoy voice and vote where this is considered appropriate by the prior and the priory chapter; those in solemn vows are members of the priory chapter.
 - 4) gather regularly with all student brothers and the master of students for meetings, recreation, and other activities. These occasions are meant to facilitate fraternal discussions and allow the student brothers to develop a sense of their own community within the larger priory community.
56. *Diversity*: Recognizing the plurality and diversity of the places and cultures in which the brothers will preach, as well as the diversity within the province membership itself, the initial formation program should encourage the student brother to grow in appreciation of this diversity, which challenges him to preach the one saving Gospel to a variety of listeners. Furthermore, this program is itself implemented with an awareness of and respect for the different needs, ages, individual personalities, cultural backgrounds, and academic experience of the other student brothers with whom he lives.
57. *Collaboration*: Because collaboration is essential for ministry in the Church, student brothers are given opportunities to develop collaborative skills so that they may “recognize the ministries and charisms [of the faithful] so that all according to their proper roles may cooperate in this common undertaking with one mind.” (*Lumen Gentium*, 30)
58. *Preaching*: Throughout initial formation, the student brother is provided with training in preaching. In addition to the requisite homiletics courses determined by the *Ratio Studiorum Particularis*, he also takes part in a preaching program under the direction of the master of students. Each friar is to be continually reminded of the essential and vital bond between contemplation and the preaching meant to flow from it (*RFG*, 14, 21; Statute [2019], 52). Student brothers in simple vows preach at St. Albert Priory at least once each semester during Saturday or Sunday Evening Prayer. A senior community member is assigned to each student brother as an advisor to help him prepare and to offer constructive criticism afterward.
- Deacons are on the regular preaching schedule for Mass at St. Albert Priory. They are also expected to have a ministry at a local parish or campus ministry center where they can regularly exercise their diaconate ministry.
59. *Peace and Justice*: The initial formation program encourages the student brother to develop

an awareness and understanding of issues of peace and justice, as well as a concern for the poor (*RFG*, 6, 14, 144).

60. *Ministry*: An organized program of ministry shall be provided for each brother on two levels:
 - a) through the field education program sponsored by the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology (*DSPT*), which is described in the *Ratio Studiorum Particularis*, and b) through supervised ministry coordinated by the student master, in collaboration with the local council of formation.
61. Each friar will engage in supervised ministry so as to develop sound pastoral leadership skills, while integrating theological reflection with pastoral ministry (*USCCB, Program of Priestly Formation*, 242, 248; *LCO*, 225, §I; and 2-3, 32, above). These experiences also assist the ongoing discernment of friars who feel called to ordained ministry in the Church.
62. Under the leadership and guidance of an on-site supervisor, the student brother learns:
 - 1) to balance the demands of prayer, ministry, study, community life, and leisure;
 - 2) to work collaboratively, particularly with the laity;
 - 3) to minister in different cultural environments (especially within Hispanic and Asian cultures);
 - 4) to gain practical experience in living the evangelical counsels.
63. The on-site ministry supervisor is an essential part of the student brother's educational experience. While not necessarily so, this person is usually a Dominican. When the person is not a member of the Dominican family, the student brother should have the opportunity for theological reflection with an older friar. The supervisor should have a clear understanding of the expectations and goals of the initial formation program, as well as a sensitivity to and love of the Church's apostolic mission, particularly ordained ministry. While he need not be formally trained, the supervisor should be open to developing any necessary skills for mentorship and supervision. Above all, he should be willing to share personal ministry experiences with the student brother (*USCCB, Program of Priestly Formation*, 249, 253).
64. The regent of studies, the director of field education, and the student master should choose a variety of ministries, so as to allow each student brother to receive the broadest possible experience and preparation for Dominican preaching and ministry. Initially, priority will be given to those ministries providing direct contact with the poor (*RFG*, 144; Acts [2019], 99). Other ministry experiences should include parish ministry, campus ministry, hospital chaplaincy, teaching, itinerant preaching, and retreats. Other ministry opportunities such as community outreach, social service, interfaith work, and other ministries which make use of a brother's particular talents will also be considered.

65. During the first year of academic studies no formal ministry is required.
66. *Summer Assignments:* One summer of ministry is to be devoted to completing a hospital chaplaincy internship (cf. 67 below), i.e., working with the sick or dying in a hospital or other clinical setting (without prejudice to the time reserved each summer for the student community to vacation together at St. Benedict Lodge, McKenzie Bridge, Oregon). Other summers may be spent in foreign language study, particularly for those languages specified by our legislation and for those having importance for studies or the apostolate.
67. *Hospital Chaplaincy Internship:* (Statute [2019], 68). Each student brother is required to complete a formal hospital chaplaincy program of several months, i.e., roughly equivalent to one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (cf. *Student Handbook*, Appendix 2 for application procedures for hospital chaplaincy programs). The chaplaincy program should encourage the student brother's spiritual and ministerial growth, including:
- 1) becoming aware of oneself as a minister and the ways one's ministry affects other persons;
 - 2) developing skills for intensive and extensive pastoral care and counseling in crisis situations;
 - 3) understanding and utilizing a "clinical method" of learning;
 - 4) accepting and utilizing the peer group process of reflection, as well as individual and group supervision.

In addition to these stated objectives, the student brother also learns ministry skills in an inter-religious setting, with people whose beliefs and ethical practices may differ from his own (USCCB, *Program of Priestly Formation*, 251).

68. *Academic Year Ministry:* Academic year ministry is determined by the student master in consultation with the student brother. When enrolled in a field education class, the director of field education at DSPT will also be consulted. Copies of all evaluation forms for the field education class received by DSPT are to be forwarded to the master of students.

By the end of September, the student master, having consulted with the student brother, will choose a ministry and fill out a written ministry form, describing the ministry and naming the on-site supervisor. The master of students will contact the on-site supervisor at least once during each semester to receive either a verbal or written evaluation of the student brother's progress.

