

tion and is to have a sufficient quorum of students to guarantee an adequate formational and educational community. Programs are to be based on a pattern of communal and personal prayer, daily Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Hours, study, apostolic service, recreation, and other community activities.

214. If a person has no previous preparation for priesthood in a formation program, the pre-theology program normally will extend over a two-year period. In determining how this standard applies in individual cases, the seminary should examine carefully the background of individual candidates. Because seminarians come with a variety of academic, cultural, personal, and spiritual backgrounds and abilities, pre-theology programs must be flexibly adapted to meet their needs.

II. PRE-THEOLOGY PROGRAM

A. SPIRITUAL FORMATION

215. The program of spiritual formation should follow a well-ordered pattern of personal and communal prayer.¹²³ The daily celebration of the Eucharist is the center of community life. The celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, especially daily Morning and Evening Prayer, is its complement. Rector's conferences, days of recollection, workshops, and retreats complete the programmatic events of the spiritual formation program. All of these elements together comprise facets of a single, coherent, and well-ordered program.

216. Such a program of spiritual formation establishes a tone and creates an atmosphere which help individual candidates to develop their personal prayer life and their spirituality. The aim is to aid candidates to reach the stage where they can profitably participate in priestly formation at the theologate level. Individual spiritual direction will play an important role in the growth of pre-theology students. Spiritual directors should be trained for the work of spiritual direction and be priests of piety and sound judgment.

217. The spiritual formation program should carefully introduce candidates to the Catholic heritage of prayer, devotion, and spiritual practice. Through focused study and the practice of spiritual exercises, the students will be helped to build on the background they bring to the seminary. To the degree possible, the program of spiritual formation should take into account the differing developmental, cultural, and personal needs of students.

218. The program should help candidates to discern their vocation to the priesthood. Through courses, workshops, and rector's conferences, the pre-theology program should make explicit the Church's doctrinal understanding of the ministerial priesthood on which it is based.¹²⁴

219. Intensified periods of prayer and reflection are recommended to aid students to enter fully into the foundational stages of the spiritual life.

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220. The formation of pre-theology students should include a healthy balance of exercise, study, and leisure; pre-theologians should develop discerning habits in regard to reading, television viewing, movie going, and other forms of entertainment.¹²⁵

221. The program of spiritual formation should be under the supervision of the director of spiritual formation of the sponsoring institution.

222. There should be a daily celebration of the Eucharist in which every member of the community ordinarily participates. The laws and prescriptions of approved liturgical books are normative.

223. The Liturgy of the Hours, especially Morning and Evening Prayer, should be celebrated on a daily basis.

224. Conferences, days of recollection, workshops, and retreats should be well organized and contribute to a whole and coherent program of spiritual formation.

225. Each seminarian must meet regularly with a priest spiritual director who is chosen from a list prepared by the director of spiritual formation. These priests must be approved by the rector and appointed by the diocesan bishop.¹²⁶

226. Each institution should have a rule of life that clearly states the expectations of the program for seminarians.

227. There should be regular communal celebrations of the sacrament of penance. Frequent, individual celebration of the sacrament should be available and encouraged.

228. The program should introduce students to devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and the Word of God.

229. The program should introduce students to devotion to the Virgin Mary and the saints. It should also acquaint them with Catholic devotional practices:

230. In the course of the pre-theology program, there should be opportunities for days of recollection and a retreat of approximately one week.

231. The program should include conferences and workshops on the spiritual and practical aspects of formation for celibacy.

232. Seminarians in need of long-term therapy should avail themselves of such assistance before entering a pre-theology program.

233. Pre-theology candidates should be well integrated into the life of the sponsoring institution.

B. INTELLECTUAL FORMATION

234. Central to the academic formation of all pre-theology programs is the study of philosophy.¹²⁷ A philosophy program should be balanced, comprehensive, integrated, and coherent. It should include studies in metaphysics, anthropology, natural theology, epistemology, ethics, and logic. It should also include studies in the history of philosophy treating ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary philosophy. Some treatment of American philosophy or social thought is also helpful for seminarians in understanding the underlying dynamics of contemporary society in the United States. The perennial philosophy of St. Thomas should be given the recognition which Church teaching accords it.¹²⁸

235. The study of undergraduate theology is essential for those who lack adequate catechesis in the faith and whose understanding of Catholic doctrine, customs, and culture is not as comprehensive as it ought to be. The courses offered in the basic teachings of the Church should ensure a knowledge of biblical revelation; the history and the doctrine of the Church; spirituality; Christian ethics; Catholic social teaching; liturgy; and the literature, art, and music of Catholic piety and culture. Candidates should also study the Church's teaching on ecumenism and interfaith relations. Undergraduate theology courses are intended as a preparation for studies in the theologate, not as a replacement for them.

236. Education in the liberal arts, especially foundational language skills, may be an important part of the program. Study of the biblical languages and Latin should be given the emphasis that church teaching accords it.¹²⁹