

A Noble Work

Ratio Nationalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis

for Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands

**Text approved
by the Catholic Bishops Conference
of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands**

**Tuesday 21st September 2021
Feast of St Matthew**

Final Draft of the *Ratio Nationalis*

To aspire to leadership in the Church is to set one's heart on a noble work.

(1 Tim 3:1)

This *Ratio Nationalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* expresses the commitment of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands (CBCPNGSI) to the noble work of priestly formation. Presented with the challenging standards of *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation*, and looking at their own limited resources, both human and financial, the bishops of PNG and SI could have taken refuge in the concession granted right at the beginning, that the new *Ratio Fundamentalis* 'applies in part to those territories within the competence of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples,'¹ and produced a document that was less demanding. But, realising the need of the Church for good pastors, they have renewed their commitment to this great work, they have expanded their vision, and they have dedicated their resources, human and financial, to achieving this great task. This calls for the virtue Thomas names *magnificentia*, which he discusses as closely related to courage. Like courage, it operates in difficult circumstances, and requires a fighting spirit to overcome the obstacles. It is a special form of liberality, and requires its generosity, but also its balance and measure, for the expenditure must be truly focussed on this great task.

This document, therefore, must be received in a magnificent spirit. As a document of the whole episcopal conference, it also asks for solidarity. It applies to diocesan priestly formation programmes across the territory of the conference, to seminaries and theological colleges national, interdiocesan and diocesan, and also applies to priestly formation in any ordinariate or personal prelature that might be erected, and those categories of religious associations and societies of consecrated life mentioned in RF 1. Many of these entities will struggle to find sufficient personnel to meet the RN's standards, and in solidarity, the stronger entities should help the weaker ones through their temporary crises, as well as appealing to the solidarity of the Church universal. But in the same spirit of solidarity, no entity should maintain indefinitely an institute that would significantly undermine these standards: the great work that magnificence intends is not a seminary or a college, which is a means to an end, but the formation of good priests for the service of God's people.

Experience shows the importance of the Senate and Board for Priestly Formation in this regard. As those responsible for each institute review, in the presence of their counterparts from across PNG and SI, its successes and failures in meeting the spirit and norms of the RN, a forum is created where encouragement, advice, and offers of sharing of resources can be made. This can also be an occasion to see if particular sections of the RN are still serving the goal of priestly formation in a changed context. And it will also provide help in discerning when is the time to close or open institutes, to merge or divide them.

It is hoped that the dioceses and institutes will be able to substantially implement this *Ratio* within three years. However, in the light of the report that came after the apostolic visitation of Luis Cardinal Tagle, that noted the marked weaknesses of the seminaries of PNG and the shortage of qualified personnel, each institute should make an initial assessment as to whether it can reasonably hope to implement this *Ratio*, so as to avoid starting a process that will make great demands on the Church with limited prospects of success; as an alternative, they should consider some sort of consolidation, as Tagle recommended. If, after three years, even with what help other dioceses and institutes can reasonably offer, an institute fails to implement this *Ratio* in significant ways, it should seriously consider consolidation, and the same would be the case if at any time an institute significantly fails to meet the standards of this *Ratio* for three years running.

This *Ratio* supersedes the previous *Ratio Nationalis* produced in 1998. Where there is a conflict between this *Ratio* and any previous decisions of the Catholic Bishops Conference (CBC) regarding priestly formation, this *Ratio* has precedence.

Regarding changes to the *Ratio*, the need for approval by Rome reminds us that these should not be

¹ *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation* n. 1, emphasis added. (Hereinafter RF)

made lightly; on the other hand, as the *Ratio* is meant to be responsive to the local circumstances, changes will from time to time be necessary. If, for good reasons, one, many or all formation programmes do not follow certain norms of the RN, then the *Ratio* itself will fall into disrepute.

Normally, these changes should arise from the Senate and Board for Priestly Formation discussions, whose recommendations will be forwarded to the CBC. Individual ordinaries, or groups of them, however, may make proposals to the Senate and Board for changes.

Further, every seven years the Senate and Board for Priestly Formation should review the *Ratio* and submit any proposed changes to the CBC for discussion and approval.

The Senate and Board for Priestly Formation met to discuss the new RF at Alexishafen in September 2017. It was decided that it would not be sufficient to review the existing RN in the light of the new RF, but rather that the RN should be completely re-written. A committee was appointed to produce a draft, consisting of a bishop (+Cesare Bonivento), a minor seminary rector (Don Debes), a major seminary rector (Paul Sundu) and the head of a theological faculty (Joseph Vnuk), who was charged with keeping the process moving.