69. *Liturgical Ministries:* The ministries of reader and acolyte are normally given before residency year, after suitable preparation (*LCO*, 215-bis; *RFG*, 151-52).
70. *Residency Year of Ministry:* (Statute [2019], 64-65, 67). The residency year of ministry has three objectives:

- 1) to provide the student brother with an experience of the communal and apostolic life as it exists and is lived in the province;
- 2) to provide the student brother with an extended period of full-time supervised ministry;
- 3) to provide the province with a different environment in which to observe the student brother (*RFG*, 148).

Living in a smaller community allows the student brother to experience another dimension of Dominican life in the Western Dominican Province. It also allows the province to examine the brother in a setting different than that of St. Albert Priory. Through more intense and frequent interactions with a smaller number of friars, both the student brother and the province are able to test the resolve and preparedness of the student brother for Dominican life and ministry.

71. The placement community is a kind of "local formation community" for the residency student. It is an integral part of the ongoing discernment of the student brother and the province. The local superior shall write a detailed evaluation of the student brother even if he is not his on-site ministry supervisor. This evaluation is submitted to the master of students for review at the chapter and council meetings of St. Albert Priory.
72. The experience of full-time supervised ministry allows the student brother to understand and further discern a call to public ministry in the Church and the Order. For the clerical student brother, it also invites theological reflection and deeper discernment of the call to ordained ministry. The role of the on-site supervisor (usually the local superior) is critical for these processes.
73. This supervisor is expected to have regular meetings with the student brother, at least once per month. He discusses with the student brother such topics as program development, leadership skills, living as a public figure in the Church, working with the laity, etc. He also directs a process of theological reflection, during which the student brother can come to understand more clearly his own personal relationship between the gospel and his ministry, his call to the evangelical counsels, and when applicable, his call to ordained ministry. The student brother is to receive careful instruction on integrating prayer life with ministry (*USCCB, Program of Priestly Formation, 253*).
74. The written evaluation from the on-site supervisor becomes a key element in helping the residency student. The chapter and council of St. Albert Priory rely on this report to gain insight into the preaching and ministerial skills of the brother, as well as his over-all suitability for the life.
75. Before placing a student brother for a residency year, the master of students is to inform the on-site supervisor of these province expectations for ongoing supervision.

76. Because student brothers may also receive academic credit at DSPT for their residency year, the director of field education should have periodic communication with the student brother and the supervisor. At least once during the year, the director should contact the student brother and the supervisor to ensure that regular supervisory meetings are taking place.
77. The master of students makes at least one on-site visitation of each residency student during the residency year. The purpose of this visit is to ensure that the student brother is receiving the expected support and training. Another important aspect is the opportunity to meet individually with friars and lay members of the staff to discuss the student brother's performance (USCCB, *Program of Priestly Formation*, 250). At the end of the visit, the master of students meets with the student brother to give a verbal report of his findings and to offer suggestions for the remainder of the year. Later, he also provides a written report to the student brother and the chapter members of St. Albert Priory.
78. During the residency year, the St. Albert Priory formation budget covers one home visit, the time and duration of which is determined by the superior of the residency community. (Therefore, the residency student does not receive the community's vacation allowance.) The formation budget also covers medical costs for the residency student (including the province health-care premium and any other medical bills) and any special expenditures approved by the master of students and the superior of the residency community, unless the residency community is willing to assume these costs. The residency community covers room and board, the community's regular monthly allowance, transportation to the residency site and the return trip back to St. Albert Priory at the end of the residency year (Statute [2019], 147).
79. *Evaluations:* The public nature of the role of priest or religious brother requires that the candidate be willing to subject his attitudes and behaviors to the review of others, including formation personnel (e.g. the student master, the priory chapter and council), a spiritual director (see no. 53 above), and at times a counselor (see no. 54 above).

Each student brother is evaluated annually by his fellow student brothers, and by the priory chapter and council. Evaluations encourage growth in self-knowledge and discernment for the simply-professed student brother in three ways: a) by asking the student brother to reflect on his time in the Order; b) by offering to the student brother perceptions from the formation community regarding his call to Dominican life; and c) by being made available to the priory chapter, helping chapter members make informed decisions about the vocation of the student brother. Secondly, by encouraging discussion between the evaluator and the one evaluated, the evaluation process helps to build up the fraternal life.

Student brothers in simple vows are evaluated on three levels: 1) a self-evaluation, 2) peer evaluations, and 3) chapter member evaluations. These evaluations encourage growth in

Dominican life by asking him to reflect on his time in the Order and the province.

80. *Written Evaluations:* Evaluations follow the outline of the student evaluation form. Anonymity in the evaluations is not permitted. The evaluator must sign the evaluation before submitting it. Unsigned forms will not be distributed to the student brother. The student brother being evaluated also signs the form to acknowledge he has read it, not necessarily that he agrees with it. Discussion of the evaluation is strongly recommended for several reasons. It holds the evaluator accountable to the evaluatee in an adult manner and encourages communication between them. It also increases trust and openness among student brothers, and between student brothers and chapter members (suitable confidentiality always being maintained). Developing all of these aspects is an asset to the formation community and, ultimately, the province. The student brother reviews his evaluations with the master of students in order to synthesize insights and suggestions, and to set subsequent goals.

Confidentiality shall be respected in this evaluation process. Only chapter members may review student brother evaluations. Chapter members should exercise prudence when determining how and with whom to discuss evaluations. After the student has reviewed his packet of evaluations the master of students makes them available to the chapter members at least one week before a chapter discussion or vote.

