

FOUNDATIONS

HUMAN FORMATION FOR SEMINARIES

Leader Guide

sliconnect

Resources for Healthy Life & Ministry

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About Foundations

Foundations is a comprehensive, four-year human formation curriculum delivered online.

Grounded in Church teaching, Foundations helps seminarians cultivate the emotional, psychological and interpersonal skills they need to thrive in ministry.

Foundations can be used as a stand-alone program or incorporated into a seminary's existing human formation program.

Included are over 30 video courses, organized into four units. The content is designed by experts in human formation who have worked with priests and religious at all stages of ministry.

The faculty includes priest-psychologists and licensed counselors who have taught at seminaries around the world.

Program Features

Foundations subscriptions include:

- 12 months of unlimited access to all program content
- Administrator dashboard to manage users and track participation
- Professional staff support for consultation and implementation.

"The whole work of
priestly formation
would be deprived
of its necessary
foundation if it
lacked a suitable
human formation."

- *Pastores Dabo Vobis*

Using Foundations

Foundations is designed as a comprehensive four-year curriculum built on a continuum of knowledge. Program units also can stand alone, allowing seminaries and houses of formation to incorporate content into existing human formation programs.

Examples of how to use Foundations:

- Assign courses to seminarians to watch independently
- Watch or discuss key topics and content in small group settings
- Project videos onscreen in a classroom setting
- Incorporate content from the videos into live faculty lectures
- Use the content to facilitate discussion among faculty about human formation issues affecting seminary life

Each Foundations course includes:

- Overview
- Learning outcomes
- Video lecture (approximately one hour each)
- Downloadable handouts
- Reflection questions
- Course completion tracking
- Administrator dashboard to manage users and track participation

Foundations Program Overview

UNIT 1: SEMINARY FORMATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

	Course	Instructor
1	Formation of Candidates for the Priesthood: the Role of Human Development (2 courses)	Rev. Gerard Fieldhouse-Byrne, D.Min., MSW
2	Our First Vocation: Called to Be Human	Rev. Gerard Fieldhouse-Byrne, D.Min., MSW
3	Using Candidate Assessment Reports in Seminary Formation	Rev. David Songy, O.F.M.Cap., S.T.D., Psy.D.
4	Who Am I: Family of Origin and Formation	Sr. Cáit O'Dwyer, RSM, Ph.D.
5	Developing a Healthy Sense of Self	Br. John Mark Falkenhain, OSB, Ph.D.
6	Growing in Celibate Chastity: The Foundations	Rev. Gerard Fieldhouse-Byrne, D.Min., MSW
7	Checking the Fit: Formation as Ongoing Discernment	Br. John Mark Falkenhain, OSB, Ph.D.
8	Healthy Living in the Seminary Community: Tools for the Journey	Rev. David Songy, O.F.M.Cap., S.T.D., Psy.D.

UNIT 2: SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND EMOTIONAL INTEGRATION

	Course	Instructor
1	Emotional Intelligence: Affective Maturity and Ongoing Development	Michael A. Day, Psy.D.
2	Stress Management and Healthy Ministry	Stephen Carroll, Ph.D., LCPC
3	Psychological and Spiritual Integration	Br. John Mark Falkenhain, OSB, Ph.D.
4	Growing in Celibate Chastity: Chaste Living in a Ministerial Environment	Rev. Msgr. Stephen J. Rossetti, D.Min., Ph.D.
5	Self Care in Seminary Life	Rev. Quinn Conners, O.Carm., Ph.D.
6	Spiritual Direction and Healthy Ministry	Rev. Joseph Chalmers, O.Carm.
7	Masculinity, Spiritual Fatherhood and Ministry	Rev. Msgr. Stephen J. Rossetti, D.Min., Ph.D.
8	Ministry in the Digital Age: Healthy Social Media and Internet Use	Emily R. Cash, Psy.D.

UNIT 3: RELATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS: GOD, CHURCH AND OTHERS

	Course	Instructor
1	Boundaries and their Impact on Ministerial Effectiveness	Emily R. Cash, Psy.D.
2	Healthy Intimacy: Relationships for Sustaining Life and Ministry	Emily R. Cash, Psy.D.
3	Working with Challenging Personalities	Emily R. Cash, Psy.D.
4	Effective Communication Strategies	Emily R. Cash, Psy.D.
5	Healthy Relationships with Prelates, Presbyterates and Parishioners	Rev. David Songy, O.F.M.Cap., S.T.D., Psy.D.
6	Growing in Celibate Chastity: Theology of the Body	Rev. David Songy, O.F.M.Cap., S.T.D., Psy.D.

