



***A Way Forward for
Leadership and Formation
in the Church of our Time***

*The Development of the Leadership
and Formation Personality*

Len Kofler MHM



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Thirdly, without the participants of the programmes coming from many countries in the world, formation, in such a rich setting, would not have been possible.

My wish is that not only leaders and formators in the Church may profit from this book, but everybody who reads it and applies it to his/her life. I hope it is a contribution towards a better world.

FOREWORD

Formation, as a term used for the preparation for Priesthood and Religious Life, is a child of the Second Vatican Council. Prior to that, one simply spoke of 'entering' or 'going to' the seminary or novitiate. And as for those appointed to prepare candidates—seminarians or novices—there was little or no training for what we now know as 'Formation'. Appointments to the seminary meant an appointment to teach—Philosophy, Theology, Scripture—and preparation for that was strictly academic. Appointment to 'direct' novices was little more than that: an appointment, for which there was little or no training; in fact, there were no training programmes.

It was in the immediate aftermath of Vatican II, in the late 1960's/early 70's, that questions began to be asked, urgently, about 'Formation' as something more than 'Education'. Something more than, and different from, an academic qualification to teach was needed to accompany [another new word coming into use] seminarians and novices during their years—not just of study, but of discernment and preparation for a life of ministry, of celibacy, of community living.

The Missionary Institute London [MIL] proved to be one of the nurseries for this new venture. In 1969, several Missionary Societies closed their respective seminaries and combined to form one Institute. They formed their own 'Houses of Formation' around the Institute, and while they provided teaching staff for the Institute, each also had to appoint a rector/'formator' for their House of Formation. These latter, withdrawn from 'the missions' and with no training for what was asked of them, quickly found themselves struggling, often floundering.

As President of the Institute in the early 1980's, Fr Len Kofler saw the need to provide in-service training courses for them, and these quickly expanded into the more ambitious project of a full-time

training programme which would focus on fostering and developing maturity on all levels, particularly emotional and spiritual, in prospective formators, with a view to equipping them with the skills to accompany seminarians and novices in their own process of human—emotional and spiritual—growth and development. In this way, the Institute of St Anselm was born in Mill Hill in 1985, moving to Margate the following year, and re-locating to Ciampino in 2017.

In this book of reflections, Fr Len draws on nearly 40 years of experience in developing and adapting St Anselm's to the needs and changing challenges in the Church today. He is grateful to find Pope Francis urging the same priorities, and encouraged to believe that the approach pioneered at St Anselm's will continue to have its part to play in preparing men and women to serve as Formators and Leaders in the Church going forward.

J McCluskey mhm

Development of the Leadership and Formation Personality

Pope Francis has summarized in one paragraph in his address to the Friars Minor Conventual on Monday, 17 June 2019, what I wish to develop in this booklet.

“An appropriate formation is necessary. A formative path that favours in brothers an ever fuller conformity to Christ; an integral formation, which involves all the dimensions of the person; a personalized and ongoing formation, as it is a lifelong itinerary; a formation of the heart, which changes our way of thinking, feeling and behaving; a formation in faithfulness, well aware that today we are living in a transient culture, that ‘forever’ is very difficult and definitive choices are not in fashion. In this context, there is a need for solid formators, experts in listening and in the road that leads to God, capable of accompanying others on this journey (cf. Saint John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata*, 65-66); formators who are skilled in discernment and accompaniment. Only in this way can we contain, at least in part, the haemorrhage of abandonment that besets the priestly and consecrated life.”

Pope John Paul II in *Pastores Dabo Vobis* stresses the Importance of a suitable human formation in Article 43.

“The whole work of priestly formation would be deprived of its necessary foundation if it lacked a suitable human formation.” He continues later “They need to be educated to love the truth, to be loyal, to respect every person, to have a sense of justice, to be true to their word, to be genuinely compassionate, to be men of integrity and, especially to be balanced in judgement and behaviour.” Later on he says: “Of special importance is the capacity to relate to others.”

A Guide to Formation Advising Seminary Faculty Deacon Edward J. McCormack.

“Let me conclude by highlighting four important features of that (*formation*) process that have emerged from recent magisterial teaching. The first is conviction that human formation is the foundation of all other dimensions of formation. Almost every person enters seminary carrying with him wounds received from his family of origin and life experience. He will also bring with him assumptions about himself and how to find meaning as well as distorted ways of behaving that are contrary to the gospel. Human formation must be a top priority in the early years of formation. When these wounds and issues are not addressed, priests can be a slave to them rather than a servant of Christ. It can undermine his relationship with Christ and with others and impact his ability to engage in pastoral ministry and pastoral leadership no matter how much he prays. The emphasis on human formation has taken on greater importance in recent years in the light of the sex abuse scandal. It is also important as we see so many people leaving the Church because a priest was unkind, rude, or controlling rather than kind, loving, and free to let Christ work through him.

A second feature of seminary formation that deserves attention is the conviction that the priest is a lifelong disciple of Jesus. Pope Francis reminds us that “formation is an experience of permanent discipleship, which draws one close to Christ and allows one to be ever more conformed to Him. Therefore, it has no end, for priests never stop being disciples of Jesus they never stop following him.” All the baptised are called to live as disciples of Jesus within the life of the church as she cooperates with the mission of Jesus. The seminarian is a disciple who has discerned a call to live out his discipleship in public ordained service to the People of God. Seminary formation offers an intense training in discipleship where men are formed into invisible signs of the merciful love of God the Father.”

A third feature worth highlighting is how the priest is called to conform himself to Christ as Head, Shepherd, Servant, and Spouse.” “It involves a cruciform process of the seminarian ridding himself of all behaviours, attitudes, and vices that are contrary to Christ while growing in union with Christ so that the Lord is the dominant influence in the life of the priest. Conformity to Christ also involves character development and the cultivation of Gospel virtues known as the fruits of the Spirit. The goal of character formation is always other directed-complete giving of oneself in tender love to the People of God.

The final feature of formation, follows from the previous one and its implications for the model of leadership a pastor adopts in the parish.” “He will adopt the model of servant leader that is expressed in joyful generosity and a freedom to put the needs of the other ahead of his own. This form of leadership is contrary to the popular forms that emphasize power, control, and prestige. It requires self-awareness and often a real conversion from power to service he must become a man of discernment who lives from a high level of self-knowledge, a deep interior life, and a mature capacity to enter relationships with others. This form of leadership calls for transformation that renews the heart and mind of the person so that he can discern what is the will of God. In this way he will be able to choose, decide, and act according to the will of God.”

From the above quotations it becomes clear that a thorough human continual development is necessary for our candidates and a provision of practical, experiential, lived, residential programmes for training formators and leaders is an essential way forward for the Church. Above all it is a path towards renewal in the Church. It begins with personal renewal of leaders and formators which is passed on to those for whom they are responsible.

INTRODUCTION

In this short booklet I am looking beyond our academic training of priests and religious. Many efforts have been put into academic training to produce a very high standard of academic work. Many years ago, Cardinal Winning invited me to give a talk to all Scottish bishops and the formators of their seminaries on the subject of integration. I started my speech by stressing that I would not talk about the integration of the various subjects, but about the integration where it needs to take place, that is in the life of the student himself.

I wish to refer to the Vatican II document on priestly formation where it clearly states that all seminary staff should take part in courses of special institutes of a pedagogical nature which would prepare them better for their work. Reading the document, I felt the type of institute they envisioned did not exist and when Cardinal Hume, to whom I was seconded, mentioned to me: "Do something different from what is being done", I founded the Institute of St. Anselm under his auspices with a very different approach, with stress on the development of the leadership and formation personality in a lived and in a very practical way. Our courses became process-orientated to help people to personalize and live out what they have learned in their academic subjects.

If seminary staff followed the courses at the Institute of St. Anselm, their lectures would help the student to integrate and personally practise the lectures they attend.

For the rest of this booklet, I am focusing on the people who are specially appointed to be formators in seminaries and religious formation. My conviction is that we need to invest more personnel and more time for better formation for those people who are involved in the most delicate work of accompanying students and candidates. We would need more qualified staff who are able and confident to

accompany their students on their bio-psycho-spiritual journey on a deep level. Such investment will pay off through more relational and more effective priests and religious who are equipped to bring about a deep renewal of our Church by modelling and witnessing deep and authentic spirituality and faith in those entrusted to them.

The abstract, theological language which students necessarily learn is alien to most people in our parishes. Therefore, we need to learn to relate to the people in our proclamation of the good news, to speak from our lived truth. When I came as a young curate to Rotorua in New Zealand, I thought that in Rotorua, a famous tourist place, I would have to use a more polished language in my sermons. I prepared my sermon and showed it to my parish priest. He said to me: "Use the language of simple people in the congregation!". He mentioned one person. I have never forgotten her name. I learned much from this comment and rewrote my sermon.

For several decades we have reflected on what our formation of priests and religious should impart. Many good suggestions have been mentioned. I just call attention to some of them. Formation needs to include a focus on sexual, emotional development, intercultural living, the vows of consecrated life and mission in the context of the world today. It needs to be more pastoral and practical. Relationships would need to be at the heart of formation. We need to train candidates and students how to be more responsible with money, use of time, telephones and general behaviour. Under pinning all this it is essential to help them to develop a deep relationship with the Trinity, manifest through a practical, lived spirituality.

The focus of the Synod on priestly formation was very much on personal formation. After the Synod, a bishop, later Cardinal, Medardo Joseph Mazombwe RIP who had taken part in the Synod and followed the Programme at the Institute of St. Anselm, told me: "Every day we were asking the question who will train the formators. Here I see you are exactly doing that." I have done that for 37 years and wish to pass on what I have learned over the years

when I was responsible for formation in a minor seminary and later in the Missionary Institute, London, a major seminary. Besides this I studied in the universities of three different countries. I spent 55 years of my priesthood studying formation work and practising it. Now it is time for another to take the Institute of St. Anselm into the future.

I am convinced that formation and vocation work are priorities for the church, for priests and every religious congregation. Money spent to train formators, vocation directors and leaders is the best investment for the church and society. Renewal in the church and in society can only come about by personal renewal of individuals. I started with the renewal of leaders and formators. Primary formation and ongoing formation are the best places to achieve renewal. Both need essential additions to complement their formation. We have focused in our formation mainly on content, input. Now we need to focus in addition on **process**, on helping people to personalise and integrate the input they receive. For redemption, knowledge is one essential aspect; however, applying this to our lives is the second essential aspect which needs more attention than we have given it.

It may help to understand why the “hidden apostasy” has happened in Europe and in other countries in the last decades and find a way forward. One of the main reasons is the physical paradigm science has developed, that matter is the only thing that matters and exists, leading to atheism and agnosticism. Therefore, we need to find a new paradigm which includes the spiritual and is evolving. My new programme of formation is based on this new paradigm. More about this will be in a later book.

I have taught people process work and deep process work over many years. One of my principles is that what I teach I try to practise myself. Most of what I teach comes from my experiences. Being connected with the indwelling God makes an enormous difference to my life. I have a clear vision of what I want to do with my life; to

spend the rest of my life witnessing to Christ and helping others in that process. This gives me tremendous meaning and purpose.

It is a challenge to live according to the Gospel values in a materialistic, controlling, manipulative, atheistic, selfish, egoistical world. I also know that there are many people who do not agree with the values of our society. I think it is true to say that these values are a consequence of our physical paradigm which was applied to *all* scientific work and thus did a lot of harm to society and the church.

By trying to follow the Gospel values in the context of daily living, I find I experience a freedom which many people do not have. I also find that I have much more energy in spite of my age. I am convinced that focus on trying to live the Gospel values is a most healthy way of living. "I have come that you may have life and may have it abundantly" Jn 10:10. Obviously, Jesus wants us to have a full life.

The only way to fully participate in our lives, in who we are and desire to become, is to use all our faculties, mind, body, and spirit and to bring our unconscious selves to awareness in our conscious selves – this requires using and integrating messages from our bodies, mind, feelings, intuition, reflections etc., together with our values and above all our spiritual convictions in relationship with the Trinity.

How many aspects of the above list have been developed in our priestly and religious formation? We live in a world where strong emphasis on thinking and abstract knowledge has led to disembodiment. This has brought about an inability to receive and understand a large portion of information that is available to us. We are not operating on all cylinders. We are not using a vast amount of the information and knowledge which is there waiting for us to draw on.

For example, 1986, the Institute of St. Anselm had an event in the House of Parliament. Cardinal Hume was the guest of honour. One

MP said to Cardinal Hume: “We need to be guided by you in many matters. Your input for making decisions is essential to us.” I was so surprised by the wisdom of that MP that I still remember it. This man was aware of the importance of spirituality even for politicians. Spirituality is important for every aspect of life and particularly as we prepare to be born into a new life with God.

When it comes to facing death, as I did with Corona virus, I was not afraid. I was able to surrender to God. I was ready to die or continue to work to take the Institute into the future in the way He wishes. I felt at peace to go to Him or continue my work here.