81. *Residency Year Evaluations:* Each member of a residency community is encouraged to write an evaluation of the residency student brother and allow him to read and sign it before sending it to the master of students. The community superior and supervisor, if they are not the same friar, in particular, provide a detailed evaluation of the student's ministerial and community activity. The superior (and supervisor) must meet with the student to review the final evaluation.
82. *Summer Ministry Evaluations:* The superior of the student brother's summer assignment community, or the ministry supervisor, writes an evaluation of the student. He may allow the student to read and sign it before sending it to the master of students.
83. *Permissions:* Permissions help the student brother to call to mind the fact that he is responsible to and shares in a vision and plan beyond his own personal one. He should ask the student master for permission to miss matins/lauds, vespers, Mass, dinner, and community meetings, and for any overnight stays, etc. (*RFG*, 150).
84. *Travel:* Student brothers are permitted to visit their families, normally after Christmas. The student brother may be permitted to travel at times besides the scheduled home visit. Examples of such travel would include weddings, funerals, particular family gatherings, etc. Permission from the master of students is required before any plans may be finalized.

85. *Bank Accounts:* While in simple vows, student brothers may retain any pre-existing bank accounts or credit cards. Though these accounts may remain open until the brother makes solemn profession, the student brother in simple vows is not permitted to use them without the express permission of the student master. The student brother may not open new investment or checking accounts.

As part of learning to live a life of simplicity under the vow of poverty, the student is expected to eliminate his access to personal funds and rely upon the community for his needs. Unless a serious problem is noted, personal accounts will not normally be monitored by the Master of Students. Following the practice of the province, the student is encouraged to develop a personal discipline of good stewardship and prudent use of community's financial resources.

The student brother in solemn vows must follow the requirements of the province regarding all agent bank accounts (*LCO* 561; Statute [2019], 133).

86. *Exceptions:* The formation program may be adjusted in view of the particular background, situation, or needs of the individual student brother. Such adjustments are decided by the master of students; those affecting academic formation are decided by the master of students together with the regent of studies.

E. Solemn Profession

87. *Solemn Profession:* Students normally make solemn profession in the fifth year of simple vows (*LCO*, 201, §I; *RFG*, 158-60; Statute [2019], 59). A student brother may petition for solemn vows in September of the fifth year of simple vows by writing a letter to the provincial (cc. to the prior and the master of students). The letter should state the brother's freedom in making this request (*CIC*, 658) and briefly outline reasons for making the request at this time.

There is no requirement for a special retreat before solemn profession. The brother's annual retreat, usually made in January, serves as his retreat for solemn vows.

Solemn profession is normally celebrated on the second Saturday of Easter, at a location determined by the prior provincial (*LCO*, 194).

The profession is recorded, and signed by the brother and two witnesses (*LCO*, 194). Notice of the profession is sent to the church of baptism by the master of students (*CIC*, 535.2).

88. *Examination and Interview:* Within six months of the projected date of solemn profession, the student brother is examined according to *LCO*, 191. The prior provincial, after consulting the master of students and prior of the community, selects three solemnly professed friars from the formation community to examine the student brother. In preparing for the examination, the student brother is asked to review *LCO*, 1 (the Fundamental Constitution); 2-55 (Religious consecration); 189 (Profession); and 205-212 (Solemn Profession). At the time of the examination, the protestations (*LCO*, Appendix 5) are made and signed. The master of students gives a report of the examination to the prior of the convent of formation.

After the voting is completed and the review given to the prior provincial, the student meets with the prior provincial for a thorough interview (*RFG*, 160). Having first consulted with the master of students, the student brother should call the provincial office to schedule this meeting.

89. *Will*: Within sixty days before solemn vows, "the brother renounces all the possessions he actually owns or expects with certain hope, in favor of anyone he prefers under the condition that profession will follow" (*LCO*, 200 §IV, 212), and the brother is to understand the serious nature of this action.

F.1. Particular Aspects of Initial Formation for Clerical Student Brothers

90. *Length and Location*: To provide sufficient time to complete all academic requirements, the initial formation program for clerical student brothers normally lasts seven years: two years for philosophy studies, four years of theology studies, a summer of formal hospital chaplaincy training, and a one-year residential ministry assignment in a community other than St. Albert Priory (*RFG*, 148; Statute [2019], 68). The nature and goals of the residency year are described elsewhere (nos. 69-78 above; Statute [2019], 67). Clerical student brothers usually spend one year of their theology studies outside the province (*RFG*, 149; Acts [2019], 100). With the exception of the residency year, the year of theology outside the province, and summer assignments, all student brothers, including both clerical and cooperator brothers, normally reside at St. Albert Priory during their initial formation (Statute [2019], 50).
91. *Studies*: In addition to those common goals outlined above, an important part of the initial formation program for clerical candidates is intellectual development, particularly as it pertains to the Dominican habits of study, contemplation, and the apostolic life (*RFG*, 137-40). The details of this program of study are outlined in the *Ratio Studiorum Particularis* of the Western Dominican Province. Above all, student brothers must come to see study integrated with prayer as a way of life, and not merely as a fulfillment of degree or formation requirements.
92. *Spanish*: A goal of the office of evangelization and discipleship is to expand the preaching, teaching, and evangelization efforts of the province, including Spanish speaking programs (Acts [2019], 65-bis). The province is committed to provide time and resources for Spanish language study. Therefore, it is important that before ordination to the priesthood, every clerical student brother is required to have achieved a level of fluency in Spanish that allows him to effectively celebrate the sacraments and preach in Spanish (Statute [2019], 69). In order to facilitate the achievement of this level of fluency, student brothers may spend a year of their formation at a *studium* located in a Spanish-speaking province (Acts [2019], 100). They may also use summers to participate in Spanish language courses and immersion programs (Acts [2019], 101). In order to give student brothers more opportunities to learn

the Spanish language and appreciate Hispanic culture, the master of students, in consultation with the regent of studies, shall utilize the resources of the province found in Mexicali, Los Angeles, and elsewhere for residency and summer internships. (Statute [2019], 65; *CIC*, 249)