UNIT 4: MINISTERIAL EFFECTIVENESS

	Course	Instructor
1	Mental Health Issues in a Parish Setting: Priests and Parishioners	Rev. Quinn Conners, O.Carm., Ph.D.
2	Why Leaders Fail: Narcissism vs. Service	Rev. Msgr. Stephen J. Rossetti, D.Min., Ph.D.
3	What Makes a Happy Priest	Rev. Msgr. Stephen J. Rossetti, D.Min., Ph.D.
4	Balancing Self-Care with Ministry Demands: Avoiding Burnout	Rev. James Gordon, Ph.D.
5	Ongoing Spiritual Direction and Creating a Core Group for Support	Rev. David Songy, O.F.M.Cap., S.T.D., Psy.D.
6	Growing in Celibate Chastity: Forming Healthy Chaste Relationships	Rev. Msgr. Stephen J. Rossetti, D.Min., Ph.D.
7	Developing a Spirituality of Ministry	Rev. David Songy, O.F.M.Cap., S.T.D., Psy.D.
8	Transitioning from Seminary to Full-time Ministry	Rev. Neil Ritchie, MBACP

Course Descriptions

UNIT ONE: SEMINARY FORMATION & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

1. Formation of Candidates for the Priesthood: The Role of Human Development *(two courses)*

Overview

This lecture examines the importance of human development in the context of formation for priesthood. The presenter provides an overview of the various Church documents and guidelines on formation with a focus on *Pastores Dabo Vobis*.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learn how our current cultural context affects initial and ongoing formation
2. Explore the specific emphasis on human formation and affective maturity as set forth in *Pastores Dabo Vobis* and other Church formation documents
3. Discover how human formation can lead to deeper spiritual formation and true personal freedom

Reflection Questions

1. Do I have a healthy awareness of my own personal vulnerabilities?
2. How is engaging in the community life of the seminary a training ground for future ministry? What relational skills will I take with me?
3. How can I grow as a person as a result of the formation experience?

2. Our First Vocation: Called to Be Human

Overview

This presentation reviews the foundations of our humanity through the theological and anthropological lens of Catholic teaching. The presenter examines the vocation to priestly life and ministry growing from and building on the foundations of our personal development, social and family origins, and human sexuality.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore the meaning of being “fully human” in one’s vocation
2. Learn how to fulfill basic human needs through priestly life
3. Discover how cultivating a relationship with God supports all the other relationships necessary for healthy celibacy and successful ministry

Reflection Questions

1. Do I consider the call to priesthood central to my personal identity?
2. Would I characterize my relationship with God as mature? Do I relate to Him as an adult?
3. What does it mean to me to be fully human in my vocation?

3. Using Candidate Assessment Reports in Seminary Formation

Overview

This course helps the seminarian understand and apply psychological assessment recommendations to the early years of formation in seminary. The psychological report is emphasized as a tool for the seminarian and formation staff in support of ongoing human and spiritual development.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore the components of a candidate assessment report
2. Identify discussion points arising from an assessment
3. Learn how to utilize assessment recommendations

Reflection Questions

1. How would I describe my experience of the psychological evaluation process?
2. What are some of the aspects of the evaluation experience that stood out to me?
3. Were there any recommendations or discussion points from the evaluation that may need attention during initial formation? After?

4. Who Am I: Family of Origin & Formation

Overview

This lecture helps the seminarian understand the impact of his family of origin on personal development. Because the experience of seminary living is fundamentally influenced by this foundation, understanding his family of origin will help the seminarian understand how to live in community, better manage relationships with authority figures, and identify areas for future growth and development.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore the impact of family of origin on our relationships
2. Discover how parenting styles influence our attitudes and behaviors
3. Identify ways to integrate this self-knowledge into a healthy formation process

Reflection Questions

1. How would I describe how my family members interact – very close relationships, or more disengaged?
2. How does the family dynamic I grew up in affect my vocation?
3. What is my overall attitude toward my childhood and upbringing?