WHAT IS THIS NEW FOCUS OF FORMATION ALL ABOUT?

It is about our inner process. In our formation we have strongly focused on information, on content. Obviously, that is important and remains an essential part of formation, but of its nature it remains largely abstract. Most people are not able to translate that content into their own personal lives. They learn to know what they should do, but they do not know the “**how**” to do it. They need to be able to personalize and integrate the knowledge they have learned, leading them to a deeper lived spiritual life in God. This new focus does not replace what is being done but rather it runs along-side it as an essential companion.

In our old paradigm, which is based on physics and which is part of our scientific thinking, because of its very nature, we become alienated from ourselves, from others, from the environment and from God, self-centred, materialistic, mechanistic, agnostic or atheistic, and static in our thinking. The old paradigm has brought many good things, the whole technological development, but at the same time due to many factors we have lost essential aspects of who we are as human beings and have become directionless.


The new paradigm and new focus for formation are essentially process-orientated. “*Panta rei*”. Everything is in flow. We are in process; we are not static. People need to learn in daily life how to live in process and in the present moment. They become aware of their emotions, their sexuality, their beliefs, their needs, their values. They learn to challenge themselves to live according to their Christian values by facing their lived values, unredeemed emotions, unredeemed belief systems and need systems, and replacing them with Christian values, redeemed emotions, redeemed beliefs and needs. They also learn to deal with deep processes which pop up in many different forms like hurts, unforgiveness, loss experiences and many other unredeemed emotions.

Living in process reconnects us with self, others, environment and God. Without these connections, we cannot live a wholistic life, to which God has called us. "I have come so that you may have life abundantly". This new focus of formation teaches us how to live 'in process' and how to teach others to live in their process. It is a life-long work and we can learn the tools to continue this process throughout our life. Because of the deep processes, memories will be triggered and surface which need to be worked through.

We are all influenced by the effects of the world we live in. It is not surprising that many people have given up their faith, because it is alien to the values of our world: money, power, control are constantly put before us. We understand that young people find it difficult to see any meaning in religious life or even priesthood. Therefore, they need accompaniment to find how the values of the Gospel make it meaningful to lead a happy life. To achieve this, the person who accompanies them needs to be happy, content and at peace and to manifest this in his/her whole being by who they are.

The essential aspect for this focus of formation is that it reconnects us with the great mystery of the Blessed Trinity as our model, inspiration and strength. It leads us into the eternal process of the self-giving love of God the Father to the Son in the Holy Spirit. Through baptism we are taken into the community life of the Trinity and through the frequent participation in the Eucharist we slowly become divinized and healed from our woundedness. In this way, at the end of time, Christ will reign over everything and everybody and hand His Kingdom over to God the Father.

The additional focus for formation shows us in detail how this process needs to unfold by dealing with our emotions, sexuality, values, wounds, beliefs and needs. This in turn will clearly reveal who is suitable and who is not suitable for religious life and priesthood. If students or candidates do not want to enter this process, they are not suitable for religious life or priesthood, because they do not want to face themselves, a necessity, to become part of the Trinitarian community.



Why do leaders and formators need to be properly trained in this additional approach to formation?

How many Bishops and Superiors struggle to help their members with problems in the parish, community, etc? Sometimes good people, who are trying to do their best, see everything differently from those responsible and cause many difficulties. These issues from the past need to be dealt with during the years of formation. Without in-depth training formators usually are not able to handle such issues. With a shortage of vocations and pressure to obtain the maximum of vocations, these problems are overlooked, in the hope that they will resolve themselves; they rarely do. With good formation, understanding and skills, more can be healed through the years of formation and good discernment made with those who are not suitable. This will save a lot of trouble for dioceses and congregations in the coming years, and their ministries will become rich and fulfilling, attracting in turn many more vocations.

Obviously, if we want an effective deep renewal in the church and society, it will be through the leaders and formators. Some people have gone through this process in the family setting, or are well integrated gifted people from their own formation. Most people, however, need to find a sound appreciation of the values of the Christian faith for a commitment to spend all their energy for building up God's kingdom in themselves and others. Many have taken in the values of society in which they grew up. They need to discover the new, true Christian values. This will take time, accompanying them with understanding, skills and empathy, supporting and challenging them in their journey.

Moreover, there is a great lack of maturity in our younger generation due to their exposure to so many stimuli which takes time to digest, and to discern the 'wheat from the chaff'.

Good, solid Christian families have become a rarity. In former times, solid faith foundations were established in the family: prayer life and their Christian attitudes and values.

Due to many circumstances, people in our time have undergone deep painful wounds which are in need of healing, as otherwise they can behave in a way they would rather not, but they do not understand why. (I am referring to 'normal' people, not to those with major issues needing counselling or therapy: these would not get the help they need in this setting.)

Candidates for priestly and religious life need sound accompaniment, which leads to bio-psycho-spiritual healing.

All kinds and forms of mild, addictive behaviour, such as the perpetual use of phones, are ruling our lives yet are destructive to a healthy life style. Most people are not even aware of these addictions. They make living in the presence of God difficult, and acquiring a deep faith which is necessary for priestly and religious vocations. Another addiction is a strong desire for money and material goods which can become the focus. A misguided attitude/approach towards money can often lead to monetary abuse.

1. Young people especially, but people in general, need role models.

When I was president of the Missionary Institute London, an international training centre for missionaries of seven missionary societies, not infrequently students said to me: "I don't want to become a priest like this lecturer". If we want more religious and priestly vocations, we have to invest the best members in formation and give them an opportunity of renewal/updating and learning skills. Formation in our time is much more demanding than decades before. Formators need to be capable of establishing healthy relationships and to have acquired a deep spirituality.

As a chaplain to sisters in Salzburg, I noticed that they had a novice mistress who had deep faith and was very able to relate to people. The congregation always had novices and newly professed sisters, whereas other congregations did not have any novices. This novice mistress became superior general. The next novice mistress was not so good in relating and they no longer got vocations. From this experience I learnt that formators who have a deep faith and good relating skills, inspire followers; modelling is of great importance.

Sound accompaniment regarding process throughout the years of formation will have a big impact and reduce many potential future problems.

2. We need a clear vision for our formation in our time. Pope Francis has provided us with this vision in his simple statement of “having the smell of the sheep”.

I interpret “smelling the sheep” with being close to the people entrusted to our care. For many priests and religious this request to be close to those entrusted to them is very difficult. They may be shy or are afraid of men or women or authority figures. Thus, their ministry suffers. From my experience, these emotions of shyness and fear are very common. As we help them to deal with their shyness or fear, they start enjoying human relationships with people of whom they had been afraid before. It is wonderful to see people blossom using more of the potential which we all have.

Many people have authority problems. They are afraid of authority and act this out with their authority figures in the parish and often with their bishops. This can be worked through during the years of formation. These authority problems cause a lot of waste of energy, which could be used for positive purposes. Parishioners often tolerate such priests because they are priests, but they are not models of a Christian way of relating. Many of these people are not even aware that there is a problem on their part, but blame the parishioners or the authorities.

“Smelling the sheep” gives priests and religious the opportunity to find out the potential of those entrusted to them. Many would be most willing to use their potential for the good of the parish. When I was in New Zealand, in St. Mary’s parish in Rotorua, I suggested to my parish priest that a parishioner could cut the lawns of the school grounds and presbytery and I could use the time to visit the families of the parish. He straight away agreed.

Many priests and religious are not assertive when they express their needs or wants and become aggressive instead, not intentionally and not understanding why. This can be dealt with in formation and will in turn build their confidence. As a young priest, I suggested to my parish priest we give some of our work to the laity and that we give more time to visiting the parishioners. He was very open. We developed a plan and visited all families of the parish, even those who did not come to Mass. Through our visits, these parishioners reconnected with the parish and parish life and even started supporting the parish financially.

“Smelling the parishioners” also helps us to deal with difficult parishioners in a constructive way. We all have our negative sides, but by getting to know them better, we learn “to carry one another’s burdens”; we become aware of their burdens and are not surprised when we encounter them and they appear difficult and aggressive, because we understand they are suffering deep within themselves. Knowing this helps us to be empathic with them.

3. I was pleased to read in the interview with Cardinal Stella, on the 10 of May 2021: “A seminary is a “laboratory” where not only the intellect is formed, but especially the heart, every fibre of the person that is human prior to being Christian, of men called to become pastors of souls.”

Frequently in my lectures I have pointed out that “this programme is a “laboratory”. I also like the stress on the “heart”. Very often the emotional formation is still very limited. Academic lectures

on emotions are insufficient. People need to experience them and learn how to handle them constructively as a gift of God. Most of us know what we should or shouldn't do, and what our behaviour should be, but few of us know 'how' to achieve what we would like to be. The first step in dealing with emotions is to help people to become aware of them. Many people are not aware of their emotions. Two years ago, a participant asked me: "What are emotions?" He was destined to be in charge of formation. He said that he had never heard of emotions.

I have given many lectures on emotional development and it helps participants to slowly get in touch with their emotions and feelings. Often participants are alienated from their emotions. This causes many difficulties, as we have repressed them—because—we do not know how to handle them constructively. It is from our emotions and feelings that we receive many messages and we need to learn to respond to them in a Christian way.

Many years ago, I gave a week's workshop on 'Leadership in State and Church', near Innsbruck. At one stage I asked the participants to write down all the problems they encountered in their work, then to reduce the statements which they had written down. After several reductions only emotions and feelings were left. This showed me how important it is to help leaders and formators to become aware of their own emotions and to be able to deal with their own and others' emotions constructively.

4. The tasks of leadership and formation have become much more difficult due to many changes in society.

The whole formation in the past was rule-orientated. As long as you kept the rules, you were OK. If you transgressed the rules, particularly in serious matters, you were sent away. This generally is no longer the case. We have moved from a rule-orientated to a relational orientated formation, mostly with little preparation. It is an exciting but challenging task to do this.

Vatican II stressed the importance of relationships, particularly also for formation and ministry. Many candidates today come from broken homes, homes of little or no spirituality, homes with little family life or interaction. This means formation needs to compensate for this and make up for the gaps in candidate's upbringing. Other basics may be missing, cleanliness both personal and for their living quarters, good manners, sensitivity and common sense. These need to be taught and can no longer be taken for granted. All need to be taught as a matter of routine, not to expose anyone, and all need to be monitored and encouraged.

In the 1980s in the Missionary Institute London even those who were excellent lecturers struggled in their formation houses and gave up, broke down or sent their students away because they could not cope with them. It was painful for me as president of the Missionary Institute London to see formators and students damaged or lost in the process of formation. This was the reason why I started to train formators at the Institute of St. Anselm.

Students have become very different since the sexual revolution in the 1960s when the younger generation took over from the older. They are more outspoken and say what they feel they should say. Formators were not used to this. In their time as students, they would not have dared to do that. I introduced an in-service training course for the rectors/formators of the halls of residence of students, at the Missionary Institute, in 1983.

The essence of these courses was still input on relationships, communication and the three vows- poverty, chastity and obedience. Besides the lectures, there were discussions on these topics in smaller groups. The focus was still on content and not process.

Family life has changed drastically. The younger generation goes its own way. Much of the Christian Family tradition has been lost such as the daily rosary and frequent Mass attendance. Thus, the

faith of the students, needs much more attention, for which rectors are not prepared.

I also noticed that an in-service training course was not enough for supporting the rectors. Often mistakes are made at the beginning, which are difficult to remedy later on. Much more emphasis needs to be on the process of training the formator' and leader' personality. They have to learn to cope with the new generation of students. The students need more personal attention and accompaniment for which the new generation of formators are generally not prepared.

5. We are very much aware how we have contaminated our environment, but we are hardly aware how we have contaminated our psyche and our souls.

We live in a materialistic orientated world. Very little attention has been-given-to the contamination of our psyches and souls which is paramount for our work as priest and religious. The contamination of our psyches shows itself in the many addictions: power, money, sex, alcohol, drugs, music, books, clothes, shoes, food, phones, even pious devotions, perfectionism or a scrupulosity, and old trappings which adorned priests in the past, to mention but a few. These addictions may not make us dysfunctional or need therapy, as is often required for drug and alcohol addictions. Nevertheless, if we are unaware and do not work with them ourselves, they may well have a negative impact on our life, work and general wellbeing. When we are aware, we can do something, so we do not need 'therapy'. We are a product of an addictive society and have not had the 'know how' to work to redeem the addictions.