This group met to discuss a first draft in April 2018, which was then put to the full meeting of the Senate and Board. By the time of the next meeting, the bishops and the seminary rectors in the group had been replaced by their successors (+Francis Meli, Patrick Monahan and Raphael Mel), which slowed the progress. A meeting of just seminary rectors was held in Port Moresby in September 2019, to try to focus on the academic syllabus, but it was hampered by the rapid turnover of people in these positions, and the lack of any participation from Solomon Islands at any of these meetings.

However, from this meeting a draft was produced that was circulated early in May 2020, with clear indications of the issues that still needed to be resolved. This led to a definitive first draft being approved at the Senate and Board meeting in Port Moresby on 22nd June 2020, which was then sent to the AGM of the CBC, but without sufficient time for it to be discussed and voted upon. Some input came from other people involved in priestly formation, and a meeting of deans was held in June 2021, which produced an agreed statement on curriculum; the Senate and Board considered these suggestions, accepted most of them, and asked for a final draft to be approved and sent to the bishops in advance of their meeting in September. A workshop on the draft for rectors and formators a few days before the meeting of bishops came up with a few last-minute improvements, and, with some very minor alterations, the final text was approved by the CBCPNGSI on 21st September 2021.

As well as trying to listen to those actually involved in priestly formation, the guiding principles behind the RN were:

- not to repeat what was in the RF, but rather to say what was specific to the PNG & SI situation;
- to be general enough to allow for the multiple contexts and institutions in which the RN will be implemented;
- to ensure that recommendations and prescriptions were linked to designated persons who have a responsibility to implement them;
- to write the RN as a reflection on scripture, to better allow the Spirit to breathe through it.

The *Ratio* has six chapters, following the suggestion of the RF. The first gives the particular context from which our candidates for the priesthood come, and to which they will return to serve. In the second are recorded any agreements the Bishops' Conference has made about the organization of seminaries in its territory. The third chapter addresses the pastoral care of vocations, and the resources available. It is the work of the fourth to describe the specific stages of formation and how they meet the needs of the candidates in this specific context. In the fifth are described the means to be adopted to provide for all the dimensions of formation, and the sixth chapter details the programme of studies to be adopted at each stage. There are three appendices: on the responsibilities of those involved in formation; on the PNG National Qualifications Framework and learning hours; and a list of abbreviations.

Chapter One

The Context: Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands

Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said to them, "Go up there into the Negeb, and go up into the hill country, and see what the land is like, and whether the people who live in it are strong or weak, whether they are few or many, and whether the land they live in is good or bad, and whether the towns that they live in are unwalled or fortified, and whether the land is rich or poor, and whether there are trees in it or not. . . . And they told him, "We came to the land to which you sent us; it flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit. Yet the people who live in the land are strong, and the towns are fortified and very large; and besides, we saw the descendants of Anak there. So they brought to the Israelites an unfavourable report of the land that they had spied out. saying, "The land that we have gone through as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants; (Numbers 13:17-20a, 27-28, 32)

1.1 Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands (PNGSI) are like biblical Canaan first and foremost as being the home of many tribes, some dwelling by the sea, others on the plains, others in the highlands. Eight hundred languages are spoken in PNG alone, and about a hundred more in the Solomons. But the comparison would seem to stop there. The towns are not very large, and 85% of the population live in the villages, which are unwalled rather than fortified. The land, although well-watered, fertile, and rich in natural resources, is in Western terms largely undeveloped; and while there is some honey, there is no milk produced, nor clusters of grapes even of the smallest size. But these outward differences should not blind us to the similarities with the peoples of the Old Testament. Although there is an overlay of a constitutional nation-state with a democratically elected parliament, a more or less free press, and an independent judiciary, these two countries still run very much on tribal lines. Cultural values that once supported the survival of tribal communities remain deeply entrenched as the country evolves. Many of these values—such as resource sharing, caring for and respecting elders, self-sacrifice, and community service—align with Gospel principles that are already practiced by indigenous peoples. Conversely, certain values, including polygamy, compensation systems, and the "eye for an eye" mentality derived from ancient laws, impede further development. The wantok system, which previously benefited small tribal communities, now hampers the equitable distribution of wealth on a national scale. In the formation of seminarians for the priesthood and religious life, it is essential to integrate cultural elements that resonate with Church teachings. This includes values emphasising family and kinship, a strong religious sensibility that highlights ritual and ritual leadership—such as the commitment to celibacy—respect for clergy and religious figures within society, and a constitution that upholds the freedom of religion. By thoughtfully incorporating these elements, we can promote a holistic and culturally relevant approach to fostering vocations while transforming those aspects that may obstruct progress.