93. *Orders*: Ordination to the diaconate usually takes place during or at the end of the third year of theology studies, and ordination to the priesthood, at the end of the fourth year of theology studies (Statute [2019], 70). To be eligible for ordination to the presbyterate, candidates normally must have fulfilled the Spanish language requirement (Statute [2019], 69), and the degree requirements for both the Master of Divinity program and a philosophy or theology Master of Arts program (Statute [2019], 70).
94. *Diaconate Ordination Procedures*: To be ordained a deacon, a student brother must be in solemn vows, be at least twenty-three years of age, have received the ministries of reader and acolyte, and have completed the third year of theological studies (*LCO*, 246, 4^o; Statute [2019], 70; *CIC*, 1031 §1, 1035, 1037). Furthermore, all necessary dispensations from impediments must be obtained (*CIC*, 285-286, 1025, 1041-1042, 1047). A student brother may petition for ordination to the diaconate by sending a letter in September to the prior provincial, sending a copy to the prior, the master of students, and the regent of studies. The letter should state his freedom to request ordination, and should include a brief statement of the student brother's understanding of this order, its obligations, his qualifications, and his reasons for requesting it.
95. *Religious Deportment (De Moribus) Vote and Examination*: After the letter has been submitted, the priory council votes to approve the student brother's request for ordination in light of his religious deportment (*de moribus*) (*LCO*, 245-247, 318). The master of students informs the prior provincial of the results. After the vote, the required examination for the diaconate occurs (*RSP*, 41). The regent of studies arranges for the exam and provides the student brother with materials to prepare for it.
96. *Dimissorial Letters*: After the priory council's approval and the student brother's successful completion of the examination, the results are reported to the prior provincial who approves the student brother for ordination and issues the dimissorial letters to be sent to the diocesan bishop (*LCO*, 248; *CIC*, 1019, 1020).
97. *Retreat*: In preparation for ordination, the student brother makes a canonical five-day retreat (*CIC*, 1039). The master of students approves the dates, place and character of the retreat.
98. *Profession of Faith*: The student brother makes the profession of faith in the presence of the prior provincial or his delegate (*CIC*, 833 §6).

99. *Date and Place:* The master of students and the prior provincial arrange the date and place of the ordination, normally the last Saturday of May at St. Dominic Catholic Church, San Francisco. (Statute [2019], 13).
100. *Documentation:* The ordination is recorded in the book of ordinations by the master of students. He sends notice of the student brother's ordination to his church of baptism (*CIC*, 535 §2).
101. *Presbyteral Ordination Procedures:* Clerical student brothers shall normally be ordained as priests after their fourth year of theology and after completing the Master of Divinity degree. Furthermore, all clerical student brothers are required to complete a Master of Arts in Philosophy or a Master of Arts in Theology or some equivalent specialization, with the approval of the regent of studies (Statute [2019], 70; *CIC* 1032 §2). Before ordination to the priesthood, every clerical student brother is required to have achieved a level of fluency in Spanish that allows him to effectively celebrate the sacraments and preach in Spanish (Statute [2019], 69). To be ordained a presbyter, a student brother must be in solemn vows, be at least twenty-five years of age, and have been ordained a deacon for at least six months (*LCO*, 246; Statute [2019], 70; *CIC*, 1031 §1). Furthermore, all necessary dispensations from impediments must be obtained (*CIC*, 285-286, 1025, 1041-1042, 1047). A student brother may petition for ordination to the presbyterate by sending a letter in September to the prior provincial, sending a copy to the prior, the master of students, and the regent of studies. The letter should state the freedom to request ordination, and should include a brief statement of the student brother's understanding of this order, its obligations, his qualifications, and his reasons for requesting it (*CIC*, 1026, 1028).
102. *Religious Deportment (De Moribus) Vote and Examination:* After the letter has been submitted, the priory council votes to approve the student brother's request for ordination in light of his religious deportment (*de moribus*) (*CIC*, 1029; *LCO*, 245-247, 318). The master of students informs the prior provincial of the results. After the vote, the required examination for the presbyterate occurs (*RSG*, 91). The regent of studies arranges for the exam and provides the student brother with materials to prepare for it.
103. *Dimissorial Letters:* After the priory council's approval and the student brother's successful completion of the examination, the results are reported to the prior provincial who approves the transitional deacon for ordination and issues the dimissorial letters to be sent to the diocesan bishop (*LCO*, 248; *CIC*, 1019, 1020).
104. *Faculties Examination:* The examination for hearing confessions shall occur according to *RSG*, 91 and *RSP*, 41-42. The regent of studies arranges for this and reports the results to the provincial and the priory council.

105. *Retreat:* In preparation for ordination, the transitional deacon makes a canonical five-day retreat (*CIC*, 1039). The master of students approves the dates, place and character of the retreat.
106. *Date and Place:* The master of students and the prior provincial arrange the date and place of the ordination, normally the last Saturday of May at St. Dominic Catholic Church, San Francisco. (Statute [2019], 13).
107. *Documentation:* The ordination is recorded in the book of ordinations by the master of students. He sends notice of the newly ordained friar's ordination to his church of baptism (*CIC*, 535 §2).