5. Developing a Healthy Sense of Self

Overview

The gift of self is essential to a fulfilling, sustainable vocation. Cultivating a healthy sense of self can help clear the way for giving oneself fully to ministry. Explore the process of developing self-awareness and learn ways to engage in an intentional journey of realization of self in relation to God and others.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore the foundations of self-knowledge as set forth in priestly formation documents
2. Identify red flags for cultivation of an unhealthy sense of self
3. Learn skills for ongoing realization of self in a personal and ministry setting

Reflection Questions

1. How would I describe my current level of self-knowledge?
2. How do I see myself in relation to others in terms of power and authority?
3. Are there people in my life that I would consider models for healthy self-knowledge?

6. Growing in Celibate Chastity: The Foundations

Overview

Celibate chastity is a life-giving, free choice for priests. This course explores the foundations of celibate chastity in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and other Church documents. The presenter offers practical ways to support this chosen way of life so the seminarian may embrace this vibrant way of growing as a man and minister of the Church.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore the vocation to chastity as outlined in the Catechism of the Catholic Church
2. Identify the key components of healthy psychosexual development
3. Learn how to develop the necessary qualities for a lifelong commitment to celibate living

Reflection Questions

1. What does the commitment to celibacy mean to me from a theological perspective?
2. Are there people in my life that are good examples of healthy, lifelong celibacy?
3. What does the concept of self-mastery mean to me?

7. Checking the Fit: Formation as Ongoing Discernment

Overview

The Church's documents on priestly formation emphasize self-knowledge and self-acceptance as important outcomes of the human formation process. Participants will learn to recognize the specific forums within seminary life in which self-knowledge and self-acceptance are promoted and explore the implications of self-knowledge for both ongoing discernment and future ministry.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore how discernment is an ongoing process and intimately linked to formation
2. Identify ways human formation helps us learn to live with unresolved challenges and limitations encountered in daily ministry

Reflection Questions

1. What specific thing have I learned about myself as a result of seminary formation so far? How has that informed my ongoing discernment of priesthood?
2. In what relationships (e.g., spiritual direction, friendships, formation directors, counseling) do I find myself growing most in knowledge of myself?
3. What aspect of my personality do I struggle most to accept? What hinders my self-acceptance?

8. Healthy Living in the Seminary Community: Tools for the Journey

Overview

There are unique challenges to living and growing in a seminary community. This course explores the interpersonal dynamics within a house of formation and the ways the seminarian might expect to interact with other seminarians and staff. The presenter offers tools to support a healthy journey of self-discovery and pastoral development within the seminary environment.

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify how self-discovery is enriched by community life
2. Explore how community life supports each pillar of formation
3. Learn tools for living and growing within a community

Reflection Questions

1. What does friendship mean to me? Do I have friendships that have grown and changed over time?
2. What can I learn about myself through living in community?
3. What do I like about living in community? Are there aspects that make me uncomfortable?

Unit Two: Self-Knowledge & Emotional Integration

1. Emotional Intelligence: Affective Maturity & Ongoing Development

Overview

This presentation introduces the concept of emotional intelligence and how it supports the development of affective maturity and individual resilience, which are keys to effective and satisfying ministry.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore the concepts of affective maturity and emotional intelligence in the context of ongoing human formation
2. Identify key skills in emotional intelligence
3. Learn specific ways to increase emotional intelligence and resilience

Reflection Questions

1. How do I typically respond to emotional reactions from others?
2. How well do I understand and recognize my own emotional changes?
3. How would I characterize my ability to bounce back from adversity? Is this an area of strength or weakness?

2. Stress Management & Healthy Ministry

Overview

We all develop coping skills to deal with stress – both healthy and unhealthy. This presentation helps seminarians identify stress management skills they currently use and discern which are potentially hazardous to personal health or relationships. The presenter offers practical tools for handling periods of stress and crisis in healthier, more adaptive ways.

Learning Outcomes

1. Define different types of stress and explore current research on stress in ministry
2. Learn the warning signs of acute stress
3. Identify spiritually integrated stress management strategies

Reflection Questions

1. What major change(s) have I experienced in the past year? How did I respond to the stress of that change?
2. What are some of the everyday occurrences that I find stressful?
3. Do I have any experiences in my past that might affect how I respond to stress?

3. Psychological & Spiritual Integration

Overview

The Church's primary formation documents promote a strong, healthy relationship between the spiritual and psychological dimensions of our identities as Christians. This presentation explores how the Church characterizes the connection between spirituality and psychology and suggests ways to distinguish between and address spiritual versus mental health challenges.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learn how the Church characterizes the role of the psychological in relation to formation
2. Recognize the complementary aspects of our psychological and religious experience
3. Identify ways to distinguish between and address spiritual vs. psychological challenges

Reflection Questions

1. When have I experienced a "coming together" of my psychological (e.g., emotional, behavioral) and spiritual or religious experience?
2. Have I ever experienced confusion over whether something is more of a psychological versus a spiritual challenge in my life?
3. What are the resources for spiritual and emotional support currently available to me?