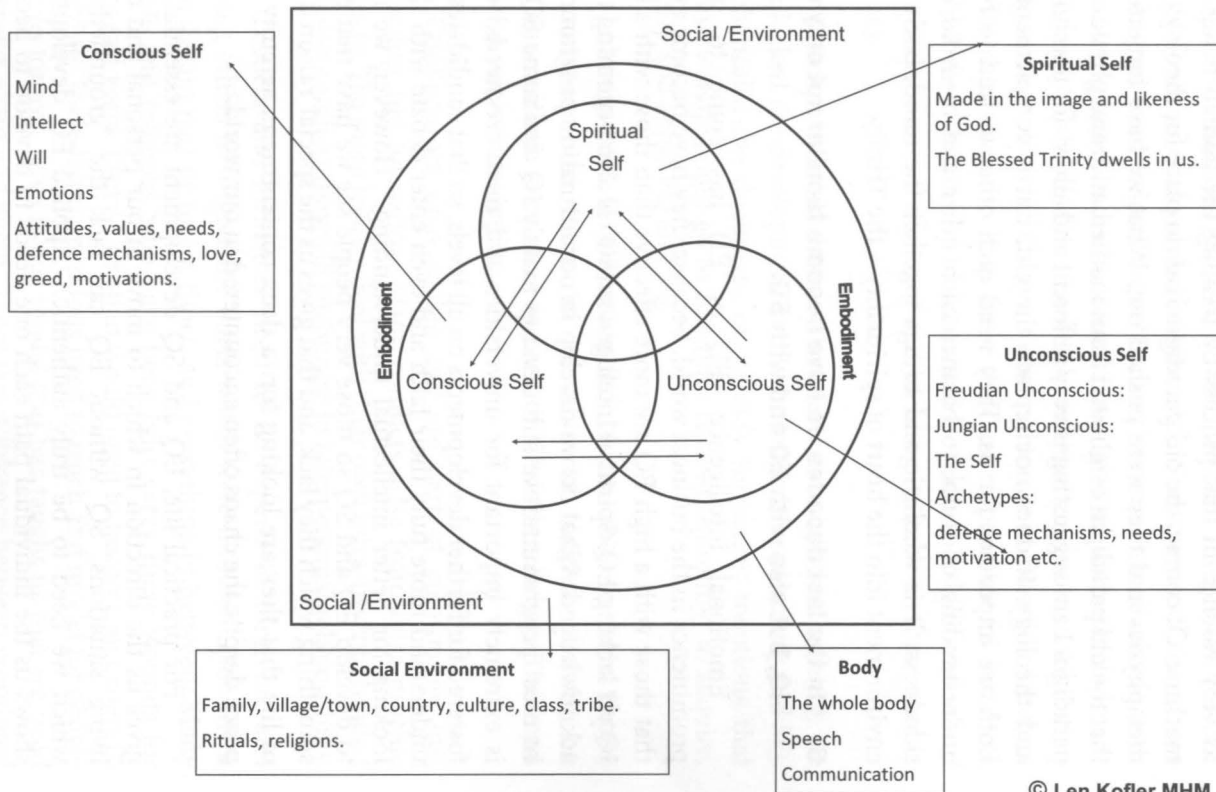
We need a deep conversion and basic skills to become a truly healing Church. We need leaders and formators who have the knowledge and who have entered their process and are working to heal their own contaminations and can therefore enthusiastically share these skills with those whom they accompany.

If we work to deal with the contamination of our psyches and souls through living in process and doing deep process work, the contamination of the environment will reduce, as with the tendency of some towards sexual abuse and other inappropriate behaviours which will surface. The old physical paradigm contributed much to these contaminations. Nobody intended it. There is nothing wrong with that paradigm except that it was applied generally to all sciences and all sciences wanted to follow it, including psychology and even theology.

When society lives according to the physical paradigm, overtime, people take on the attractions, pleasures, materialism, control, mechanics, abstraction, individualism, and other by-products of that mentality. How does this affect their relationships? The human being is more than just matter. My personality model is a basis for a wider vision of what it means to be truly human.

Psychology wanted to be accepted as a science and sacrificed its very essence in that process by treating the human being as a machine. Of course, the old paradigm had no place for theology and metaphysics and they were pushed out. What we have forgotten is that the old paradigm originated from mathematics and physics. The paradigm I am suggesting is very different and allows for psychology and theology. It does not replace the old, but it complements it. Both are important for us. They need each other to lead to fuller understanding of truth, to balance each other and to avoid one-sidedness. It is wholistic and brings together the mind, body and environment into the heart of spirituality – the Trinity.

Wholistic Dynamic Structure of Personality towards Transformation in Christ, the Alpha and the Omega.



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6. In the last decades we have become familiar not only with IQ, but also with EQ and with SQ.

Emotional intelligence (EQ or EI) has come to more prominence in the business world, because they have become-aware that those with a high EQ are more effective than those with a high IQ *yet* lacking EQ. Spiritual intelligence (SQ) is also beginning to be acknowledged. What do we develop in our formation programmes? In most programmes we still develop mainly IQ and some SQ. IQ is extremely important for universities and therefore needs to be fostered for further developments on all levels, so that candidates can understand more fully their faith and even enter debate with those looking for better intellectual understanding. However, we need to develop EQ and SQ so those very people see we have that extra something which they lack, and that gives us the special ‘raison d’être’ of life that they are looking for: a deep contentment, serenity and peace despite the chaos often encountered in our world.

For practical life, EQ and SQ development are essential. SQ gives us the direction in which to move in our personal and daily living situations. SQ without EQ can lack the “groundedness” which we need to be truly authentic. Applied EQ development shows us the individual path each one needs to develop to become who they are meant to be. In our formation we aspire to find the

right balance between these three types of intelligences to produce the best opportunities for growth and personal integration for our candidates to priesthood and religious life. Seminary staff, formators and leaders need help and guidance to become more familiar with their own process and to become more familiar with development in EQ and SQ to be able to model and give guidance in Christian living and behaviour to those for whom they are responsible. Leaders and formators want to help those they are responsible for but have not had the opportunity to learn and develop the skills and art of this delicate work of affirming and building up each on their unique journey.

My experience is that we have fostered, rightly, a high IQ; we have lacked the development and knowledge of applied EQ and SQ. Prophetically, the document on priestly formation mentions that seminary staff should go to Institutes (like St. Anselm's) to acquire, develop and apply EQ and SQ.

7. Leaders and formators need to be able to help those entrusted to them to be able to forgive and to be reconciled, a central aspect of Christian living. This can be very challenging.

Conflicts are unavoidable and are part of community life, leadership and formation. Many conflicts arise from intra-psychic conflicts. The more leaders deal with their own intra-psychic conflict the fewer conflicts they will encounter in interpersonal relationships.

Leaders and formators need to be experts in forgiving and helping others to forgive the hurts which were inflicted upon them from distant past or recent times, and everything in between. Many priests and religious who have been hurt carry these wounds for years and years. Every Christian would need to become an expert in forgiving. There is a tremendous need to teach and model for people how to forgive. Jesus is our model and has taught us that we need to forgive again and again. There is a difference between emotional

forgiveness and forgiveness as an intention. Leaders and formators need to learn the art of emotional forgiveness, which brings about true forgiveness. Leaders and formators need to learn to forgive and to be reconciled where possible. They need to become emotionally robust. Hot emotions will be thrown at them and it is important to deal with their own emotions constructively, to be proactive rather than reactive.

Many priests and religious waste a lot of energy in living in unforgiveness and even bitterness, because they don't know how to forgive. Some tell me there are persons in their life they cannot forgive. Forgiveness was a big concern of Jesus to teach his disciples. Many people forgive only 'intentionally' those who have hurt them. When I gave a talk on forgiveness in Ireland, a lady said: "I have forgiven everybody, but I would not like certain people to come to my funeral". Obviously, she had forgiven them 'intentionally', but not emotionally.

Emotional forgiveness is true forgiveness. Most people don't know how to forgive emotionally. Students and candidates would need to learn in their years of formation how to work at fully forgiving. Unforgiveness is a heavy burden to carry. It is poison to our system. It blocks our psycho-spiritual journey towards union with God. To be able to forgive must become part of all our lives.

8. We need mercy and compassion together with an ability to challenge and also allow due reparation in line with laws when appropriate. As Christians we need to be willing to take responsibility for our life and behaviour. This requires in formation the skill of "caring confrontation".

Caring confrontation is a tool for psycho-spiritual growth. One of the main purposes of formation and leadership is to help people in their psycho-spiritual journey towards union with God, which is the main purpose of every human being whether they know it or not, but particularly of priests and religious.

We need to be able to use the skill of caring confrontation to guide those in formation and also parishioners, particularly those who have made a commitment to each other, and parents who are struggling in their families.

This is a challenging skill and art, and it has to be done out of genuine love and concern for the person and their wellbeing if it is to be effective for them. The opportunity to learn and practise this is paramount.

It sounds very simple. That is what I thought, too, until I discovered that some were completely unable to do it, because they had serious problems with any confrontation. On the other hand, some people did it in a way which was anything but caring. There are the two extremes. Some people need a lot of time to work through their problems, their fears with confrontation. Others need to work through their anger which goes into confrontation and makes confrontation a destructive process.

The focus in confrontation is that it is done **caringly and out of love**. That is why I talk about caring confrontation. Some will do it in a way that the person hardly gets the message, or remains unaware of the need to do something about his/her behaviour. Without such awareness the person cannot change their behaviour. Awareness is the first step in changing one's behaviour. Many priests and religious, as well as the general population, have not learnt about self-awareness, only about 'my rights, me, myself', without any regard for the other and the impact their behaviour has on them. We have become so alienated from our body and our behaviour, from others, the environment and God.

9. To learn to live in process and to do deep process work are new skills which formators need to learn and teach, since they were not part of past formation, having been learnt naturally in the family.

Learning the skills of process is best done in the context of community living, allowing trainees for formation to practise their new-found skills in a safe and supportive environment. This can provide a safe environment where they learn to encourage and affirm each other as well as practice new skills. It will also provide opportunities to learn the art of reconciliation and forgiveness, essential for all settings.

At the centre of community is the self-giving love of God, particularly shown in the creation, incarnation and in the self-giving of Jesus on the cross and in the Eucharist. God's love is the model for our love. God's self-giving is the model for our self-giving.

Through living daily in community in process and doing deep process work we learn the self-giving love as it leads to living in the presence of God. We no longer remain products of the old paradigm which fostered self-centeredness and individualism. The process work helps us to acquire the Christian values which we know from Sacred Scripture. Since we are living under the strong pressure of the old paradigm, living in daily process is a necessity to survive as authentic Christians.

In this daily living process, we connect with the Blessed Trinity which lives in us and we work together with the Holy Spirit to heal and divinize our frail and wounded human nature. This brings meaning, purpose, enthusiasm and sometimes pain. Many have to learn that suffering is part of a deep spiritual life.

Life is exciting, because we discover new things of our personal history nearly every day. This gives us a chance to integrate our past life with our present life and make sure that past negative experiences are properly worked through and become assets for our future life. In this way our life becomes richer daily. This is what living in process and doing deep inner process work does for us. We will experience more and more God's guidance and illuminations in our lives.

Leaders and formators need to be enthusiastic and full of life and joy. Through this process work anybody can achieve that, because it brings us in deep contact with God on a daily basis by establishing more and more God's kingdom in ourselves.

10. Leaders and formators need to acquire a good level of self-awareness.

Growing in the sound knowledge of our strengths and weaknesses will be a rich bank to help us in our lives of personal processing, integration and life with and in the Trinity.

For example, where am I, in myself, at this moment? What are my thoughts? What are my expectations? What are my feelings? Are they positive or negative? Am I angry, disappointed, fearful? How do these emotions affect what I am going to do? How does it affect my decisions which I have to make today? How does it affect my relationships with people?

Am I optimistic about the future of my congregation? Am I overworked? Am I in too much stress? How can I deal with these situations? Am I constantly irritated? What do I do about that? Am I a Christian example to the people entrusted to me? What is happening to my faith and prayer life? Have I got a deep relationship with Christ? Do I keep on fostering it in spite of my workload? What are my expectations of my students? Are these expectations reasonable? Are they too high? These are just some areas of which I need to be aware and do something about it, if I see it is necessary or good for the benefit of those entrusted to me.

Professor Revers in Salzburg University used to say, "If I am aware that I have holes in my socks, I am not surprised when somebody tells me. When I am surprised, I may react angrily instead of responding prudently to the situation". As a leader or formator I am bound to receive much anger from those entrusted to me because of their authority problems and other difficulties learnt as a result of

childhood back grounds and past circumstances. They are often not aware of what is happening and see things in a negative light rather than a positive message for better understanding, an opportunity to learn – a grace from God to a better and richer life. If I react inappropriately, I may feel guilty and ashamed and overcompensate by trying to make up for my mistake and avoid doing caring confrontation. Thus, I may reinforce the inappropriate behaviour of those for whom I am responsible.

Awareness is the first step of change and growth. The awareness of how we come across to others may invite us to change our behaviour. Often others notice our negative behaviour and can give us feedback, if we elicit it. I used to comb my hair backwards. At one stage, someone, said to me: “You look so severe.” That was the last thing I wanted to communicate to the participants and I changed the way I combed my hair. Even now, I frequently ask a friend how I come across in my lectures or in meetings, so that I can learn from the feedback which I receive. The danger is that people in authority positions don’t get feedback from those under them, so we have to elicit it, if we want to grow.