F.2. Particular Aspects of Initial Formation for Cooperator Student Brothers

108. *The Cooperator Brother Vocation:* Called by the grace of God, the cooperator brother participates in the charism of the Order of Preachers to evangelize through a diversity of ministries and to follow Christ in the way of Saint Dominic through a life of prayer and service to the truth of the Gospel. Within the province, the cooperator brother serves in a number of ministries as envisioned below.
109. A progressive commitment to the life of ministry in the Church necessitates an openness to the transformative power of the Holy Spirit. To this end, we envision a number of kinds of apostolic engagement for the student brother in the Western Dominican Province (*RFG*, 153-54). They include, but are not limited to: religious formation, such as teaching, catechesis, or faith formation; an intellectual apostolate in philosophy, theology, or other field, including education, research, writing, publishing, etc.; pastoral ministry, such as parochial ministry or campus ministry; a missionary or evangelical apostolate, including new forms of preaching; social outreach to the poor or marginalized; a professional apostolate, such as social work, academic administration, financial analysis, or accounting; internal support, such as maintenance, housekeeping, mechanical or culinary work, business administration, care of elderly or infirm, etc. On the one hand, the kinds of engagement envisioned for cooperator brothers are not intended to be mutually exclusive or restrictive. On the other hand, a concrete commitment by the cooperator student brother and the province to an overall plan of his formation will require planning for the education, formation, training, and practical experience appropriate for his role in the province's mission. The cooperator student brother's formation may demand education ranging from certification to a master's or even doctoral degree. When considering his apostolate, the fruitfulness of his prior professional training and experience should be considered. Specialized training should not be overlooked, particularly where it will help the cooperator student brother commit himself more deeply to his ministry.

110. *Formation Program:* There are both common and unique aspects to the initial formation of cooperator and clerical student brothers (*RFG*, 154). After the common novitiate (*LCO*, 179), cooperator student brothers share periodic retreats and workshops with clerical student brothers. They are also to share periodic days of social time in both the Fall and Spring, as well as the annual vacation time at St. Benedict Lodge in McKenzie Bridge, OR (see *Student Handbook*, Appendix 8).
111. In recognition of their particular formational needs and concerns, a solemnly professed cooperator brother shall be appointed to assist the student master and advise him on matters related to the cooperator student brothers' formation and their growth in the understanding of their unique vocation (*LCO*, 217 §II; *RFG*, 155).
112. Following the guidelines for academic formation listed in the *Ratio Studiorum Particularis*, the regent of studies and the master of students shall organize a comprehensive program of philosophical and theological formation for each cooperator student brother, as required for his full participation in the life and mission of the Order, and a program of specialized training and education, tailored to his gifts and talents, for their role in the province's mission (*RFG*, 154).
113. Cooperator student brothers are to have access to all the spiritual and psychological resources necessary for their personal growth, as well as the same quality of training and supervision for apostolic ministry that exists for clerical student brothers (*RFG*, 154).

IV. PERSONS INVOLVED IN FORMATION

A. The Community of Formation

114. *The Community of Formation:* Solemnly professed friars assigned to a house of initial formation should reflect the ideals of common life, and be willing to cooperate in the work of formation, all the while being positive examples to those in formation (*LCO*, 160-161; *RFG*, 58-60, 66). Together with the student brothers they must build a real community, providing for each other's religious welfare, and fairly distributing the community's obligations and responsibilities. They should reach decisions in a collegial spirit. The priory chapter and council are to be regularly informed and engaged in the work of formation so that they may responsibly exercise their role in admitting a brother to simple and solemn profession.
115. *The Conventual Chapter:* The conventual chapter is constituted in the convent of formation according to *LCO*, 307-313. In view of their essential role in the formation process, members of the conventual chapter are expected to take an active interest in the day-to-day life and

ministry of the student brothers (*LCO*, 160-161; *RFG*, 57-60). Chapter members should recognize that an honest and realistic assessment of each student brother is the best way to serve both the province and the student brother. When doubt arises regarding the greater good in accepting a student brother for vows, chapter members should recall that "the benefit of the doubt must be given to the Church" (*USCCB, Program of Priestly Formation*, 294 and *RFG*, 84).

116. *The Conventual Council*: The conventual council is constituted in the convent of formation according to *LCO*, 314-319. The same guidelines which are given for the conventual chapter apply to members of the council in their work of discussing, evaluating and voting on the student brothers.

117. *Schedule of Chapter Discussions*: Student brothers are presented to the house of formation chapter and council according to their place in the formation program as outlined below.

A. Mid-vow Evaluation. Midway through the term of a student brother's vows, the chapter and council meet to discuss his progress. The student brother writes a self-evaluation which presents his own reflections on his growth in the Order. The chapter and council meet privately to discuss the student brother's progress and to conduct a straw vote. What is the value of this? Is it helpful in the province's experience? The master of students then provides the brother with a written summary of the vote and the chapter and council's comments, which are discussed at the next regular meeting between the student brother and the master of students.

B. Petition for Renewal. A student brother who has made first profession for one year must submit a formal written petition to renew his vows. This petition, submitted by May 1st to the prior provincial, is then presented to the priory chapter and council for voting at the May meeting.

During the second year of simple vows the student brother submits a formal written petition to the provincial by May 1st asking to renew vows for three years. These student brothers are normally evaluated and voted on by the priory chapter and council at the May meeting.

A residency student brother must submit a formal written petition asking to renew vows for one, two or three years. These student brothers are evaluated and voted on by the priory chapter and council at the May meeting.

C. Petition for Solemn Profession. A student brother who wishes to petition to make profession of solemn vows must submit a written petition in September of that year (normally the fifth year of simple vows). The master of students will determine the exact deadline for the submission of his petition.

118. *Voting Confidentiality*: Voting by the chapter and council is done by secret ballot (*LCO*, 313 §III). Strict confidentiality is to be maintained regarding chapter discussions and vote (*LCO*,

312 §VI). No chapter member, except the master of students, may report the results of the vote (in either general or specific terms), or the opinions or statements of other members to anyone outside the chapter and council. Similarly, students may not ask chapter members to reveal, in any format, the results of votes. The master of students, as delegated by the prior of the convent of formation, reports the results of the chapter and council discussions and votes to the prior provincial (*LCO*, 192 §II). These results are either consultative or decisive according to *LCO*, 198, 202, 206.

B. Those Responsible for Formation

119. *Masters of Novices and Students*: In addition to the qualifications and duties outlined elsewhere (*LCO*, 186-87, 214; *RFG*, 74; Statute [2019], 63, 65), the masters of novices and students may engage in some outside ministry, without, however, making commitments which will interfere with their duties (*RFG*, 76).