1.2 The Church operates within a complex dichotomy. The Gospel is a relatively recent introduction; it was first preached on the coast less than 150 years ago, and there are still individuals in the remote parts of the Highlands who remember the arrival of the first missionaries. Christianity was eagerly embraced, and the Second World War marked the martyrdom of Peter ToRot, who is now officially recognized among the blessed. However, the acceptance of the Good News often depended on the terms set by the locals. Many were impressed by the wealth of the Western missionaries and viewed Christianity as superior to their traditional beliefs, especially regarding material blessings. Polygamy continues to be practiced in some segments of society, and violence among tribes — used to settle disputes, resolve domestic conflicts, or target individuals accused of sorcery (sanguma) — is widespread. Various Western imports, such as guns, pornographic videos, alcohol, the divisive nature of different Christian denominations, and the tendency to assign monetary value to all things pose challenges to evangelization. In Papua New Guinea (PNG), about a quarter of the population identifies as Catholic, while around 10% in the Solomon Islands do the same. The remainder of the population largely identifies as Christian in some form. However, many Catholics are drawn to other denominations. Seventh Day Adventists, known for their strong organization and moral standards, are numerous and influential, while Pentecostals attract followers with their lively worship and promises of miracles.

1.3 The educational system has similar problems. Schools were established in the colonial era, run by Westerners (many of them missionaries); by allowing only the best to proceed to each successive level, although half the population remained illiterate, they gave a solid basic education to many and allowed some to proceed to excellence. The school system has, however, expanded rapidly and is not coping, either in terms of material resources or the required quantity or quality of teachers. Schools lack even basic libraries and laboratories, and, where access to the internet is possible, it is slow, expensive, and unreliable. Most students who finish Grade 12 are still poor in English, weak in analytical and critical abilities (being more used to rote learning), and quite likely never to have read a book from cover to cover. Educational qualifications are often sought for their exchange value rather than their intrinsic value, and cheating and forgery are common. The PNG government has recently legislated for a greater degree of regulation to deal with corruption and a decline in educational standards.

1.4 There is much work for the clergy to do, and there are plenty of priests through whom God does great things as they minister the sacraments and preach the word. There are occasions when the Holy Spirit has achieved great things visible to the world (one could mention, for example, the work of reconciliation in Bougainville under the leadership of +Bernard Unabali). Priests enjoy high status in the Catholic community and beyond, but in many cases the local clergy simply fail to deliver. The more capable ones are often misled into believing that they could better serve their people by running for public office. Far too many did not establish deep enough spiritual roots during their period of formation. Academically unprepared, they cannot respond to attacks on the Church by other denominations, and their preaching quickly becomes repetitious. Lacking a spiritual foundation, their prayer life often dies away quickly after leaving the seminary, to the point where some do not even celebrate daily Mass, and they are left prey to material consolations. Having approached human formation in the seminary by learning how not to get caught, they now have problems with money, alcohol and women. Without pastoral zeal or imagination, they are not reaching out to the lost, binding up the injured, or calling back those who have wandered into other folds. Many leave, often soon after ordination, either of their own choice or suspended or dismissed by their ordinary. Others stay but exercise a minimalist ministry and cause scandals in their way of life. These deficiencies among the clergy – who in many places are low in number – combine with geographical isolation so that many communities are without the sacraments for months (sometimes years) on end and are relying on the catechist to supply their hunger for the Word of God.

1.5 It is from this Church and these societies that God is calling young men to the priesthood, and to which they will be sent back to minister. While in most cases their commitment to the Church is real, what they know about the Christian way of life is what is lived in the village, and what they think about the priesthood comes from the priests they have seen and known, all interpreted through a mind-set that focuses strongly on the blessings of this life. Many of those attracted to ministry will have bad habits with regard to alcohol, betel-nut, tobacco and perhaps pornography and women. They will usually have been low achievers from a poor educational system. The more successful ones, by their own choice or under family pressure, will have gone to university to pursue a profession that will pay more than the priesthood does. There is real faith, piety, and eagerness to serve, but many obstacles exist.

1.6 These are the men that God sends us, whom we must take and form as priests to go back to these communities to support and strengthen what is good and truly Christian and to lead the people onwards to what God has prepared for them.

1.7 We could consider the task too difficult, as the Israelites wept at the report of the spies sent to Canaan and wanted to go back to Egypt. We could set our goals low and aim simply at pushing through the system men who can be sent to fill vacancies and hopefully not cause too many problems. Or we could be inspired by the example of the early missionaries who faced even more daunting dangers, embrace the challenge, and, trusting in God as Joshua and Caleb did, take on the great work of the best priestly formation possible.