Living in the present moment, living in the presence of God, living in process will help us enormously to become aware of what is going on in us. The bio-psycho-spiritual journey facilitates the process of living in the present moment and in God’s presence. It also shows us how to live the Trinitarian community life of love in our daily lives. It becomes the tool for living a contemplative life in an active ministry in parishes, formation centres, religious communities etc. In this way we are not just ‘talking the talk’, but we are ‘walking the walk’.

11. Leaders and formators need deep faith.

We may have a great deal of knowledge about Theology, doctrines, the Church as a whole, and spirituality, rituals etc. but this is not of itself sufficient to ensure a deep faith. We need to

experience it and live it, have time to work with questions and even doubts to bring it to a greater depth.

Without deep faith we cannot enjoy our ministry as leaders and formators. It is essential that we have enthusiasm for our ministry. Without joy our ministry is limited. Deep faith gives tremendous meaning to our life. We all need to have meaning and purpose in our lives.

Our society needs help to become reconnected with God. Many people are alienated from God. To achieve this, they need to be reconnected with their bodies, their feelings, their deepest values. We all need healing and this happens as we learn to live in process. It happens through establishing a living relationship with God and healthy relationships with people.

As people learn to establish more authentic relationships with God through many tools and skills, we can see that an inner revolution takes place -the God image appears more and more in their behaviour. They see life very differently from the way they saw it before so that they often say: "I should have had a programme like this before. Then my life would have been very different, much more fulfilling". Deep faith is a great gift from God, but there is also a responsibility to share this gift with others who may be struggling or even in despair, who have not had the opportunity to develop such deep faith.

12. Leaders and formators need great confidence - in order to lead their flock from all sides as well as in the midst of them.

Confident leaders are not threatened or fearful but will inspire, affirm and build up their flock with deep faith and trust in the power and guidance of the Spirit. They are able to take the opportunity for help and support from human resources and above all through their relationship with the Trinity.

This confidence comes out of deep faith and working to develop a healthy self-esteem. Many people lack a healthy self-esteem due to negative experiences in childhood. I have often seen how people grow enormously in healthy self-confidence if they are given and learn the skills and tools and apply them to their daily life. If they have a deep faith and see it as an asset for their living, this experience will provide the confidence to share it with the people entrusted to them. People pick up very quickly whether a leader or formator is confident. If they are not, some people take advantage and abuse such a formator or leader who may then, in order to survive, turn into an authoritarian leader and/or formator.

When I was formator in a minor seminary, the rector of the seminary called a meeting of the boys and among many other points he said: "You are not allowed to receive girls into your room". One of the boys asked him: "Why not?" In his insecurity he replied: "I am telling you as rector, that you are not allowed". The student wanted him to give a reason whereas the rector in his insecurity pointed to his position. The student was very hurt and wanted to leave the premises that day. I explained to him that the rector means it well for him and gave him several reasons for understanding the rector's request.

13. Leaders and formators need to be aware of the different values in our society and Christian values.

We live in a multicultural, secularized world and are constantly influenced by the values of our society which, in part, are opposed to our Christian values. Therefore, leaders and formators benefit greatly from an understanding of value clarification for themselves and those entrusted to them. How can they live a Christian life? Their values need to show they have something more to offer the world – it is advantageous to be a Christian, priest and religious; our values give an extra richness to life.

We have a great opportunity in Europe and other countries to proclaim the values of the Risen Lord and bring about a personal renewal in the church and in society. One way to achieve this is to train our leaders and formators in a thorough and personalized way. They need to become mystics in action.

Many have naturally taken on societal values and we need to help them to bring these in line with the values of our Christian faith. Just to mention one value: money. They may have the vow of poverty, but do they live by this value or are they always looking for money, material possessions etc.? In formation, we need to inspire our candidates to live the vow of poverty and not just follow the norms we find in society.

What about love and service, being at the service of each other? Are our religious communities built on service or the values of society, such as “I am important; I want to be the centre of community; I need to be consulted in every change which takes place in community”. In our egocentric society, how do we help people to move to a Christo / Trinitarian centred life which is initially less attractive or gratifying? Only through modelling peace, serenity in suffering, greater joy and harmony can we convince people that it is worthwhile to be a Christian.

Jesus said: “I have come to do the will of my Father”. Do I say the same and live it in my daily life? Most have this intention and genuine desire but they don't know ‘how’ to achieve it. I need to grow in confidence that if I do my will, it may not be for my greater good, but if I do the will of God, it will definitely be for my ultimate good and for all others around. I can say that I sincerely want to do the will of God, because I am convinced that it is the best for me. That is why I constantly add to my petitions: “if it is your will, God”. What does the vow of obedience mean to me? This is a question we must ask ourselves frequently.

Being a leader and formator is challenging. We need to lead by modelling an authentic life: trying to be congruent with what we believe, advocate and expect of others whilst recognising and accepting we too are human and will not succeed every time, which is also important modelling. Perfection comes in the next world.

Value clarification is essential for each Christian, for each priest and religious. What are the values which I profess and what are the values by which I live? Are they the same? How authentic am I? When I live an inauthentic life, I damage not only my soul, but also my psyche. I start contributing to the contamination of society and the environment. We may not see these connections but it still happens. Our renewal starts by paying attention to how each one of us contributes towards polluting our psyches, our souls and our environment.

As we contaminate our psyches and souls, we become less sensitive towards our environment. These processes are very subtle and obviously we are not aware of them. We would not want to do that, but we do it. Once we have been made aware, we can choose to heal our psyches and souls again. As we do that regularly, we become more sensitive to what God wants us to be. We can work then with the guidance of the Holy Spirit in his work of sanctifying us.

14. We need Leaders and formators who have a solid commitment to renewal of themselves, their congregation or diocese and the church and society as a whole.

Much contamination of our psyches and souls has taken place over the last decades in our society. We who are priests and religious, as well as our candidates for priesthood and religious life, are part of that contamination. We all are in need of healing. Saying prayers alone will not achieve this. We need to cooperate with the healing work of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. We know this from the Bible, but do we really relate to the indwelling Trinity, or is it just a doctrine we know about?

If we have a true relationship with the three persons of the Trinity, we are aware and open to their guidance for healing to happen in us. We listen to the daily inspirations on how to relate to ourselves, to others and the universe and to the Trinity. This is what living in process means. It is a skill/art which we need to develop and practice daily. It is similar to living in the present moment and being aware of the indwelling Trinity with whom we work together in the daily work of building up God's kingdom in ourselves and in others.

Renewal is achieved when we follow Christ on a daily basis and help others to do the same. In that process they will experience what Christ has promised us: "My burden is light", but also "take up your cross". This daily work of building up God's kingdom makes each day precious and meaningful.

Thus, there is no boredom in such a life. On the contrary, it is a daily challenge. If we practice living in the presence of God in our relationships, our whole community will be involved in a process of renewal. If priests practise living in the presence of God in their relationships with parishioners, the whole parish will get involved in a process of renewal. If they teach the parishioners to practise living in the presence of God, all people of that parish will be involved in a process of renewal.

This personal renewal work involves particularly our emotions. It means learning to use our emotions constructively. This is a whole area necessary for renewal.

There is a lot of searching by many people in our world for a better, happier and deeper life, but mostly they look in all the wrong places: drugs, alcohol, sex, money, power, new clothes, faster cars, better things than the neighbour has etc. We can witness to them by our life, happiness, security and contentment that a profound relationship with our God gives us just what they are looking for. Things will change radically and people will gradually flock to a Church giving meaning and hope to their life. People are searching

for fulfilment in life. The only ways many think that they can find it is by having more money, power, control, pleasure and entertainment. Quite a few are searching for spirituality in all kinds of ways. We know that ultimately only the Christian spirituality will lead to this fullness of life we are longing for. If leaders, formators and many Christians find that fulfilment and show it in their daily living, that might help many people to look once more to making Christ the centre of their lives.

15. Most of the work of formators and leaders will be accompaniment.

Accompaniment is delicate sensitive and challenging work. Those asked to do this work deserve the opportunity of thorough training and on-going support. The way they practise this mission will determine the kind of Church and Religious Congregations we will have in the future, as well as vocational prospects. Excellent formation helps people to become more fully the person they are meant to be for God. This in turn attracts other candidates as they witness the worthwhileness of a life in Christ and a life of service to others. Training in living in process and deep process work, besides acquiring helping skills, is necessary for learning to accompany *those in formation*. They need accompaniment in their psycho-spiritual journey in order to acquire an understanding of what this psycho-spiritual journey implies. It is not just spiritual information but rather learning to live a spiritual life. It is not just prayer and meditation it means helping them to overcome obstacles in this process, such as hurts, unforgiveness, bitterness, authority problems, unfinished loss experiences, passive aggressive behaviour and other baggage we bring from the past.

To accompany people, we need to be very much aware of our own process. If we are not aware of what is going on inside ourselves, we might become abusive without even knowing it. We would have no chance to remedy this situation. Abusive behaviour is very common. Not all abusive behaviour is a crime. All abusive

behaviour is damaging ourselves, our psyches and souls, as well as those towards whom it is directed. This can be verbal abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, power abuse, monetary abuse, spiritual abuse, etc. For example, are politicians aware of their monetary abuse by allowing firms to charge highly excessive prices for testing corona virus before flights?

As leaders and formators, we need to be knowledgeable and observant, able to detect and recognise inappropriate behaviour, some serious and some minor, which can otherwise develop into more destructive behaviour. If we have learnt to do caring confrontation, motivated by love for the person, it can only bear fruit, leading them further on their journey or sometimes to a different life. This is a whole area in which we all can grow and become better Christians and build up God's kingdom of justice and peace in ourselves and others.

Don't think for a moment that you do not belong to this category of abusers. During last year's course I noticed that I had been abusive to a participant in my reply to a passive aggressive statement he made. When I did become aware, I apologized to him. He, too, had been abusive to me in his statement, but was not aware of it.

All passive aggressive behaviour is abusive. However, most of it is unconscious. It is an area with which a leader and formator would need to be familiar. Pope Francis has mentioned several times the damaging effect of gossip. How common is it in our communities? What do we do in our formation to help candidates to become aware of it and avoid it? It is very much against charity. Cynicism, sarcasm, coming late, forgetting things, and gossip are just a few forms of passive aggressive behaviour. In our accompaniment we can facilitate those entrusted to us to become aware, so that they can work on themselves to avoid this type of destructive behaviour. Pope Francis refers to gossipers as terrorists. Like terrorism it splits and divides.

16. Leaders and formators have a tremendous positive or negative influence on the future of the province, congregation, diocese, parish, church and state.

As leaders and formators we can build up or destroy a parish, congregation, diocese and people. We have a great responsibility to affirm those entrusted to us. We need to be fully aware of this responsibility. It is a great challenge for us. We must not underestimate our positive or negative influence. We are called to build up God's people which necessitates building up God's kingdom in us.

Only by continually growing in our connectedness with ourselves and God can we gradually achieve the building up of God's people. By working on ourselves to be at one on all levels of our being, we can help others to become harmonious in themselves. Many people are split in themselves. Some function mainly from their head, others mainly from their emotions. Both are important. Splitting, though mostly done unconsciously, is of itself evil: "divide and rule". It can be destructive when leadership and leadership teams are split, and people will capitalise on the split. We learn this as children: Mother says 'no' so we try Father and he says 'yes' – we have split and won.

We bring our "splitness" into our relationships with people and into our teams and communities to get our own way. When we do this, we are no longer working for building up God's kingdom, we enter the diabolic sphere and work for evil in the world.

Most people want to work for a better world. We can rally these good intentions and move in the right direction to work for unity, peace, justice and fulfilment in our own teams, communities, dioceses, institutions.

17. Leaders and formators need to be people of peace and justice.

We live in a disunited world and need leaders and formators to show us 'how' to live in peace and bring justice into a dark and unjust

world. Leaders and formators must be people of peace and justice. Without justice there will never be peace.

It is not enough to have the intention to live in peace and justice. Each one of us needs to become aware of the unjust structures and the turmoil in ourselves. As St. Gregory of Nyssa says: "We should also bring together the warring factions within us". He goes on to state: "The definition of peace is that there should be harmony between two opposite factions. And so, when the civil war in our nature has been brought to an end and we are at peace within ourselves, we may become peace".

To bring about this harmony in ourselves takes time and is a lifelong process. Learning to live in process and do deep inner process work will facilitate this work. Nobody can establish this inner harmony ALL AT ONCE and for ever. It is a process which needs to go on until we die.

Gregory of Nyssa continues to say: "When we consider that Christ is the true light far removed from all falsehood, we realize that our lives too should be lit by the rays of the sun of justice, which shine for our enlightenment". If we live in process, the Holy Spirit will enlighten us so that we discover our internal unjust structures. We learned these in childhood and are most likely not aware of them. Taking time to deal with our own unjust structures helps us to become more authentic and more Christ-like. The more we are able to remove our own internal unjust structures, the more peaceful we become in our dealing with life and people.

18. If leaders are not aware of their woundedness, stemming from their past, they can become abusers unintentionally and sometimes unconsciously, acting out abusive behaviour. Woundedness is a part of every human being. We are all in need of healing and redemption.