4. Growing in Celibate Chastity: Chaste Living in a Ministerial Environment

Overview

There are graces and challenges in developing chaste, life-giving relationships in the midst of a busy ministry. The presenter emphasizes the importance of developing healthy boundaries that foster positive relationships and keep out unhealthy influences. Guidelines for judging the appropriateness of priestly relationships are included.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore the Christian understanding of human sexuality
2. Identify the challenges of living a chaste life, particularly given current cultural norms
3. Learn the importance of and obstacles to establishing healthy boundaries in ministry

Reflection Questions

1. Do I have a network of healthy relationships in my life at this time? Describe those relationships.
2. What are my personal strengths and challenges in developing these relationships?
3. What will be my challenges to maintaining these relationships in full-time ministry?

5. Self Care in Seminary Life

Overview

This lecture encourages taking mental, physical and spiritual health seriously during seminary formation. Identify legitimate self-care needs and practical ways to facilitate them in a seminary setting to support ongoing discernment and eventual priestly life and ministry.

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the various stressors typical in seminary life
2. Reflect on current self-care behaviors
3. Discover practical ways to structure self-care into a busy ministry

Reflection Questions

1. What was my experience doing this assessment?
2. What did I learn about myself?
3. What aspect(s) of healthy self-care is most challenging for me?

6. Spiritual Direction & Healthy Ministry

Overview

Ongoing spiritual direction is an essential part of healthy ministry. This lecture offers a holistic approach to spiritual direction and explores how healthy spirituality fits into the larger picture of growth and maturity as a priest and as a person. Strategies for engaging effectively in a spiritual direction relationship are included.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore how spiritual direction supports healthy ministry
2. Learn the characteristics of a good spiritual director
3. Identify the warning signs of an unhealthy spiritual direction relationship

Reflection Questions

1. How do I interact with my current spiritual director?
2. Are there areas of my spiritual life that need work?
3. What are my short-term goals for spiritual formation? Long term?

7. Masculinity, Spiritual Fatherhood & Ministry

Overview

Priests should work towards developing a fully integrated gender identity characterized by strength and assertiveness as well as compassion and nurturing. Giving of ourselves in service to others helps us exercise a generative, spiritual fatherhood. This lecture affirms masculine identity and offers ways to integrate and express it in a positive, life-giving way.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore ministry in context of masculine and feminine identity
2. Identify the characteristics of generative, spiritual fatherhood
3. Learn ways to integrate masculine and feminine attributes into healthy, balanced ministry

Reflection Questions

1. In what ways do I accept my masculine identity and integrate it into my ministry?
2. What are my needed areas of growth in accepting and integrating my masculine identity?
3. How do I, or not, nurture others as a spiritual father? How could I improve?

8. Ministry in the Digital Age: Healthy Social Media & Internet Use

Overview

Technology has a significant impact on daily ministry. Explore the personal and cultural challenges of misusing the Internet and social media and learn practical suggestions for healthy Internet use.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore what an “online presence” means in ministry today
2. Learn about your personal technology style and how that affects pastoral and personal relationships
3. Identify strategies for setting healthy boundaries around the use of technology

Reflection Questions

1. How does my current use of technology positively and negatively impact my relationships?
2. What is my “online presence?” Is there anything I would change about how I am perceived online?
3. Are there times I have struggled with technology-related boundaries?

Unit Three: Relational Effectiveness: God, Church & Others

1. Boundaries & Their Impact on Ministerial Effectiveness

Overview

The implementation of healthy boundaries in ministerial settings is critical for fostering a healthy work environment and developing effective relationships with staff members and parishioners. Explore the various relationships typical in priestly life and identify the boundaries that should be in place to ensure personal and professional effectiveness.

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify characteristics of different types of boundaries and relational patterns
2. Learn strategies for working with individuals with different types of relational styles
3. Identify ways to model healthy boundaries in daily ministry

Reflection Questions

1. How should I respond when I feel like someone is constantly invading my personal space? How can I respond in a way that is caring but clear and direct?
2. If I consistently feel uncomfortable around a parishioner, how do I handle that? What can I do to make the situation better?
3. Have I ever felt attracted to someone I work with or minister to? Do I feel equipped to handle it if that does happen?