120. At the request of the master of students, the prior provincial may appoint an assistant to the master with the consent of the provincial council (*LCO* 374). The assistant should have the same qualities as those expected of the master (*RFG*, 74). His term shall end with the end of the term of the master. His duties shall include but not be limited to:

- 1) meeting regularly with student brothers to discuss their progress in the life;
- 2) meeting regularly with the master of students to discuss particular issues with a student brother or the student community, and to summarize meetings from (1);
- 3) serving as a member of the provincial council of formation and the local council of formation (see nos. *RFP* 122, 124);
- 4) serving as the immediate superior to the student brothers when the master of students is away from the priory;
- 5) attending student meetings, chapters, or social events, as deemed appropriate and necessary by both him and the master of students;
- 6) attending the annual meeting of masters of novices and students whenever that meeting is hosted by the Western Dominican Province.

121. In all of this, the student master and his assistant will be careful a) to guard against offering conflicting direction to the student brothers, b) to work together, and c) to support and confirm each other's decisions. When the master of students is present in the priory, student brothers report directly and only to him for all necessary permissions and questions.

122. *Admissions Board*: The duties and membership of the admissions board are determined in the Statute of the province, no. 56. The primary work of the province admissions board is to review applicants to the province. Its recommendations are given to the provincial, who has the ultimate responsibility of admissions (*LCO*, 171-173). The admissions board may also make recommendations to the provincial and the provincial council regarding province

admissions policies. The province promoter of vocations convokes and chairs the meetings of the admissions board.

C. The Formation Councils

123. *Provincial Council of Formation:* The duties and membership of the provincial council of formation (*RFG* 91-94) are determined in the statute of the province no. 48. Along with the brothers listed there it includes also the provincial promoter of permanent formation (*RFG* 93) and an assistant master of students, if there is one (see no. 120 above). To ensure communication between province leadership and the initial formation programs, the provincial council of formation shall meet regularly to consult on formation policies and directions (*RFG*, 92, 94). As chairman of the council, the prior provincial convokes meetings (*RFG*, 91) and reports regularly to the provincial council on the results of such meetings.

124. *St. Dominic Priory Local Council of Formation:* The local council of formation in the novitiate community shall consist of the prior, the master of novices, the assistant novice master (should there be one), and at least one other member of the community, appointed by the prior with the consent of his council (*RFG*, 88). They should meet regularly to offer one another mutual support and insight as they discuss the progress of those in the novitiate, as well as any special issues that may arise within or among the novitiate or senior communities of the priory (*RFG*, 87). The novice master shall be responsible for convoking meetings of the local council of formation (*RFG*, 89).

125. *St. Albert Priory Local Council of Formation:* The local council of formation in the studentate community shall consist of the prior, the master of students, the assistant student master (should there be one), regent of studies, and at least one other member of the community, appointed by the prior with the consent of his council (*RFG*, 88). They should meet regularly to offer one another mutual support and insight as they discuss the progress of the student brothers, as well as any special issues that may arise within or among the student or senior communities of the priory (*RFG*, 87). The student master shall be responsible for convoking meetings of the local council of formation (*RFG*, 89).

D. Other Formators

126. *The Dominican School of Philosophy & Theology (DSPT):* To ensure communication and cooperation between the student brother formation program and DSPT, the prior of St. Albert Priory, the president of DSPT, the student master, the regent of studies, and the DSPT academic dean are encouraged to remain in regular communication with one another, meeting regularly to discuss scheduling, concerns, and opportunities for the student brothers.

127. *Formation Directors of Dominican Friars:* The formation directors of Dominican friars in the

United States and Canada meet annually to discuss common concerns, offer support, and consider possible forms of cooperation among provinces. Formation directors of the province are urged to participate in such meetings as often as possible (*RFG*, 80).

128. *Regional Formation Directors*: Whenever possible, the novice and student masters are encouraged to collaborate with the directors of formation for Dominican sisters or other orders of religious in the Bay Area to provide shared classes and collaborative events for fostering the intellectual and spiritual development of all local religious in formation (*RFG*, 81).
129. *Evaluation of the Initial Formation Program*: The initial formation programs of the province are to be evaluated in the year preceding the provincial chapter. Each local director of formation shall oversee the evaluation for his community, e.g., the master of novices for the novitiate, etc. The masters of students will arrange to receive critical assessment from current student brothers, student brothers who have finished their initial formation within the last five years, the local council of formation, the local priory chapter, and the provincial council of formation. The review will also be informed by the reports from the prior provincial's annual visitation (*LCO*, 340-341; *RFG*, 63). The results of this evaluation are included in each master's report to the provincial chapter (*LCO*, 356, 2^o; *Province Policy and Procedures Manual*, "Procedures for the Provincial Chapter").

V. PERMANENT FORMATION

A. General Principles

130. Formation does not cease with solemn profession or ordination. Indeed, formation is the means by which we continue to live our discipleship, deepening our knowledge of Christ and continuing the process of being configured to Him. (*RFG*, 171-174; *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* [2016], 80). Formation is thus a process of constant renewal and maturing which occurs throughout various stages of our Dominican life (*RFG*, 173). Through formation we remain attentive to the needs of God's people, the signs of the times, and the many ways in which the world thirsts for the Gospel. Formation is thus an essential part of our life as preachers and continues until death.
131. Concerned with the whole person, permanent formation addresses the intellectual, human, spiritual, and apostolic dimensions of formation. A balance among these four aspects of permanent formation is essential for the integrity of Dominican life, as well as each brother's growth in holiness and well-being (*RFG*, 174; cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis*).
132. The end of initial formation and entrance into full-time apostolic ministry is one of the most important transitional moments in the life of a Dominican friar. As a consequence, first assignments must be made with particular care (*RFG*, 184). The prior provincial is urged to

select a community of assignation where Dominican life is lived in its integrity, including communal observance of the Divine Office, common recreation, the presence of a vital apostolic ministry, the presence of peers, the spirit of joyful fraternity, and the possibility of a suitable mentor. In addition, assignments for newly ordained priests should include opportunities for the robust exercise of sacramental ministry.