Living in process and doing deep process work will help us to become aware of our own woundedness and to deal with it.

There are many forms of abuse, of which most people have no knowledge, but commit them all the same. Just to mention one. I may be invited to have breakfast with **someone**. After a few words of greeting, the person turns on their mobile phone and spends the rest of time playing with it. I sit in silence for the rest of my breakfast.

However, there are many more serious areas of abuse. Carol Glatz, Catholic News Service on August 6, 2021 states: "Spiritual abuse occurs more frequently than believed, Vatican official says". Archbishop Jose Rodriguez Carballo, secretary of the Vatican Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, refers to abuse of power, conscience, financial corruption and problems associated with affectivity. Affectivity includes many emotions and sexuality. Emotional abuse has many facades. This includes the emotion of anger, inculcation of fear or guilt, acting out jealousy or envy, passive aggressive behaviour which is unconscious, like the 'terrorism' of gossip, and many more.

The archbishop goes on to state: "It should also be noted that there have been some cases in which, after the necessary investigation, the female founder has left consecrated life or the male founder has been reduced to the lay state. All of this does a lot of damage to consecrated life and to the church itself. Therefore, much more attention should be paid when discerning the need, benefit and usefulness for the church when approving associations whose canonical recognition is underway".

It is the right of bishops to approve such association, the archbishop said, "but also a grave responsibility. Much discernment is needed".

We need to provide solid training and on-going support through Pastoral Accompaniment, that deals with all these areas. Thus, well-intentioned people have the opportunity to learn how to do things differently and more effectively.

19. Leaders and formators need to be able to establish healthy relationships with those entrusted to them.

Healthy relationships are central to community life. To improve our relationships, we have to learn to deal with our emotions constructively and develop good communication. In relationships people have been hurt, in relationships they can be healed. To build up a good community, we need to facilitate good communication and a healthy use of emotions. This is a challenging task, since many people are not aware of their emotions, or if they are, they have a belief that they are bad and should be avoided. Emotions give life its richness and colours. All emotions are good and a gift from God. We need to help people see this and give them the opportunity to learn and practice how to use them constructively.

Leaders and formators need to learn how to handle more than one role. They may be the superior of a community; they may have to assess the members of the community and they need to have their own social relationships. Several “roles” become more difficult, because of different perceptions: by some they will be seen as a father/mother together with all the expectations they have of a father/mother; to others they will be the authority figure to be feared or rebelled against; yet others will see them as a brother/sister, on an equal level; or the superior may be seen as the head teacher whom they disliked, and so forth. Whilst all of us are equal in the eyes of God, we have different competences which need to be respected. It is demanding to do justice to these roles and expectations. Their job may be to accompany members of the community in their bio-psycho-spiritual journey towards union with Christ. At the same time, they may well have to be involved in having to assess their growth journey and to challenge them.

Leaders and formators need to be good listeners, so that they pick up what those who come to them mean when they share their problems. They need to be able to “smell” those entrusted to them for lots of reasons. One reason is to be able to discern vocations

and to foster vocations. When a member of the community goes through a mid-life crisis, he/she may need help to understand what is going on in them. I am sure we have lost many good members by not understanding the meaning of mid-life crisis. Mid-life crisis is a normal part of every one's journey and a positive call to a deeper life in God. Formators and leaders need to understand this process so they can facilitate others through yet another gift of God, to grow in maturity and integration on our journey to fullness in Him.

To help people to become aware of the meaning of crisis in general and of mid-life crisis in particular, I gave a one-week course in 1986 on "Crises - opportunities for growth" to remedy the attitude that "this priest is in crisis, he will leave the priesthood". I am sure we lost many priests and religious in those years due to a lack of understanding of what the purpose of a crisis is. Basically, crises are opportunities for psycho-spiritual growth. Most people do not understand this and so they cannot help their members. I spend quite some time on our courses to make clear what crisis means.

Leaders and formators need to deal with their own mid-life crisis or at least understand it.

They also need to be able to take conflict and use it as a tool for their personal growth as well as for fostering growth in those entrusted to them. Most people have serious problems with conflict and try to avoid it at any cost. It takes much time to learn to use conflict as a tool for growth.

Some members of the community may have problems with low self-esteem and become frequently aggressive. They need help to improve their self-esteem. The low self-esteem may cause them and other members of the community much suffering, tension and even inefficiency.

In our communities, members become often co-dependent and lose their healthy independence. Some members may have

the tendency to care for others too much. Other members may have authority problems. All these issues need to be challenged and facilitated in order to establish a healthy growth-producing community.

Living in process will help us to live the Trinitarian life, by being aware of the indwelling God in our daily life. We can help those entrusted to us to do the same. The relationships in the Blessed Trinity are perfect; ours, however, will never be perfect, but they can be improved on a daily basis. "Become as perfect, as the Heavenly Father is perfect".

20. Leaders and formators would need not just to function, but to be enthusiastic to build up God's kingdom in themselves and those entrusted to them.

How can we get vocations and enthusiastic members, if the leaders and formators are not enthusiastic? Enthusiasm is contagious and inspires people. Lack of enthusiasm deadens people. **Today we need enthusiastic witnesses, like the Apostles, to the Risen Lord.** This enthusiasm—comes from being connected with the indwelling Trinity, by living in process, in the presence of God.

Formators would need to inspire our candidates for priesthood and religious life. Academic studies don't normally achieve this by their very nature of being abstract and as such only feeding our heads.—The lives of leaders, vocation directors and formators need to inspire those for whom they are responsible to follow them and learn from them as they see their leaders witness the sort of life they themselves want to live. Academics who are able to relate well and make their teachings very relevant to daily life, facilitating a deep lived spirituality, stand out in the crowd and are admired. They inspire others to emulate them.

Formators need additional specialised training, where they are led into the bio-psycho-spiritual journey which leads to union with

the Blessed Trinity. The Mystery of the Blessed Trinity, Incarnation, Baptism and Eucharist are at the centre of the transformational process which they learn and live in their daily life with enthusiasm, and which they pass on to their students during the years of formation, so that future priests and religious can do the same with the lay people entrusted to them in their parishes. As the richness and depth of their lives are witnessed, others will want to become part of the same process which will lead to a deep renewal of the church and slowly of society.

We need to be fully aware that it is not only our environment that has been contaminated by the value system of society as a consequence of the physical paradigm, but our souls and psyches as well. These internal distortions are the causes of our environmental contamination. Thus, we need to deal with these internal distortions to achieve a continuous contamination-free environment. These contaminations have taken place over decades or even centuries. Now we need to work for a healthy inner world based on the teaching of Christ, the Son of God, who came into this world to redeem us and show us how to live healthily.

The bio-psycho-spiritual process will help people to acquire a Christian value system which will counter the process of inner damage by substituting truly Christian values where the recipients will experience inner freedom, joy, fulfilment, peace and deep meaning for their lives.

Once people have been introduced to this bio-psycho-spiritual process, they can practice this process on a daily basis in order to deal, step by step, with past issues that still impact them, and find healing for these scars from childhood or later in life. Slowly they will experience the freedom of being children of God and part of the Trinitarian Community, where they experience fulfilment, have joy and a purpose in life in spite of physical, psychological and spiritual suffering. They will see it as being involved in the Paschal Mystery, where "the burden is light". The deeper we go in this process, the

more we find fulfilment and meaning. It is a life-long process, but it can be learnt by living it with the help of people who have practised this process for some years and keep up the practice.

21. Leaders and formators need to learn to respect themselves, look after themselves and be compassionate with themselves. When they lead a healthy life style it is very good modelling for those in formation.

Respecting ourselves, taking care of ourselves, listening to ourselves and our own process, does not lead to self-centeredness. The opposite is true, because it connects us with ourselves and with God. When people are self-centred in their addiction, they are out of touch with themselves, others and God. When people begin to respect themselves, they begin to be aware of their connection with all things and God.

Self-care is important for leaders and formators. They need to be in good physical, psychological and spiritual health to be able to do justice to their demanding work. Since leadership and formation work have become more challenging, it is necessary that those going into leadership, formation and vocational work have the opportunity, through thorough training, to turn their stress and pressure into personal bio-psycho-spiritual growth by seeing them as external graces and using them within reasonable limits. Often, leaders and formators finish with burnout or leave their congregations, which is counterproductive to getting future vocations. Leaders and formators can learn to enjoy their work and grow through it on a psycho-spiritual level. When leaders are under pressure those around them often unconsciously take advantage of their fragility for their own gain. Good boundaries need to be set up to ensure each one has the necessary space and time for themselves. Emergencies are an exception. No one should be available 24 hours. Our society expects everything instantly, but we can help people to learn that waiting can be good for them and can give them the opportunity to reflect and pray. Boundaries are very important for us to learn we can't have

everything we want when we want it. We also need to learn gratitude for all we have. Many have basic needs that are not met. Our wants in the bigger picture are miniscule. We can learn that we can survive with less.

Leaders and formators need to learn tools and skills they can use to work through the hurts which they receive in their work. If not, they will finish with burnout, lack of enthusiasm, anger, bitterness or even with feelings of revenge, which are all negative and not constructive for priestly or religious life and ministry. They may even become physically ill.

22. Leaders and formators need to enter the journey of becoming mystics.

To become a mystic, we have to learn to enter deeply into our bio-psycho-spiritual process. We need to become aware of what is going on in our bodies, psyches and souls. Thus, living in process and doing deep process work are essential to discover the Trinity dwelling in us.

We need to be constantly connected with the God in us, and keep on working with the Holy Spirit, to become more and more sanctified by removing the obstacles which block us from experiencing the presence and working of God in us, so that we can co-operate more with the work of the Holy Spirit in us. There needs to be a constant process of purification, so that we experience then the illuminations and unity with God and the whole universe.

The mystical way will make sure that we do not become swamped in our pluralistic society, but that we can be the leaven in this society and help it to be again more connected with God, ourselves, the earth and the universe. Unity is an important factor in holding together a split society. Love and respect for every person, every culture, every faith, or people with no faith, are essential for unity. As a mystic this is not only possible, it is a basic characteristic of what it means to be

a mystic. The mystic is so deeply rooted in God, that he/she is no longer afraid of the otherness of people.

Just imagine if every member of your presbytery, or of your congregation, would be a mystic, how different life would be. This additional formation aims at fostering active mystics who become the leaven in our society by witnessing to the Risen Lord in their very happy, fulfilled and joyful being.

23. Leaders and formators must never forget the message of Revelation (1:8): “I am the Alpha and the Omega, says the Lord God, who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty”.

It is our privilege to work with Christ who is moving the universe towards Omega, which He is. We and the universe have come from God and will go to God. He is evolving the whole universe into his body. The body of Christ is being formed in us each time we receive the Eucharist, the Risen Body and Blood of Christ. Matter is divinized. We are already, through baptism, in an embryonic risen state. Day by day this embryo develops in a more mature member of the Body of Christ in the church which administers the Eucharist through his priests. We cannot overestimate the importance of the Eucharist in our daily lives, and the work of redemption, and as such the importance of the church, which provides the ministers of the Eucharist and the other sacraments.

The sacraments, particularly the Eucharist, nourishes us daily, providing the motivation to keep us in constant process and to do deep process work so that God’s kingdom of love, peace and justice becomes more and more a reality in our personal lives, and thus in our social and physical environment.

We are members of the mystical body of Christ, who through his Spirit leads us daily to give glory to God the Father by whom we become more perfect through the work of his Spirit with whom

we co-operate daily. This is our calling as Christians and at the same time our contribution to a better world. These may be small steps, but they are important steps. If many people make these small steps, they become big steps and will make a difference to the church and to society.

In the history of the development of the universe it took millions of years until, according to God's plan, life entered the universe; and it will take millions of years until the whole universe is divinized and has divine life in abundance. We as members of the mystical body of Christ are involved in this process of bio-psycho-spiritual growth and transformation. What a privilege!

CONCLUSIONS

I have tried to keep this to a concise picture of why I think that our leaders and formators need solid training, allowing those with many demands on their time the possibility of reading it. I hope I have shown you how our formation can be richly enhanced for the benefit of everyone by teaching the positives, both psychological and spiritual, that are sadly no longer automatically learnt in the family.

Ideally, I would suggest for formators three or four years to equip them as best as we can for their most important and challenging work. On their work depends the future of congregations and the witnessing of the church to the Risen Lord. If the wrong people are ordained or enter religious life, damage is done to the congregation and the church. On the other hand, if the formators help candidates who are struggling, and save more vocations and foster enthusiastic priests and religious, this will back the investment of money and time put into them.

Learning to live in the constant presence of God will provide us with the necessary enthusiasm which is needed to make an impact on people in our society. Jesus inspired the apostles with this enthusiasm, he will also inspire us when we keep in daily contact with him by living in process. Again and again, I experience the helplessness of people who do not have a relationship with God. I feel a sadness, because for them death means the end of their existence, whereas for me death is the door to a new full experience with God.