2. Healthy Intimacy: Relationships for Sustaining Life & Ministry

Overview

Priests are called to balance their own needs for connection and relationship with the needs of those they serve. The presenter identifies the types of intimate relationships priests should strive for and explores the interpersonal and intrapersonal benefits of these connections.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore the types of healthy intimate relationships
2. Learn the interpersonal and intrapersonal benefits of intimacy
3. Develop skills for maintaining healthy relationships

Reflection Questions

1. What is my definition of an intimate relationship? Do I have that kind of connection with anyone?
2. Are there times when I have experienced false or unhealthy intimacy with someone?
3. What are my expectations for my relationship with a close friend versus my expectations for a relationship with a close family member?

3. Working With Challenging Personalities

Overview

Understanding how to identify the common characteristics of challenging personalities and learning how to effectively work with these individuals is imperative for ministry leaders. This lecture explores various types of personality disorders, identifies key characteristics of these personalities and offers practical strategies for navigating challenging personalities while maintaining self-care and healthy boundaries.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learn how to identify characteristics of various personality disorders
2. Explore the ways personality disorders manifest themselves in relationships
3. Identify practical strategies for navigating complicated relationships

Reflection Questions

1. Why is it difficult for a person with a personality disorder to change his/her behavior?
2. What are the treatment options for individuals with personality disorders?
3. How do I currently respond to people with challenging personalities? Are there things I could change about my responses?

4. Effective Communication Strategies

Overview

There are many communication styles, and some are more effective than others in a ministry setting. Discover your personal communication style, look critically at communication strengths and vulnerabilities, and identify ways to improve communication with those you serve.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore different communication styles
2. Learn the benefits of candor in a ministry setting
3. Identify strategies for communicating effectively

Reflection Questions

1. What is my personal communication style?
2. Am I facing difficult issues right now that would benefit from candid dialogue?
3. What are my communication strengths? What needs improvement?

5. Healthy Relationships With Prelates, Presbyterate & Parishioners

Overview

Healthy relationships are built on a foundation of self-esteem, self-knowledge and openness to ongoing formation. This lecture explores the need for the priest to relate well to others and examines the challenges of the pastoral and authoritative relationships that are essential aspects of priestly life.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore why healthy priestly relationships are essential
2. Identify three important forms of priestly relationships
3. Learn principles for developing healthy relationships

Reflection Questions

1. How easy or hard is it for me to make friends? Have I ever had an unhealthy friendship?
2. How would I characterize my relationship with/perception of authority?
3. Who is my closest friend? Do I feel as though my close friends really know me well?

6. Growing in Celibate Chastity: Theology of the Body

Overview

An overview of St. John Paul II's *Theology of the Body* and how it informs the ongoing process of self-discovery and pastoral development. The presenter explores the relationship between human sexuality, relationships and the Christian vocation and encourages us to know ourselves more deeply as we are made in the image and likeness of our creator Father.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore St. John Paul II's *Theology of the Body*
2. Learn how *Theology of the Body* applies to celibacy
3. Identify topics for discussion in spiritual and human formation

Reflection Questions

1. What is my understanding of personal holiness?
2. How do I view my particular call to humility?
3. Is there a connection between the desire to be holy and a call to contribute to the salvation of others?

Unit Four: Ministerial Effectiveness

1. Mental Health Issues in a Parish Setting: Priests & Parishioners

Overview

Priests encounter individuals with various mental health issues in all aspects of ministry. Understanding these issues helps a priest engage with others in an informed and safe way. This lecture offers basic information about various mental illnesses, providing the seminarian with skills to minister effectively to these individuals and to work collaboratively with mental health professionals.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learn the characteristics of some common mental disorders
2. Explore the impact of mental health issues on daily ministry
3. Identify strategies for supporting and referring individuals and families struggling with mental illness

Reflection Questions

1. What is exciting for me as I think about developing skills to help people and families with mental health issues?
2. What challenges do I expect when trying to work with people and families in mental distress?
3. What plans can I put in place to help me acquire sufficient skills to help parishioners suffering from mental health issues?

2. Why Leaders Fail: Narcissism vs. Service

Overview

Understanding how one's personal, legitimate needs interact with a call to serve others is critical to being a healthy, generative leader. Explore how these complex personal and ministerial issues can ultimately inform in a positive way a priest's ability to minister to others.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore the dangers of narcissism and entitlement in leadership
2. Learn healthy ways to counteract the Bathsheba Syndrome
3. Explore the notion of priesthood as a life of service

Reflection Questions

1. Why do some hardworking, dedicated leaders fail?
2. In what ways am I vulnerable to narcissism and in what ways am I dedicated to service?
3. How can I enhance my own self-awareness about this challenge?