133. During the first two years of full-time ministry, every newly assigned brother shall be provided with a suitable mentor (*RFG*, 184, 187). The prior provincial, in consultation with the student master and the superior of the community to which a brother is assigned, will designate a suitable brother or other qualified person to accompany him. At the discretion of the prior provincial or if the brother and mentor so wish, the period of mentorship may be extended.
134. Permanent formation includes regular communal reflections on important aspects of our Dominican life. A plan for permanent formation should be incorporated into the community project of each local community (*RFG*, 178-79). In particular, time should be set aside for reflection on the dynamic relationship between our common fraternal life and our preaching, the vow of chastity, appropriate ministerial boundaries, questions concerning the liturgy, the spirituality of aging, and contemporary questions challenging the faithful (*RFG* 190-92, 195, 197-98).
135. As with initial formation, each brother is primarily responsible for his own permanent formation. Nevertheless, there are a number of brothers who are tasked with guiding permanent formation for the brethren of the province. On the provincial level, responsibility for permanent formation lies primarily with the prior provincial (*LCO*, 251-bis), assisted by the promoter of permanent formation and regent of studies (*LCO*, 89, §III, 251-ter; *RFG* 180-81). Within each local community, responsibility for promoting permanent formation lies with the superior or prior, with the assistance of the conventual lector (*LCO*, 88, 326-bis; *RFG*, 177). Either directly or through the lector, the superior encourages study by arranging theological discussions at the house meetings and by facilitating communication concerning local workshops, seminars, etc. The superior must see to it that the brothers are not consumed by their ministry, but have sufficient time for days of recollection and retreat, and for daily prayer and study.

B. Transition, First Assignment

136. *First Years after Initial Formation:* The promoter of permanent formation shall provide regular support for friars during approximately the first five years after initial formation (Statute [2019], 30). In particular, the promoter of permanent formation shall ensure that each friar is able to attend three consecutive workshops which provide support, encouragement, and guidance in his Dominican life. The nature of the workshop will be determined by the prior provincial, in consultation with the promoter.

137. *Formation Feedback*: The regent of studies, with the assistance of the promoter of permanent formation and others designated by the prior provincial, shall request feedback from the post-formation experience of friars during their first years after initial formation (as described in n.136, above). These friars shall cooperate with such requests, in the manner determined by the regent of studies (e.g., by surveys, peer sharing, input from superiors, pastors, supervisors, mentors, expert help, etc.), whether taking place at the workshop mentioned above (n.136) or via other means. This feedback is to be shared with the provincial council of formation and DSPT faculty and administration, to enable the province to assess the quality and fittingness of its formation (in cooperation with the DSPT's assessment of its degree programs) so that it suits the needs of the friars and equips them for their mission.

138. In addition to their entrance into full-time ministry, brothers experience a number of important moments of transition in life, including changes of assignment, alterations in one's health, aging, or changes in family circumstances. Permanent formation includes fraternal support, ordinary ways of accompanying brothers during these pivotal times, as well as provincial gatherings in which brothers may share their blessings, challenges, and hopes for the future (*RFG*, 189).

C. Promoter of Permanent Formation

139. *Duties of the Promoter of Permanent Formation*: In addition to duties specified elsewhere (cf. *LCO* 251-bis and 251-ter), the promoter of permanent formation shall:

- 1) Oversee all sabbatical programs and short-term programs, e.g. workshops, conventions, retreats, pilgrimages, taking place after initial formation, including those begun during initial formation, but designed to be completed after initial formation;
- 2) Provide resources to friars, on an individualized basis, to facilitate their pursuit of education, new skills and professional development;
- 3) Research and make available information about current programs, including professional workshops on the principles of leadership and management;
- 4) Provide current information about grants and sources of funding;
- 5) Work with the provincial council of formation, the regent of studies, and the intellectual life commission, be aware of the needs of the province, and help the friars plan and prepare for changing and new apostolates, especially for newly appointed formators (Statute [2019], 53);
- 6) Keep records of programs that have proven successful and helpful;
- 7) Review and recommend all programs that require substantial funds and time to the prior provincial and the provincial council;
- 8) Coordinate the program to support our friars in the first five years after initial formation;

- 9) Foster communication and collaboration among the community lectors, the regent of studies, and the intellectual life commission (*LCO 251-ter*, §I);
 - 10) Submit regular financial reports and an annual budget to the syndic of the province;
 - 11) Reside within the territory of the Western Dominican Province;
 - 12) Solicit an annual report from each community lector regarding his community's life of study and its library, and include a summary of these reports to the intellectual life commission.
140. Brothers are urged to remain current in their respective academic and pastoral fields by attending conferences and subscribing to newsletters and journals. They should make use of local resources, including diocesan workshops and retreats and online learning programs. In addition to these, local communities should take advantage of times of communal reflection, including regular chapters, community discussions and retreat days, conventual preaching, and community recreation (*LCO*, 5; Statute [2019], 1, 7). On the provincial level, opportunities for permanent formation include provincial assemblies, regional meetings, and gatherings for brothers who have completed initial formation within the last five years.
141. Following initial formation, solemnly professed friars continue their formation for the rest of their lives in the Order. As one aspect of this permanent formation, complementary studies are primarily intellectual or academic, normally involving the completion of a degree program. Sabbaticals and other short-term programs aimed at any of the dimensions integral to the Dominican friar's development are another aspect of permanent formation. The structures for overseeing these two kinds of programs are distinct. Therefore, each of them is treated in a different place, permanent formation here and complementary studies in the *Ratio Studiorum Particularis*.