This booklet explains the importance of training leaders and formators. I focused on these two groups of people because of their central and influential position in the church for a deep renewal.

My sincere conviction is that all people are searching for fulfilment and happiness as they understand it. This understanding of happiness comes from their childhood experiences and education.

Unconsciously, education has been too much influenced by a limited physical paradigm which needs to be complemented by a paradigm which does justice to the full human being. Even psychology in its efforts to be scientific, as most people understand it, bowed to the 'goddess' of what is scientific and produced a very limited understanding of the human personality.

My concern is to bring God back into our society and build our future culture on the solid foundation of the teaching of God, which is expressed in the ten commandments and summarised in love of God, our neighbour, ourselves and the environment. I believe that every person is somehow searching for God, but some find only a limited satisfaction as they are stuck in their search for power, money, status, possessions etc. My wish is that those searchers have the opportunity to go deeper until they find the true God that the majority of people believe in.

No wonder that John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge wrote the book '*The Wake Up Call*' (2020). This book is about how the West and USA handled the pandemic due to the lack of a unified approach. We need the model of the Blessed Trinity for our way of living and functioning. That is one of the reasons why Jesus revealed this mystery to us. Our beliefs are not just doctrines, but meaningful models for healthy living. One lesson we can learn from the mystery of the Blessed Trinity is **unity**, which can only come about through lived trinitarian relationships.

In an Appendix at the end of the booklet you will find some information on the Institute of St. Anselm which was founded under the auspices of the late Cardinal Basil Hume OSB in England in 1985. I would like the Institute to become an Alma Mater where people are trained and after 3 to 4 years return to their own countries and set up a simpler version of the Institute to facilitate their own people, such as pastoral workers, teachers and many other professions on full or part time basis according to the needs.

GLOSSARY

Bio-psycho-spiritual journey:

I see the human person coming from God and going to God. It is a journey of the body, mind and spirit, and all three are involved in this journey. It is a journey of purification, due to original sinfulness and personal sinfulness. This journey finishes in union with God. As we work through more and more areas of woundedness and sinfulness on our journey, we become freer and experience more illuminations and moments of union with God. Mind, body and spirit become again more united in ourselves. They are interrelated and have an influence on each other. Conceptually we separated them and believed that in reality they are separated.

Deep process work:

Deals with painful emotions, hurts, traumas, loss experiences etc., which pop up from time to time. We must take the opportunity to work with them. In this way we clear out much unfinished business and become more integrated and more alive.

Intra-psycho conflict:

These conflicts are within ourselves. For example, I want to lose weight, but I also want to eat sweet things. We carry many intra-psycho conflicts into interpersonal relationships and thus they become interpersonal conflicts. We bring these intra-psycho conflicts into our communities and into our workplace situations. The more we work through our intra-psycho conflicts, the less we bring them into outside situations.

Living in process:

Means being aware of what is going on in us with regard to emotions, feelings, desires, wishes, hurts, pains, thoughts. In this way

we connect not just with our head, but with our body and our spirit. We get connected with the indwelling God in us. He guides us from moment to moment in what to do with our emotions, desires, wishes. We learn to live life fully, with purpose and enthusiasm. We develop a sensitive awareness to be able to choose how we act in certain situations, rather than reacting perhaps in a way we would rather not. E.g. Once we become aware of our anger, we decide what we will do according to our Christian principles.

Paradigm:

A general understanding of what scientific work is, within which a study or enquiry is done. One can also call it a world view. This view becomes the foundation of theories and methodology of scientific work. It also means a model or an example. Our present paradigm comes from physics, where we measure things, control them and come to clear results by doing that. Because it is exact and clear in its research, it became the model for all sciences.

APPENDIXES

**Article written by Fr. Len Kofler MHM
in the Millennium Year 2000**

THE INSTITUTE OF ST. ANSELM: MEETING THE NEEDS OF TODAY, TAKING ON THE CHALLENGE OF THE FUTURE.

How to take the Institute of St. Anselm into the future:

In this article I try to give as clear a picture as I can of the function that the Institute of St. Anselm fulfils and could fulfil, within the Church. First, a short history of the Institute of St. Anselm will be presented. Then the reasons will be given why I believe it is crucial to ensure that it be taken into the future. Thirdly, ideas will be developed for establishing structures to enable this to happen.

Short History of the Institute of St. Anselm.

When I was president of the Missionary Institute London, I noticed how staff and students were struggling with relationships. In one year we lost three rectors of halls of residences and several students. I became more and more aware that we needed to do something to change that situation. Moreover, when students came to see me and shared some of their problems, I asked them: "How is it that you did not deal with this issue during the noviciate?" The reply was: "Father so and so was very nice and kind, but we never looked at these issues." These and many other similar experiences encouraged me to think of doing something to improve this situation.

In 1983 I put this problem to the Trustees of the Missionary Institute London. They suggested starting an in-service training course for the rectors of the halls of residence. We did so in 1983 and ran two such courses. However, I soon realised that this venture was not enough. I became aware that formation personnel need to be

trained before they take on responsibility. I was aware that at least a year was needed for such training, but preferably three. However, I was also convinced that no bishop or major superior would free a person for three years. Thus in 1985 I started the first course for leaders and formators in Damascus House, Mill Hill London. This was a tremendous learning experience for me. The late Cardinal Hume was the first president and encouraged me enormously to start this venture in this country. He said to me: "Do what you have shared with me, but don't repeat and copy what others do." I took this seriously and developed, independently of any other institution, a programme from my experience and training, which I thought would help the formators and leaders in the Church.

The basic structures of the Course were embryonically there even in the first year in 1985. The experiential dimension of such a programme was so clear to me that I dropped all academic requirements within the first fortnight of running the Course after a long discussion with the participants. Similarly, I was convinced that we needed both spirituality and psychology. Therefore, I tried to integrate the two right from the beginning. The Courses were very well attended and became very popular so much so that the President of Missio said: "Your Course is the most popular Course." The number of participants grew from thirty to over hundred in a very short time. From many letters received over the last fifteen years, I can say that the Course meets a need which from feedback we get, does not seem to be met in other Courses.

Besides the original Course for leaders and formators, many other Courses have developed within the framework of the Institute. After the first year's Course, we now offer an integrative spiritual counselling Course where we try to integrate psychology with Christian spirituality. We train Christian counsellors, psychotherapists, trainers, supervisors, group counsellors and group psychotherapists. We are currently in the process of being validated by Greenwich University so that we can confer: A postgraduate

Certificate in psycho-spiritual individual and group skills, a postgraduate Diploma in individual and group psycho-spiritual counselling in a Christian context and a Master's degree in psycho-spiritual individual and group psychotherapy.

Besides all these Courses there is also an intensive programme for human development. We have at present 23 participants on this programme, divided into three groups.

Reasons for taking the Institute of St. Anselm into the future.

The Institute of St. Anselm has trained over 2000 priests and religious in the last fifteen years of its existence, thus fulfilling an important need for the Church. It provides leaders and formators with the necessary personal psycho-spiritual formation and tools to fulfil their tasks much more effectively. The many letters from former participants clearly indicate how the training they received in St. Anselm's helped them to cope much better with their work. Many participants are worried that the Institute might die with me. Thus, I am writing this article to stimulate discussion and commitment from the Vatican, bishops and major superiors to help us take the Institute into the future. I am now over 65 years old and I think it is wise to train the people now who will take the Institute into the future. This will take some years, since the nature of the Courses is so different from other Courses.

Our priestly and religious formation in general has too much input and is not enough growth-oriented. Most staff of our seminaries and formation centres on their own admission are unable to accompany students or candidates on their psycho-spiritual growth journey in a meaningful way, not having received training for this themselves. The consequences are that, after the many years of formation, our priests and religious have a deep knowledge of our faith and moral teaching, but don't know how to grow as a spiritual and moral person. They lack a sound psycho-spiritual understanding of their growth process. Therefore they can

neither use the knowledge for themselves or for others. Thus, we lose parishioners whose needs are not being met and who are not able to understand our theological language used in the pulpit and in liturgical celebrations.

We have lost the young people in many countries in Europe. From my research in Salzburg I came to the conclusion that we need to train pastoral workers in a way that will prepare them to understand our young people and to help them in their psycho-spiritual growth journey. Our young people have a right to a meaningful proclamation of the "Good News". Vatican II was clear how priests should be prepared for priesthood. Have we implemented the guidelines for priestly formation of Vatican II? Have we introduced centres to train our trainers? Here at the Institute of St. Anselm we have seriously tried to implement the spirit of Vatican II with regard to priestly formation. The Church cannot afford to neglect such fundamental instructions.

Over 15 years a very serious reflection on the integration of psychology and spirituality has taken place in the Institute of St. Anselm. It has been tried out in a practical way. As I write this article, I am pleased to discover an article about the seminary in Bovendonk in the Netherlands. "Tutors are carefully selected for their ability to integrate spirituality and psychology, for teaching is based on an understanding of Christian anthropology which avoids the artificial split between the things of the soul and the things of the body and mind." This thinking is very much in line with my personality model and the integration which I have worked and reflected on over 20 years, and which we try to implement in the Institute of St. Anselm. I am hearing from so many that it would be a loss for the Church and society, if with my death as founder, this accumulated experience would be lost, particularly since many problems the Church is facing at the moment could be solved, if, as our past and present participants testify priests, religious and lay people could come and share in the insights and the experiences that are part of St. Anselm's Courses.

For two thousand years the Church has taught us admirably what to believe and to do. For the next two thousand years the Church needs to show us how to believe, and to do what we believe in. Doctrines and morals have been developed in an astonishing way, but the “how” of living and communicating what we believe needs to be developed. In the Institute of St. Anselm much thought has been given to these topics. Many ways are discovered, on how to achieve these goals. After the Synod on priestly formation, an African bishop said to me: “Every day we were talking about who trains the trainers. You have got it here, you are doing it.”

Many priests and religious are not given enough help to be able to live what they believe in. They don't understand themselves, neither therefore are they able to understand deeply those entrusted to them. Surely formation must mean that we gain self-understanding, self-awareness, self-knowledge and start a process of integrating what we learn and believe in during the years of formation. Priestly formation implies that we learn the necessary skills for running a parish, a parish council etc., but how many priests understand group dynamic processes? How many priests feel safe enough to run a parish council? How many priests are able to listen actively and deeply to members of the parish council, without feeling threatened?

A vicar general said to me two years ago: “We don't learn how to treat people and how to relate to people in the seminary. As soon as we are ordained, we are put into a parish and we don't really know how to relate with ease in our new role. We feel insecure and we become authoritarian and tell people what to do. One of us is then made bishop and he feels even more insecure and becomes more authoritarian. Thus, people are afraid of the priest or lose respect for him and priests are afraid of the bishop.” Obviously, this is not a healthy situation. A rector of a seminary came to see me, because he was worried about the negative fearful atmosphere within the seminary. We looked at some structures and procedures and found

that they were triggering fear in students. Surely an atmosphere of fear is not growth producing.

We experiencing a rapid change of consciousness, and our religious congregations and priests, bishops and all Church leaders need to be tuned into these changes so that they are not 'reacting' to situations, but they may become proactive. This is not achieved by input and knowledge, but by personal growth in psycho-spiritual sensitivity. Here at the Institute of St. Anselm we have trained many people in acquiring this psycho-spiritual sensitivity so needed in our time. Mere fostering of knowledge of theology, scripture, canon law, church history, psychology, sociology is no longer sufficient for the pastoral workers in our time. Students need to go through a longer process of psycho-spiritual growth.

The Church needs our support by providing trained personnel to lead it meaningfully through the third millennium. We need to use the depression that seems to be part of some countries due to priestly and religious child abuse. By listening to the deep feelings of child abuse that are expressed by the mass media, society as a whole and responding to them in a constructive way we can turn this crisis into a source of renewal for the Church and society. We must not think that child abuse is just a problem of the Church, it is a problem of society. The Church in some measure is being scapegoated, possibly to take away the focus from incest that is much more common than we realise.

We need to learn a language that people, and particularly young people, understand. We need to find a way out of the vocation crisis that exists in many countries in Europe. For this we need happier and more enthusiastic priests and sisters. The "Good News" must be proclaimed with more enthusiasm and conviction. This can be achieved through a longer period of renewal for those who proclaim the "Good News", in Courses that we offer in the Institute of St. Anselm. At the concluding mass this year a participant stated: "I came depressed to St. Anselms. I saw no meaning any more in

religious life. I am now energised again and go with full enthusiasm back into mission.” Have we become too work-oriented and not enough growth-oriented? Why did Our Lord spent thirty years in the family and only three years in ministry? Are there some lessons for us to learn? My opinion is that many priests and religious are so worn out that they are no longer able to be true witnesses to the Risen Lord. A thorough Course of renewal and energising has brought back many priests and religious to new vigour and enthusiastic ministry.