Chapter Two Agreements About the Organisation of Seminaries

Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, 'Look, we are your bone and flesh. For some time, while Saul was king over us, it was you who led out Israel and brought it in. The Lord said to you: It is you who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you who shall be ruler over Israel.' So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron; and King David made a covenant with them at Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel. (2 Sam 5:1-3)

2.1 PNG's current system of seminaries began in 1963 with the establishment, by the CBCPNGSI, of Holy Spirit Regional Seminary for diocesan candidates at Kap near Madang. The major seminary moved to Bomana in 1968, and its faculty was combined with that of de Boismenu Seminary (for MSCs); St Fidelis' Minor Seminary, established in 1966, remained at Kap. In time other religious congregations set up formation houses at or near Bomana, and all the religious candidates were enrolled as students of Holy Spirit Seminary (HSS) until the creation in 2000 of the Catholic Theological Institute (CTI) as a separate entity focused primarily on academic formation.

2.2 Currently there are two institutes in PNG and SI that are the responsibility of the CBC as a whole: HSS and CTI, both at Bomana, NCD.² The governing councils of these two institutes consist of (besides the *ex officio* members of the staff) bishops chosen by and from the Conference (with CTI's council also having lay-people appointed by the Conference and two provincials chosen by the Federation of Clerical Religious).³ Changes to the most fundamental legislation and the appointment of the rector or president of these institutions are made by the Bishops Conference.

2.3 From the beginning HSS was required to accept all candidates for the priesthood presented by any diocese from within the territory of the Bishops Conference, provided that they meet the basic entry standards; after its erection, CTI had the same responsibility, broadened to include religious candidates for the priesthood from congregations working within that territory.⁴

2.4 There also arose various inter-diocesan minor and major seminaries in the archdioceses of Mt Hagen, Rabaul and Honiara, which began as feeders for these three national seminaries, and a diocesan minor and major seminary at Vanimo that were always intended to be a separate system. Nonetheless, the national seminaries remain national, and an ordinary always has the right to transfer one, several or all of his candidates from one of the other seminaries to HSS or CTI.⁵

2.5 In 2020 the CBC decided that the Spiritual Year for diocesan seminarians would be transferred from St Fidelis at Kap to the interdiocesan Good Shepherd Seminary in the Archdiocese of Mt Hagen, without restricting the right of a bishop to make other arrangements for the Spiritual Year.

2.6 Apart from the matters mentioned above as belonging to the CBC, the internal affairs of each seminary are governed by a board or governing council. There is, however, a body called the Senate and Board for Priestly Formation, consisting of those bishops in whose dioceses there is at least one major or minor seminary, and the rectors of each major or minor seminary as well as the president of CTI. This body meets at least once a year as a forum for discussing issues related to priestly formation and as the ordinary means by which the CBC exercises its overall responsibility for priestly formation.⁶ When it sees a matter that requires an authoritative decision, it refers it to the Bishops Conference, normally by preparing a motion which is presented to the AGM.⁷ It has no direct authority over the internal affairs of any seminary.

² For CTI this responsibility is exercised in conjunction with the Conference of Clerical Major Superiors (see CTI Constitutions 4).

³ CTI Constitutions 7.

⁴ CTI Constitutions 17.

⁵ See CTI's *Recognition of Other Institutes' Policies* §1.

⁶ See *Basic Schema [Ratio Nationalis] on Priestly Formation for Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands*, 1998. §188.

⁷ Cf *Basic Schema* §189.

Chapter Three The Pastoral Care of Vocations

Jesus was standing one day by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the crowd pressing round him listening to the word of God, when he caught sight of two boats close to the bank. The fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats – it was Simon's – and asked him to put out a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.

When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, 'Put out into deep water and pay out your nets for a catch.' 'Master,' Simon replied, 'we worked hard all night long and caught nothing. But if you say so, I will pay out the nets.' And when they had done this, they netted such a huge number of fish that their nets began to tear, so they signalled to their companions in the other boat to come and help them; when these came, they filled the two boats to sinking point.

When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus, saying, 'Leave me, Lord; I am a sinful man.' For he and all his companions were completely overcome by the catch they had made; so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's partners. But Jesus said to Simon, 'Do not be afraid; from now on it is men you will catch.' Then, bringing their boats back to land, they left everything and followed him. (Luke 5:1-11)

(a) General Principles

3.1 God is still calling many young men in PNGSI to embark upon the path to priesthood. Like Simon, they are often sinners, caught up in their nets.

3.2 PNGSI Vocations Office

The CBC, in consultation with the Federation of Religious (FOR), is to set up a vocations office for the territory of the Conference and to provide it with an annual budget. The CBC general secretary, on advice from the Senate and Board for Priestly Formation, will invite and appoint a director at a national level, who will be answerable to the bishop deputy for priestly formation. (RF 13)

The office will be responsible for:

- maintaining an up-to-date website and/or Facebook (or equivalent) page for vocations;
- publishing every two years an updated edition of *Come, Follow Me*, and distributing copies to the dioceses;
- gathering and distributing resources for vocations promoters, including arranging expert guest speakers who could help at meetings;
- producing a booklet, *Pikinini bilong yutupela i laik skul long kamap pater* designed for parents of interested young men;
- producing booklets of lives of the saints, both for inspiring vocations and to give families examples of letting their children follow God's call;
- providing assistance for regional meetings of vocations promoters.