D. Sabbaticals

142. *Sabbatical*: A sabbatical is an intensive continuing formation effort for an extended period of time away from one's normal assignment for the individual's personal and ministerial growth. Sabbaticals can be "seasons of grace" that allow for a deeper spiritual formation, an "extended period of study, prayer, and rest" (USCCB, *The Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests*, 2001, part 1, sec. M; part 2, sec. B). A sabbatical should be initiated by the friar himself as a way to foster his own human, spiritual, intellectual, or apostolic development as a Dominican – a contemplative preacher of the Word of God. The promoter of permanent formation can provide information on the many kinds of sabbatical programs that are available.
143. *Eligibility for and Length of Sabbaticals*: All the friars are eligible for:
- 1) A six month-long sabbatical program after six years of active ministry; or
 - 2) A one year-long sabbatical every twelve years of active ministry.

Normally, those who are engaged in the teaching apostolate are expected and encouraged to take advantage of sabbatical policies at the institutions in which they teach. However, the prior provincial, in consultation with the syndic and the intellectual life commission, should do his best to provide the same opportunity for a friar who, by reason of his assignment, is not able to receive a sabbatical from the institution in which he teaches. In this event, the friar's plans for research and academic improvement must be approved by the prior provincial after consultation with the intellectual life commission.

144. Superiors wishing to take a sabbatical must submit their intentions to the prior provincial for consideration.

145. *Absence from Assignment:* A friar's absence from his assignment for a sabbatical shall be determined in light of the needs of his present assignment, together with the availability of a replacement. This is to be done in consultation with his local superior and the prior provincial.

146. *Financing Permanent Formation Programs:* Expenses for the cost of approved sabbaticals and continuing education (short-term) programs shall be borne by the budget for permanent formation. Funding for all educational programs is part of the overall province budget; and the proposed sabbaticals and continuing education (short-term program) budgets must be approved by the economic council and the provincial council. However, the individual, with the encouragement and assistance of the regent of studies, the promoter of permanent formation, and the intellectual life commission, is to apply for grants, fellowships, etc., which may help defray the cost of the program. Many short-term or continuing education programs (conventions, workshops, retreats, etc.) are able to be funded according to the local (arch)diocesan policy or by the friar's local community.

147. *Follow-up:* At the conclusion of the sabbatical, the friar will share his experience with the promoter of permanent formation by preparing a written report. This report will include:

- 1) An evaluation of the quality of the program;
- 2) An assessment of whether or not the program should be recommended to others;
- 3) An explanation of how this sabbatical experience will impact the friar's ongoing ministry.

148. *Application Procedure for a Sabbatical:*

- 1) A friar interested in taking a sabbatical first notifies his local superior. He then consults with the promoter of permanent formation regarding the various options that are available to him.
- 2) The applicant then contacts the prior provincial to inform him of his plan to apply for a sabbatical. If the prior provincial determines, given the needs of the province, that it is possible for the friar to be freed from ministry for a sabbatical, the provincial

notifies the brother in a letter and sends a copy to the promoter of permanent formation. The standard form of this letter makes it clear that the prior provincial is giving permission only for the process of application to go forward, and not for the sabbatical as such.

- 3) After formulating a concrete plan and consulting the prior provincial, the applicant completes the application (available from the promoter of permanent formation), sending it to the promoter of permanent formation by January 1 prior to the fiscal year in which the sabbatical is to begin.
- 4) The promoter of permanent formation will acknowledge receiving the friar's application, advising him on any materials or information that might be lacking in the application, and informing him of the date of the next intellectual life commission meeting.
- 5) The promoter of permanent formation presents the application to the intellectual life commission for its recommendation. The regent of studies then gives the commission's recommendation with pertinent information regarding the basis for the decision and any supplemental suggestions in writing to the prior provincial, and sends a copy to the applicant. Final permission is given by the prior provincial. This permission should not be expected before the provincial council meeting that determines the annual budget for the province.

149. *Basis of Selection for Sabbaticals:*

- 1) Fulfillment of eligibility requirements;
- 2) Applicability for personal growth;
- 3) Relationship to the overall needs of the province and the local community;
- 4) Availability of the applicant at a particular time and the availability of replacement personnel, if required;
- 5) Quality of the program and potential for profiting from the experience;
- 6) Seniority (length and quality of previous service);
- 7) Plans for future service to the province;
- 8) Budgetary constraints for a given year;
- 9) Date of application.

E. Short-term (Continuing Education) Programs

150. *Short-term continuing formation programs* are summer institutes, workshops, conventions, retreats, pilgrimages, etc. Like sabbaticals, these programs are intended as an experience of faith, a journey of deepening conversion. They are not intended to be a form of vacation.

151. *Finances:* Any friar who has completed his initial formation is eligible for this type of program. Friars are expected and encouraged to take advantage of any funding available

from the ministries in which they serve, or from their local community. When local funding is not available, a request for funding can be made to the prior provincial through the promoter of permanent formation.

152. *Number of Participants:* It is hoped that the friars of the province will avail themselves of the opportunity to participate in these short-term programs. Budgetary constraints in any given year may limit the number of participants in these programs paid from provincial funds.

153. *Application Procedures for Short-term Programs.*

- 1) Where necessary, the applicant shall consult with his local superior for permission to undertake a short-term program;
- 2) The applicant should research available funds locally;
- 3) If there are no resources available, the friar, with the approval of his local superior, shall obtain an application from the promoter of permanent formation, and return it to him with a request for financial assistance to attend a particular program;
- 4) Applications shall be sent in a reasonable period of time prior to the beginning of the program;
- 5) The promoter of permanent formation will consider the applications in the order in which they are received;
- 6) A letter will be sent by the promoter of permanent formation to the applicant indicating approval or non-approval, with a copy to the local superior.