The perceived insensitivity of the Church needs to be overcome by a different form of training our priests and religious. Our teaching on sexuality needs a presentation that is understood in our time. For example, speaking of integration of sexuality as a process. We have still not overcome our legalism. In our teaching and living we have not found the balance of the place of suffering and joy in a Christian’s life. We need to make sure that we are less frequently misunderstood when we make a stand with regard to many issues. Often it is a matter of using the right language. Theological language is not understood by most people, psychological language is now part of our culture.

The Church is a sign of Christ’s presence in the world. Christ’s message is essential for the people of our time. Christ’s message of reconciliation, of bringing two people together, is the unifying force that most people will accept out of their deepest desire and need if, proclaimed empathetically, and followed through by sensitive facilitation of the process of reconciliation. The Institute has developed Courses for Reconciliation and we have started training people as leaders for reconciliation. This to me is Christ’s essential mission into our world. This is the most needed message in our time.

The Courses given at St. Anselms will help to achieve in one way or other the many goals set out above and thus will contribute towards the Church becoming more compassionate, caring, understanding and lovingly challenging. Is this not a needed Church for our millennium?

Some possible structures.

I have tried several ways to take the Institute into the future: training early-retired lay people, setting up a religious society, entrusting the Institute of St. Anselm to one congregation. None of these attempts have been successful enough to take the Institute into the future. Possibly the necessary structures for the Institute of St. Anselm need to be similar to those of the Missionary Institute London which belongs to seven missionary congregations. There may be a need for a much wider basis to carry these ideas and venture into the future. Thus, I appeal to lay people, bishops, bishops' conferences, major superiors, provincials, past participants and the Vatican. There may be lay people who would like to spend their life for such a purpose. In fact, there are some that do exactly this at the moment. I am sure if all the above-mentioned are interested in taking this venture seriously, together we can achieve what I set out below. My hope would be that many dioceses, congregations, orders, would generously commit themselves to providing one staff member or support this venture financially, and the Institute of St. Anselm will train the members for this specialised work.

Many times participants, bishops and superior generals have approached me to start an Institute of St. Anselm in other countries. I am convinced that it is needed in any country in the world, however, I have no personnel at my disposal. Therefore, with this article I appeal to all those I have listed above to consider how they might provide personnel whom we train at the Institute of St. Anselm, and who then set up a centre in their own country, so that in years to come only those who receive training as trainers need to come to St. Anselms in England. It is important that these Courses should be given in other languages, too.

My suggestion is that a congregation or a bishops' conference or even an individual bishop takes responsibility for establishing such a centre, and invites other congregations, dioceses to get involved in providing trained staff. If they send the right person, the Institute

of St. Anselm will be able to train them well at a low cost in the span of four to six years. This is already being modelled here in the Institute. It is a collaborative ministry for the Church, particularly for the missionary Church. The Courses provide a deep conversion experience that generates new energy and enthusiasm in priests and religious.

I look forward to receiving many replies to this appeal from bishops, bishop's conferences, major superiors, lay people from all over the world so that we can implement what I consider an essential ministry for the Church and society as a whole. I see the present 'St. Anselm's' as the alma mater for many 'St. Anselm's' all over the world. This could be an enormous new spring for the Church and religious life. People need to undergo this process of psycho-spiritual growth in order to be able to foster it in them and in others. We must not forget we have a powerful intercessor with God in the Late Cardinal Hume for this ventures who told me in 1984: "Do it, do here, next year!" I trusted God and started the Institute. Let us trust God and enter this new venture together. What a wonderful millennium gift to the church.

SOME CONCERNS AND HOPES FOR PRIESTLY AND RELIGIOUS FORMATION

Introduction

Since Vatican II most likely no topic has been more the centre of attention in meetings of seminaries and chapters of Religious than the topic of formation. Surely, many changes have been introduced into the process of formation, particularly in the area of human sciences. Subjects like psychology, sociology, economics were introduced into the seminary curriculum. Structures have changed. There was a move from a rule-oriented to a person-oriented approach. Formators are being prepared in short courses of several weeks or a year's course. Some may even prepare for several years to become formators. Candidates are being assessed and now and again, these assessments are being used and followed up in the process of formation. Sometimes, if the candidate is not ready, a year outside the formation centre or seminary is recommended and counselling and therapy are provided. Documents on formation were produced and many articles written on this topic. All these are signs of great hope. Why do I think that there is still a need for further work or even more articles? The title expresses it. The author is still concerned about the present state of formation, in spite of all the changes introduced since Vatican II.

Personal history of the author

I have spent most of my priestly ministry working in formation. From 1968 to 1974 I was in a minor seminary as formator after five years' experience in a missionary setting in two parishes in New Zealand. In those most difficult years from 1968 to 1974 I saw the need for further training for myself and inscribed in a course of sociology in Trent, in northern Italy. After having received a doctor's degree in sociology, I went to Salzburg University and studied psychology

and updated my theology. At the same time, I was chaplain to sisters and, for a short time, even novice master for the novices, since the novice mistress was sick in hospital. I finished with a doctor's degree in psychology and pastoral theology. Then I was appointed lecturer of pastoral theology to the Missionary Institute London and after two years I became the president. During this time, due to a crying need the idea originated to provide some training for the various rectors of the halls of residence. I introduced an in-service training course for formators. However, I felt it was not enough just to support the rectors. They needed to be better prepared for their work. Thus, in 1985 under the auspices of the late Cardinal Hume I started the Institute of St. Anselm to train formation personnel. Since then, we have trained around 6500 priests and religious from many countries in the world. The Institute that I founded over 35 years ago and of which I am still the director has developed enormously since its beginning. It is from this background of experience that I write.

Introduction of new subjects into the curriculum

In many meetings and discussions about improving formation, people became aware of the importance of the human sciences such as psychology, sociology, economics, communication, etc. Thus, they were introduced into the curriculum. Students would study developmental psychology, social psychology, sociology, economics, communication etc. The expectation was that they would complement the studies about God with the studies about the human being and society. Thus, the students did acquire besides the knowledge about God knowledge about human beings and about human society. Did this knowledge make them better priests or better religious? No, it just made them more knowledgeable religious and priests. Did it help them to relate better to God or to human beings? Some might think, it did. I have serious reservations to answer that question with 'yes'. If the knowledge helped them to improve their self-concept, then obviously they became priests and religious with more self-confidence.

Constant abstract thinking a process resulting in alienation from relationships to persons

The process of constant abstract studies, even of theology and psychology, instead of facilitating the relationships with God and human persons, may alienate them. People who are involved in abstract thinking for years, lose because of their activity contact with concrete reality. They see things in abstractions, rather than in their concrete reality. They learn to relate to abstractions and not to the persons of God or human beings. They may acquire much knowledge about God and human beings. This abstract knowledge, however, does not help them to relate better to God or to human beings. On the contrary, they may turn away from God because this abstract way of relating to God leaves them cold, empty and unfulfilled. I am not surprised that some people who study theology end up being agnostics or atheists. The object they look at –God- is an object in their experience and not a person unless they spend a considerable amount of time in meditation. If they meditate, then their experience becomes an experience of a person rather than an object. Thus, the very process of abstract study of God can be a process of ‘deformation’ rather than formation, if by formation we mean establishing a personal relationship with self, others and God.

Just as the abstract study of theology by itself does not help us to establish a deeper relationship with God, neither does the abstract study of psychology help us to establish better relationships with human beings. Thus, what we need is experiential theology and experiential psychology or applied theology and applied psychology. However, this is not what students receive in seminaries or universities. Very few professors or lecturers can apply their abstract knowledge to concrete reality and concrete situations. This applied theology and applied psychology is what religious and priests and those entrusted to them need. Thus, it is necessary to train our seminary and formation staff to present

their material in a concrete way, applied to concrete reality, in a way that students can use it for their personal growth and proclaiming the Good News.

Personal formation

It is important for those who come into formation that they experience personal spiritual renewal or conversion. Thus, our teaching needs to be presented in such a way that it nourishes the students, candidates and novices spiritually and psychologically. They need to undergo a spiritual psychological growth experience. There are, however, few centres that provide this opportunity of a deeper personal conversion on a psycho-spiritual basis. Some are mainly spiritual and neglect the psychological dimension. Others are mainly or exclusively psychological and neglect the spiritual dimension. Both are important for a holistic formation. At the Institute of St. Anselm, we have struggled to find the right balance for this integration of psychology and spirituality. Several years ago, 18 Indian bishops followed a month's course justifying their coming to Europe by acknowledging the fact that their courses in India are either spiritual or psychological. "Here," they said, "we find the integration of the two in an experiential way."

The integration of psychology and spirituality needs to be done in an experiential way by accompanying students on their psycho-spiritual journey. Students, candidates and novices need to go through this process of psycho-spiritual integration by accompaniment. Who trains the trainers? Archbishop Madardo Mazombe from Zambia, after the synod on priestly formation, came to the Institute of St. Anselm to follow a seven weeks' course. Several times he mentioned to me: "Often during the synod we asked who will train the trainers. You are doing it here at the Institute." Yes, we are doing it at the Institute. However, a one- year course is not enough for this delicate work of formation.

Duration of formation of the formator

From my experience over fifty years, I am convinced that a three years training and formation of the formator would prepare them and equip them much better to help those entrusted to them in their psycho-spiritual integration and growth. This was my original plan when I set up the Institute of St. Anselm. However, I was aware that most congregations and dioceses would not allow their personnel to spend more than one year to prepare them for this most important work. Now, fifty years on, I propose that three years preparation is needed for most persons who go into formation to have the security, integration, confidence, skills, awareness, spirituality which they need as formators.

The first year helps them to acquire self-awareness and the necessary skills for helping professions or formation. Many people are passive aggressive and often completely unaware of this fact. Thus, they can do much damage to other people without ever realising it and being able to take responsibility for their behaviour. For priests and religious this will no longer be tolerated by society in the future. Thus, in our formation we need to help students to become much more self-aware of the process which is going on in themselves and how they relate and communicate with people. I could give many illustrations about parish priests' behaviour towards parishioners and parishioners reactions to them. "Father, our parish priest never greets us. It would be so nice if only he would say 'Good Morning'. I know he is shy." "Our parish priest is a good builder, but don't contradict him. He does not take it lightly."

In the second year they will consolidate what they have learned in the first year and try to apply it in supervised accompaniment. In addition, they familiarise themselves more with group work. After many weeks of hard work, they become confident to accompany people and to run growth groups. For some people this takes a whole year, for others several months. When they become a novice mistress or a rector of a seminary, they need to have a

certain security, otherwise the strain becomes too much for them. Obviously, individuals differ greatly.

The focus in the third year is the integration of psychology and spirituality. Part of the training exists in integrating psychology and spirituality. When they accompany people, they need to be aware that the accompaniment needs to happen on both levels- the spiritual and psychological. To know when to move into the spiritual and when to move into the psychological level is a fine art and takes time to learn. Both levels need dealing with in formation. There are many psychological obstacles which block spiritual development. Pure psychological development can become directionless without the spiritual dimension. It will be deprived of its spiritual resources and ultimate values. Therefore, we need the integration of both. Pure spirituality often becomes a form of spiritualising everything people encounter in their lives without working it through. However, after years of spiritualising things the cost to health and growth is enormous. There may be much repressed anger or sadness, lack of zeal and enthusiasm. There may be a feeling of not being fulfilled and happy. They may be terribly disappointed with God to whom they gave their lives expecting some happiness and fulfilment in return. Instead of that they feel “I am in the wrong place. Did I make a mistake by becoming a priest or a religious?”

This integration of psychology and spirituality needs to happen in an experiential way by accompaniment on both levels. To become efficient in accompanying students and novices, formators need much time. However, if the formator is able to accompany people well, the diocese or congregation may get a hundredfold return in more priests or religious and more fulfilled and happier people. Thus, it is worthwhile to experiment with this venture of the Institute of St. Anselm.

Formation for the Religious and Priests of Today

I would like to thank Fr. Len Kofler for inviting me to speak to all the participants of this important and significant encounter, organised by the Institute of St. Anselm.

I accepted the invitation willingly because I have had the privilege of knowing and deeply appreciating all the sterling work this Institute is performing in the field of holistic formation for religious and priests, particularly in the area of human and spiritual formation. They are not only enriched in their own personal life by what they receive here but they are then also able to adequately prepare themselves in becoming formators, leaders and evangelisers.

From this point of view, it seems to me that the Institute is answering well to what the Church, Religious Orders, Congregations and Institutes are requesting as regards the formation of their members and also as regards the preparation of their formators. An intervention by Pope Francis addressed to the Minor Franciscan Conventuals on Monday, 17th June 2019 clearly outlines these expectations and their modality within the present context.

“**An adequate formation is necessary**, a *formative journey* which helps brothers to conform themselves more fully to Christ, a *holistic formation* which touches and includes all the dimensions of a person. It has to be a *personal and permanent formation* because is a way of life. It is to be a *formation of the heart* which will change our mode of thinking, feeling and behaving. It is to be a *formation towards fidelity*, well aware that nowadays we live in a transitory culture where ‘the forever’ is very difficult to come by and permanent choices are no longer in fashion. As such, in this context, **well grounded formators** are required. *They are to be experts in listening and in knowing the path which leads to God, capable in accompanying others on this path* (cf. St. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation on Consecrated Life n.