3.3 Diocesan Promoters of Vocations

3.3.1 Parish priests of each diocese working closely with the youth and their families become the first discernment of vocations. He must foster an environment by accompanying boys and girls to participate in different parish activities and create groups where young boys and girls desiring to consecrate themselves can discern their calling to the priesthood and religious life. He then introduces them to the Diocesan Vocation Promoter. The success of the work of the Diocesan Vocations Promoters depends on the active and regular accompaniment of the enquirers or aspirants by joyful parish Priests coherent with their priesthood life and able to make the first discernment by their proximity with the youth

3.3.2 Each diocesan bishop will appoint a priest as promoter of priestly vocations, ideally one who has already shown interest and ability in encouraging men to follow this path and has no other pastoral or administrative commitments. When the needs of the diocese make this level of commitment impractical, the other apostolic commitments of this priest should still give him the freedom to respond quickly to enquiries, to go to places of potential vocations (schools, universities,

youth gatherings, ordinations) and to visit enquirers in person. His mission will be successful if he orientates them to their parishes to meet and speak to their Parish Priests and be accompanied by them with the help of the parish community. The Diocese will provide him with sufficient material resources (vehicle/travel budget, phone and internet) to carry out his work. With these resources, it is the duty of the vocations promoter to ensure that he is always easily contactable by phone and internet and that these contact details are available to Church personnel and interested young men.

3.3.3 The Holy Spirit calls some to serve in their own dioceses, others as religious, and others as missionaries, and all of these enrich the Church, universal and local. (RF 15) To recruit a man to a particular diocese or congregation by applying emotional pressure or making false promises will simply create problems later.

3.4 *Diocesan Vocations Office*

3.4.1 The bishop will appoint and fund a director of the Diocesan Vocations Office and provide him or her with a budget and office space. This director may be a religious who is not the diocesan promoter of priestly vocations and the director will work closely with a team of three to five vocations promoters for male and female religious along with the diocesan vocations promoter.

3.4.2 The vocations office will be responsible for collecting resources and organizing vocations promotion events at a diocesan level, particularly for Vocations Sunday, and directing enquirers appropriately.

3.5 *Regional meetings of vocations promoters*

It is the responsibility of each archbishop to organize an annual meeting of the vocations promoters of his ecclesiastical province, delegating the actual work to his own vocations office or promoter or to one of the other promoters or offices in the province, who should be assisted by the Conference's vocations office. Where convenient, these meetings could also take place at a larger level, e.g. all dioceses that send candidates to a particular propaedeutic centre, or a national conference. At these meetings there will be training for new vocations promoters, discussion of topical issues, exchange of information, and some input from experts. The appropriate seminary rectors may be invited. Vocations promoters from religious congregations, particularly clerical ones, may also be invited to these meetings.

3.6 *Promotion of vocations: a work of the whole Church*

3.6.1 *Priests as promoters of vocations*

The most important way that priests promote vocations is by living their own priesthood joyfully and faithfully. They should also talk frequently of exemplary priests, whether among the canonised saints such as John Vianney, Vincent de Paul and John XXIII, or from pioneer missionaries and the clergy of their country.

They should foster vocations among suitable young men whom they know by praying for them, by suggesting a vocation to them, by responding positively to their enquiries, and by putting them in touch with the appropriate vocations promoter. When they talk about the priesthood, while being realistic about its challenges, they should above all be positive.

3.6.2 *Vocations ask for a generous response from families*

3.6.2.1 Vocations most often germinate in the family, where children learn from their parents not only the faith, but also hope and love. Other family members, particularly grandparents, have an important role. Parish priests, catechists and parish leaders should encourage families to the practice of daily prayer together, as this is an integral part of Christian family life, and it will nurture vocations too.

3.6.2.2 It is through families that life is handed on from generation to generation, and it is through their parents' sexual life that the children receive their own sexuality. Families, therefore, are privileged places for handing on the Christian wisdom on the value of life and the meaning of sexuality. A strong family foundation will enable the children to give their lives either in Christian marriage or in service of the Church, and to find the meaning of their sexuality, as married or celibate, in these vocations. Example is important, as is instruction at the right time, and even if the parents cannot give deep explanations, their charitable remarks approving or disapproving of the behaviour

of others can have a lasting effect.