3. What Makes a Happy Priest

Overview

This lecture explores the research on the happiness of priests and identifies the factors influencing successful, sustainable ministry. The presenter offers insight into the true joy of priesthood and encourages seminarians to foster the characteristics that will help them find fulfillment in daily ministry.

Learning Outcomes

1. Learn about the psychological and spiritual state of priesthood in the United States
2. Identify factors that can prevent burnout and enhance satisfaction
3. Explore the characteristics of a healthy priestly spiritual life

Reflection Questions

1. In your own words, what are the basic factors that make happy priests?
2. What are your strengths and weaknesses in this area?
3. What is your definition of happiness? Has it changed over time?

4. Balancing Self-Care With Ministry Demands: Avoiding Burnout

Overview

In their efforts to serve, priests often put others' needs before their personal ones. If ministry leaders do not make self-care a priority, however, they are at risk for burnout and engaging in potentially unhealthy behaviors. Identify potential challenges in the transition to full-time ministry and learn skills for prioritizing self-care and preventing burnout.

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify potential challenges in the transition from seminary to full-time ministry
2. Explore warning signs of ministry burnout
3. Learn to balance the practice of self-care with engaged ministry

Reflection Questions

1. Am I aware of my own warning signs (physical, emotional, spiritual) that tell me I am under too much stress?
2. Is there someone in my life that I consider to be a good model for self-care?
3. Do I have a plan in place for self-care once I am in full-time ministry?

5. Ongoing Spiritual Direction & Creating a Core Group for Support

Overview

A variety of relational and spiritual supports are needed to sustain priesthood. This presentation identifies some of those key types of support and offers strategies for developing ongoing relationships, particularly ones that provide encouragement and accountability for healthy, chaste living.

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the need for ongoing spiritual direction
2. Learn how to create a core group of support
3. Consider the need for an ongoing examination of conscience

Reflection Questions

1. What are some of the spiritual and emotional challenges I expect to face in the coming years?
2. Do I have a plan in place to ensure I have a spiritual director after I leave seminary?
3. How have I coped with loneliness in the past? Do I have any unhealthy coping behaviors?

6. Growing in Celibate Chastity: Forming Healthy Chaste Relationships

Overview

In *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, Pope John Paul II called the priest a “man of communion.” This lecture encourages seminarians to become such men of communion by fostering life-giving relationships in their personal and ministerial lives. These relationships are important not only for the priest, but for the entire presbyterate and Church in fostering its essential unity.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore the state of chaste intimacy and relationships in priesthood today
2. Investigate some of the divisions within the priesthood
3. Learn how to move toward a deeper priestly unity and reconciliation

Reflection Questions

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the best, where do I rate myself on having life-giving, chaste relationships? Why?
2. What are some of the obstacles in my life to developing and maintaining these relationships?
3. How do I think I will do in full-time priestly ministry maintaining these relationships? What can I do now to begin to build better relationships?

7. Developing a Spirituality of Ministry

Overview

The Christian call to service is deeply rooted in a personal relationship with God and the Church. This lecture examines how seminary foundations in prayer and spirituality can become the building blocks of a long-term, dynamic support structure for priestly life and ministry.

Learning Outcomes

1. Identify how priestly ministry flows from a solid spiritual life
2. Explore elements of spiritual formation that affect ministry
3. Learn principles of ongoing spiritual formation for ministry

Reflection Questions

1. How can my own sacramental life nourish the sacramental lives of others?
2. How do I perceive my role as a spiritual father?
3. Am I comfortable sharing my personal faith with others?

8. Transitioning from Seminary to Full-Time Ministry

Overview

The transition from seminary life to full-time ministry presents unique challenges. The presenter offers practical strategies for navigating the first few years of priesthood successfully.

Learning Outcomes

1. Explore the potential challenges of the transition to full-time ministry
2. Identify specific support structures for navigating transition
3. Learn ways that transition can make us better ministers

Reflection Questions

1. What major life transitions have I experienced so far? How do I typically respond?
2. What losses might result from my move from seminary into full-time ministry?
What will I have to let go of?
3. Are there support systems in place for me now that might be different or even absent in my new assignment?