65 -66). *They are also to be formators who are able to discern and to accompany others. Only in this way will we then be able to partly halt the haemorrhage of abandonment which has grasped hold of priestly and Consecrated Life.*”

Evidently, it is no longer a question of principles which are clear in their objectives in all documents on formation and in the Ratios of various Institutes but rather a know-how as to actually how to help formation become transformation and not only information so that in so doing, it may not only instruct but also build up.

It is still clear that formation is aimed at moulding the person in such a way as to help him / her gradually conform more to Christ by assuming his thoughts (1 Cor. 2, 16) and his feelings (Fil. 2, 5). This is ultimately the result of following Him and imitating Him. In this delicate and important task of the formation of Christ's disciple, one can rightly affirm that the only Formator is the Holy Spirit. Those who collaborate with Him are called to assume His way of acting by means of a journey which does not impinge on one's freedom in any way, which passes through the heart and which aims towards those motivations which can liberate the best capabilities within each person. However, they also must have the capability of identifying and dealing with negative experiences which can be traced back to the maternal womb or to one's experience at birth or in one's infancy. They are to be able to identify those possible wounds which hamper or condition the human and spiritual growth of the individual even to the point of leading him / her to a crisis in his / her project of life, that is, in his / her fidelity to God. They are to help the person in question to know himself / herself and to understand why he / she has certain attitudes and reacts in the way he / she does.

This is exactly what the staff and team at St. Anselm works upon and knows how to do so well, that is, to assist the person to get to know himself / herself, his / her emotions (fears, desires, anger, violence etc) and the reason behind certain types of behaviour and

reactions. In so doing, the person learns how to positively integrate them in such a manner as to help one's life become more whole, serene, good and happy.

Listening to the participants and reading some of the written testimonies left by persons who have either done part or the entire program offered, I have remained truly struck by the very positive opinion of the experience done. I have also remained impressed by the benefits which the course also had within the Institutes to which the participants belong to, which afterwards offer to collaborate within the field of formation, both initial and ongoing.

This is why nowadays many congregations recommend psychological help during the prenovitiate stage so as to get to know their candidates better. This has become even more necessary when one bears in mind that the new generation of Religious come from a deeply fragmented culture, sometimes even beginning from their own family of origin. Therefore, one's background formation, which previously was of great importance because almost by natural osmosis, it passed on certain values, attitudes, ways of relating etc, alas nowadays this is not always the case. Hence, a personal and a personalised formation process has decisively become very important. It has been two generations since the chain of transmission of values passed on by the family, which were then further developed at school and the Church and which society also supported, has been severed. The dramatic consequence of this scenario is the development of more fragile persons who have many parts within themselves which need integration.

We cannot forget the fact that the youths who come to knock on our doors **today**, are **youths of today** with all their qualities and virtues but also with their deficiencies and defects.

There is an ecclesial document on formation which although not recent, is still magnificent. It goes back to 1990 and is still very meaningful in many aspects, perhaps even more so today. It obviously

refers to Religious Life in general rather than to Consecrated Life. What I am referring to is the document *Potissimum Institutioni*.

n. 86 “Young people are “the hope of the Church.”(175) She has “so much to talk about with youth, and youth have so much to share with the Church.”(176) Although there are adult candidates to the religious life, the majority of candidates today are between eighteen and twenty-five years old. To the degree that they have been influenced by what is conveniently called “modernity,” it seems that some of their common traits can be identified with sufficient accuracy. The portrait reflects a northern and western model, but this model is tending to become universal in its strengths and weaknesses, and each culture will add touches to it that are required by its own uniqueness...”

n. 87. “The sensitivity of young people profoundly affects their perception of the values of justice, non-violence, and peace. Their hearts are disposed to fellowship, friendship, and solidarity. They are greatly moved by causes that relate to the quality of life and the conservation of nature.”(177) Likewise, they have a thirst for freedom and authenticity. Generally, and at times ardently, they aspire toward a better world; there is no lack of those who are engaged in political, social, cultural, and charitable associations in order to contribute to the betterment of humanity. If they have not been corrupted by totalitarian ideologies, they are for the most part keenly interested in the liberation of humanity from racism, underdevelopment, war, and injustices. This attitude is not always -- at times is far from being -- motivated by religious, philosophical, or political principles, but the sincerity of these youth and the depth of their generosity cannot be denied. Among youth may be found some who are marked by profound religious sentiment, but this sentiment itself needs to be evangelized. Finally, there are some, and these are not necessarily in the minority, who lead a sufficiently exemplary Christian life and are courageously engaged in the apostolate, already experiencing what it means to “follow Jesus Christ more closely.”

n. 88. "Though this is so, their doctrinal and ethical frames of reference tend to be relative, and to such an extent that they do not always know very well if there are solid points of reference for attaining the truth about humanity, the world, and things. The lack of the teaching of philosophy in schools is frequently a reason for this. Young people hesitate to say who they are and what they are called to become. If they have some conviction about the existence of good and evil, the meaning of these words seems to be at odds with respect to what it was for preceding generations. There is frequently a gap between the level of their secular knowledge, which can be highly specialized at times, and that of their psychological growth and their Christian life. Not all have had a happy experience within their family, considering the crises which have afflicted this institution, either where the culture has not been deeply influenced by Christianity, where the culture is of a post-Christian type where there is an urgent need of a new evangelization, or even where the culture has long been evangelized. They learn much through images, and the present system of education encourages this at times, but they read less. It thus happens that their culture is characterized by a nearly total absence of an historical dimension, as if our world began today. They have not been spared by consumerism, with the deceptions which it begets. Succeeding, at times with difficulty, in finding their place in the world, some let themselves be seduced by violence, drugs, and eroticism. It is becoming less and less rare to find young people among the candidates for religious life who have had unhappy experiences in this last domain."

n. 89. "One thus has an indication of the problems which the variety and complexity of this human background poses for vocation promotion and also for formation. It is the discernment of vocations that is the concern here. Above all, in certain countries, some candidates for the religious life present themselves because of a more or less conscious search for social gain and future security; others look upon the religious life as an ideal place for an ideological

struggle for justice. Finally, there are others of a more conservative nature who look upon the religious life as if it were a place for saving their faith in a world which they regard as being hostile and corrupt. These motives represent the reverse side of a number of values, but they need to be corrected and purified.

In the so-called developed countries, there is perhaps above all a need of promoting a human and spiritual balance based on renunciation, lasting fidelity, calm and enduring generosity, authentic joy and love. Here, then, is a demanding but necessary program for those religious who are charged with vocation promotion and with formation.”

Here we have a precious analysis with many enriching elements, even though it is not systematic and even less etiological in its layout because it does not seek out the causes and furthermore, it reflects the situation of more than thirty years ago (1990). It also ignores a not yet so evident issue ever present in the field of formation. I am here referring to the exponential growth of the means of social communication, especially as regards possessing one's own personal mobile phone, with all the immense implications this brings with it.

Without any doubt, it would be possible to continue to analyze the “phenomenology of initial formation today”, particularly as regards the candidates for Religious Life. However, it would not be right to solely delve deeper in the qualities and limitations of the new generation of Religious candidates in their first formative years and in their living out their vocation... It is just as necessary to tackle the issue of the persons who are to accompany them – the **formators**.

Analogically, as regards to what has been said above, there is a precious ecclesial document addressed to the persons who are dedicated to accompany Religious candidates in their initial formation stage. Although this document too was written some

years ago, actually it is dated 4th November 1993, feast of St. Charles Borromeo and addressed specifically to the Seminary formators, it can undoubtedly be found useful to all formators. It is entitled "*Guidelines for the Preparation of Formators in Seminaries*". In listing the main characteristics which those who dedicate themselves to the formation of priests and religious should have, it quotes seven:

- *A spirit of faith*
- *A pastoral awareness*
- *A spirit of communion*
- *Human maturity and psychological balance*
- *Clear and mature capacity to love*
- *A capability to listen, dialogue and communicate*
- *Positive and critical awareness of the present culture*

These seven elements are then obviously amplified, albeit briefly, but in a very enriching manner. I will simply choose one, among others, as an example. With reference to the "*clear and mature capacity to love*" it affirms: "He / she does not refuse gratitude, appreciation or affectivity but lives them without any strings attached and without even conditioning his / her availability to serve. Whoever is actually mature, will never tie others to himself / herself. On the contrary, he / she will be able to cultivate in others an oblation affectivity centered and based on the love received from God in Jesus Christ. It always has to be in definitive reference to Him." (n. 35)

It is certainly not an exhaustive list. In fact, I would add a fundamental element for every person dedicated to formation within the Church: **the capability to discern authentically and in a mature way**, which is never limited in adopting 'courses of action' which can even lead to hamper freedom.

Well, in this demanding field of formation and in the qualification of formators, the *Institute of St. Anselm* is a point of reference which deserves to be further known, appreciated and sustained.

It is enough to look at the present courses, in spite that by going back to the original ideas of training leaders and formators, the number of courses has been considerably reduced.

- *Diploma in Human Development, Leadership, Formation and Community Building*: this course is meant for bishops, major superiors, parish priests, community and group leaders, rectors of seminaries, members of formation teams, pastoral workers ,,,, and it can be considered a foundation course for all professional training. Students learn to improve their helping skills.
- *Sabbatical Course*: similar to the programme of the Diploma in Human Development, Leadership, Formation and Community Buildingm, except for the skills training, the course last six months and is meant for ex-superiors general, ex-provincials, priests and religious who need more time for reflexion on their work and rest before taking on another assignment. They need to learn to let go of their old job, before they are ready to start another one
- *Certificate in Community and Pastoral Leadership*: a seven week Summer Course, it is an intensive course with people from all over the world to study on this course.
- *Diploma in Integrative Psychospiritual Growth Facilitation of Groups*: for a small group of the second year, it is run on an apprenticeship-based system where trainees work alongside senior members of staff as co-facilitators.
- *Diploma in Transformational Pastoral and Community Leadership and Individual Growth Facilitation*: offered in

the third year of the diploma course and whose purpose is to prepare competent leaders and formators who can foster growth in those entrusted to their care.

- *EQ Body-Work Therapy*: a two year's training course for body-work therapists, which deals with the repressed emotions which will be released through this form of therapy.

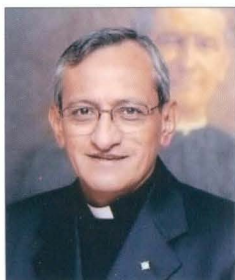
As you can see, it is an experience we cannot let die! Institute of Saint Anselm needs all our support to continue to live and be a great gift for the formation of formators and religious leaders!

Rome, 1st May 2022

Fr. Pascual Chávez, SDB

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Fr. Pascual Chávez

Rector Major of the Salesians 2002 to 2014

Fr. Chávez is a Mexican, born in Real de Catorce (San Luis de Potosí), a mining area in the heart of northern Mexico, on 19 December 1947. On 8 December 1973, he was ordained a priest. From 1975 to 1977 he studied in Rome at the Biblical Institute where he obtained a licentiate in Sacred Scripture. From 1989 to 1994 he was

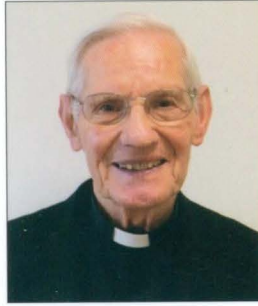
the Provincial of the same province that included all of northern Mexico as far as the United States. In 1995 he began his doctorate in Biblical Theology and lived in Madrid-Carabanchel where he remained until he obtained his degree at the Pontifical University of Salamanca (Spain). He has served as the Regional Councillor for the Interamerica region, and participated in many General Chapters in various capacities. He speaks several international languages fluently and after his term as the Rector Major, he dedicates his time to preaching of retreats and in spiritual animation.

“I have had the privilege of knowing and deeply appreciating all the sterling work this Institute is performing in the field of holistic formation for religious and priests, particularly in the area of human and spiritual formation. They are not only enriched in their own personal life by what they receive here but they are then also able to adequately prepare themselves in becoming formators, leaders and evangelisers.”

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“In this demanding field of formation and in the qualification of formators, the Institute of St Anselm is a point of reference which deserves to be further known, appreciated and sustained.”



Fr. Len Kofler MHM D.Soc., D.D., PhD.

Supervisor, Accredited Psychotherapist, Group
Psychotherapist, Trainer of Supervisors and Accompaniers.

Father Len Kofler is Austrian by birth and was ordained as a Mill Hill priest in 1959. He has been a counsellor for 40 years caring for clients with many different problems. In 1985 he was seconded to Cardinal Basil Hume OSB, by his General Superior, to found the Institute of St Anselm in England where priests, religious and lay people came to train to be leaders and formators. In 2018 after 33 years in the UK the Institute of St Anselm moved to Ciampino Rome. The Institute is accredited by ASIC and the programmes are validated by NCFE in the UK.

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