3.6.2.3 Bishops, priests, religious, catechists and school teachers are to encourage generosity in families when one of their members is considering a priestly vocation, both in a general way and in individual cases. This is especially needed where the family has made a significant material investment in the young man's education and is looking for a material return. As part of this encouragement, families that have allowed or even promoted a priestly vocation in sons with a university education or a very good Grade 12 result should be put forward as examples of true Christian concern for the whole of God's people (without causing them embarrassment)

3.6.2.4 Diocesan vocations promoters should attempt to visit families of young men considering the priesthood and go through with them the booklet *Pikinini bilong yutupela i laik skul long kamap pater* (which they will adapt for the particular case of each diocese), either as individual families or in groups.

3.6.2.5 Special care needs to be taken when a child is adopted, and from an early stage the vocations promoter should try to be in touch with both the natural and the adoptive parents. This will help avoid problems that arise as the child's commitment to the Church intensifies.

3.6.3 *Means of promoting vocations*

3.6.3.1 Regular prayer for vocations should be encouraged by the appropriate leaders in parishes, schools, youth groups and in families, including occasional Masses for vocations. At these occasions, it is useful to have priests and seminarians telling their own vocational story. Parish priests and catechists are also to encourage groups who regularly pray for vocations.

3.6.3.2 Experience in many countries shows that priestly vocations often come from among altar servers. Parish priests should promote friendship, prayer and instruction about the liturgy in a special way among the altar servers, male and female, either in their own parish or in union with other parishes. Diocesan vocations directors can encourage these activities at parish, deanery or diocesan level.

3.6.3.3 Bishops and parish priests are also encouraged to promote other societies that foster vocations, such as the Missionary Childhood.

3.6.4 *Starting early*

Vocations should be strongly promoted among adolescents, even when it is clear that they will not be ready to enter a formation community for some years. This also applies, with all the adaptations necessary for their tender age, to even younger children.

(b) Minor seminaries and other forms of accompanying adolescents

3.7 A young man will often hear God's call to the priesthood before he is old enough and has sufficient education to enter the major seminary. During those intervening years, PNG and SI society are the source of many temptations and influences that could make such a man less fit to follow Christ in any way, let alone as a priest. In fact, many of those who hear the call have already fallen in one or more ways, and no small number will have developed habits that are inappropriate for clergy and even positively sinful. These young men need both people who can accompany them and community support.

3.7.1 *Minor seminaries*

3.7.1.1 Minor seminaries on the traditional model are one such way of providing a formation community for those who still need to complete Grade 12. In PNGSI, like other mission countries where opportunities for secondary education are limited, a minor seminary will often attract students who have no real interest in pursuing a priestly vocation. However, there are situations where some who enter the minor seminaries without any interest for priesthood, discover their vocation to priesthood when they are well accompanied and when they are exposed to frequent access to the sacraments and prayer life in the minor seminary.

3.7.1.2 Bishops should, where possible, maintain minor seminaries that have permitted school status, but only after discerning whether maintaining the minor seminary would place undue strain on the overall programme of priestly formation, particularly in terms of formation personnel and qualified

teachers of English and other disciplines. How many students actually end up as priests is one of the factors that should be taken into account in this discernment.

3.7.1.3 It is up to the bishop's discretion whether or not to send candidates to such a minor seminary.

3.7.2 *Alternatives to minor seminaries: houses of formation or simple accompaniment*

3.7.2.1 When the interested young men are not attending a minor seminary, bishops are encouraged to make alternative arrangements, such as a house of formation – with at least one priest in residence – from which these men can attend a standard Catholic secondary school.

3.7.2.2 Where no such arrangement can be made, the diocesan vocations director should ensure that each interested young man in the diocese is in regular contact with him or another suitable priest. These priests should encourage such men to participate in the life of the local Church and to join vocation clubs or other groups that could provide some community support for formation.

3.7.2.3 Even in this situation, the prospect of becoming a priest can help these men to develop their prayer life, encourage their participation in the liturgy (e.g. as a server or reader) and other church activities, motivate their studies, stimulate and guide their reading, and fortify them against the temptations that beset young men – all of which will stand them in good stead whether they become priests or not.

3.7.3 *Pre-Propaedeutic Seminaries and Propaedeutic Seminary 1*

3.7.3.1 Given the poor state of secondary education in PNG and SI, those who have successfully completed Grade 12 or Form 6 will in almost all cases lack the academic skills, the general knowledge and the mastery of English that are the pre-requisites for tertiary study. It is also likely that they will have been poorly catechized and will have fallen – and perhaps even developed bad habits – with regard to sex, alcohol/tobacco/betel-nut/narcotics, and/or violence.

3.7.3.2 Such men will do up to two years of supplementary secondary education, which in PNG is normally referred to as the Pre-Propaedeutic year and Propaedeutic Seminary 1. This does not correspond to the propaedeutic year of *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation*, the requirement for which is met by what in PNG and SI is called the Spiritual Year or Propaedeutic Seminary 2.

These two years, pre-propaedeutic and propaedeutic 1 are conducted in a community which is not a major seminary but an institute that prepares people for tertiary studies and the life of a major seminary.

3.8 *Human, pastoral and spiritual formation in minor seminaries and alternative arrangements*

3.8.1 In all these communities – the traditional minor seminary, the house of formation linked to a standard Catholic secondary school, the propaedeutic centre – the rector or the one in charge is to ensure that there is a programme of human, spiritual and pastoral formation adapted to the age and background of the students.

3.8.2 The first lesson is to trust the formators, to be honest with them, and to embark under their leadership on a journey of self-discovery and transformation.

3.8.3 *Human formation – untangling the nets*

3.8.3.1 With regard to the potentially addictive and damaging behaviours mentioned above, those responsible for the human formation of the candidates are reminded that simple prohibition is not the right way. The candidates should be taught in the beginning about the goodness of the human body and of all plants and other created things, for they come from God and are to be received with thanksgiving from God. Within this context, they then are to be taught about how to use God's gifts with thanksgiving, in a way that is free and manly, not compulsive and childish, and, where the use they have in mind would be an abuse, to honour God, themselves, and the created thing in question by not "using" it at all. Practical steps for avoiding the occasion of sin should also be given, and students should be taught to support each other in their journey to freedom.

3.8.3.2 The formators need to be aware of the danger that the students will treat these sessions as the giving of information which they should remember and reproduce in tests or hand on to others,

rather than being about *my* sexuality and *my* drinking, and therefore a call to conversion. Total victory will not come at once, and this aspect of formation will need to be revisited from time to time for many years.

3.8.3.3 Theology of the body is a useful way of treating some of these issues.

3.8.3.4 These men in formation may have experienced things earlier in life (such as abuse, abandonment, or “adoption,” which usually means being given away by the parents) that they need to come to terms with. Formators should be aware of this and offer appropriate guidance and/or refer them to counsellors as necessary.

3.8.4 *Spiritual Formation*

3.8.4.1 At this stage it is important to establish a rhythm of daily prayer (liturgical, popular, and meditative) and participation in the Mass. The content of this regular prayer is decided by the minor seminary, house of formation or propaedeutic centre, under the leadership of the rector, provided that it adequately, if gradually, prepares them for the daily recitation of the Divine Office and other regular prayers of the Spiritual Year.

3.8.4.2 Formators are to encourage regular confession. The rector, in co-ordination with the spiritual director (if there is one) should provide a choice of confessors and arrange times of retreat and days of recollection.

3.8.5 *Pastoral formation*

Those in propaedeutic centres are normally not yet ready to engage in pastoral work as leaders or teachers, although the rector, in co-operation with the other formators, will encourage and arrange participation in local Church activities as appropriate.

3.8.6 *Academic formation*

3.8.6.1 Minor seminaries or houses of formation should follow a standard syllabus for the final year of school, so that successful students can meet the requirements for university entrance in that country. The rector should also organise some extra catechetical and spiritual instruction to assist candidates in living the life of their minor seminary or house of formation, and in discerning their own vocation.

3.8.6.2 The programme for propaedeutic centres, on the other hand, does not offer any government-recognised qualification. This is to discourage applications from people not considering a priestly vocation, and also to avoid the need to obtain government registration and course accreditation. Nonetheless, a certificate of attainment is given to all students in case it should be needed in the future.

3.8.6.3 The syllabus for such a centre will be discussed in chapter six.

(c) **Mature vocations**

3.9 Mature candidates may yet need preparation academically and/or in terms of human and spiritual formation, in a manner decided by the bishop. Each candidate can spend a year under the supervision of his parish priest and his collaborators in the initial stage of his discernment. The bishop could send the candidate to a propaedeutic seminary or to a house of formation attached to a school (but perhaps not attending that school); the bishop could also simply make an arrangement for the necessary studies, or, if the candidate is academically qualified but needs further human and spiritual formation, the bishop could let him live as before but with regular meetings with a suitable priest.

(d) **Applicants who have already had some seminary or religious formation**

3.10 Some men will try their vocation in one diocese or congregation and then leave it (of their own choice, or by a decision of their formators) and then apply to another. In the case of someone who started the spiritual year or major seminary, bishops, major superiors and their delegates should ensure that it has been at least twelve months since the person left the previous formation programme before accepting him into their own formation programme. The ordinary of the new entity, personally or through the vocations director or another delegate, must make diligent enquiry about

the reason for the applicant's departure from the previous entity. The ordinary of the previous entity has a duty to ensure that whatever information the entity has is promptly supplied to the new entity: it is in the interest of all the parties concerned that such information, even if it reflects badly upon the applicant, be supplied. It is not fair to ask the second entity to make a judgement about the applicant's suitability based upon the silence of the first entity.

Chapter Four

The Initial and Ongoing Formation in priestly life

In PNGSI the following are the moments of formation for diocesan priestly vocations: Initial formation and ongoing formation.

Initial formation begins with the Propaedeutic period leading up to priestly ordination.

1. Family and parish life, leading to initial discernment (before entering any formation community)
2. Minor seminary/house of formation/Pre-Propaedeutic centre
3. Propaedeutic Year (called "Propaedeutic Stage" in RF)
 1. Propaedeutic Year 1
 2. Propaedeutic Year 2 (Spiritual Year)
4. Major seminary: Philosophy (called "Discipleship Stage" in RF)
5. Major seminary: Theology (called "Configurative Stage" in RF)
6. Pastoral Year (between two years of the Theology programme, called "Vocational Synthesis Stage" in RF)
7. Post-seminary pastoral placement (in preparation for ordination as deacon and as priest)
8. Ongoing Formation

Ongoing formation appropriate to age throughout life

4.1

Initial discernment

(before entering any formation community)

The boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord in the presence of Eli; it was rare for the Lord to speak in those days; visions were uncommon. One day, it happened that Eli was lying down in his room. His eyes were beginning to grow dim; he could no longer see. The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying in the sanctuary of the Lord where the ark of God was, when the Lord called, 'Samuel! Samuel!' He answered, 'Here I am.' Then he ran to Eli and said, 'Here I am, since you called me.' Eli said, 'I did not call. Go back and lie down.' So he went and lay down. Once again the Lord called, 'Samuel! Samuel!' Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, 'Here I am, since you called me.' He replied, 'I did not call you, my son; go back and lie down.' Samuel had as yet no knowledge of the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. Once again the Lord called, the third time. He got up and went to Eli and said, 'Here I am, since you called me.' Eli then understood that it was the Lord who was calling the boy, and he said to Samuel, 'Go and lie down, and if someone calls, say, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening."' So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

The Lord then came and stood by, calling as he had done before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' Samuel answered, 'Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.' (1 Sam 3:1-10)

4.1.1 During this stage the candidate is still living in accommodation provided by his family, whether at home, at school or some other centre of studies, or, having moved to another place to find work, is living with family or friends. He has expressed an interest in becoming a priest to the parish priest who is in regular contact with the candidate and his family. After the first discernment, the parish priest introduces him to the vocations director.

4.1.2 During this time the vocations director is to check that the candidate has the basic requirements for entry into the next stage, and should seek documentation: baptismal certificate, confirmation certificate (or signed statements of witnesses if these were not recorded), school records, medical report, and references. Confirmation is to be arranged if the candidate has not yet received this sacrament.

4.1.3 This is a time for the vocations director to explain to the parents and the rest of the family what a priestly vocation means and what it will entail. He needs to carefully explain that God is asking for the gift of their son, and that there will be no "compensation" from the diocese or congregation, and that once a final commitment is made, there is no possibility of taking the son back. Nor, when he has become a priest and is living in a presbytery, can his family treat the presbytery as their own house. Of course, he will always remain their son, and they can expect him to pray for them daily until his

death. It is the vocation director's duty to inform the parents or guardians of their son's decision, and it is highly desirable that they give informed support.

4.1.4 The vocations director should also diligently check the candidate's background. (Is there an attachment or a promise to a woman and/or children? Is he under obligations to benefactors who have paid for his education? Does he enjoy a good reputation? Does he have problems with alcohol, etc.? Does he show a commitment to the faith?) He should talk enough with the candidate to see how genuine and realistic his interest is, and to ascertain that the young man is not carrying the vocational ideals or calling of the parents or the ideals of his family or tribe.

4.1.5 The vocations director should also see that the candidate himself is given the opportunity to learn more about the priesthood and priestly formation, so that he can realistically decide for or against moving into a community of formation. He should be given some basic guidance in developing a life of prayer suited to his circumstances (e.g., daily Mass, if possible; regular confession, daily rosary, simple morning and evening prayers; a programme of short daily biblical readings, participation in his basic Christian community and/or a pious association). He should be encouraged to complete studies (which might mean going back to school or doing an alternative Grade 12 programme), to overcome bad habits, and to gradually let go of those things which priestly formation will ask him to leave behind. His involvement in things that might prepare him (altar serving, music ministry, the Church youth group, Legion of Mary, works of mercy, etc.) is to be encouraged.

4.1.6 When the candidate is ready to enter a community of formation, the vocations promoter will ensure that he and his family sign a legally valid waiver, acknowledging that the diocese has the right to dismiss the candidate, and that the candidate and his family have no claims on the diocese on the grounds of work done, opportunities missed, illness, accident or death, etc.

4.2 Minor seminary/house of formation/pre-propaedeutic centre

*How different the one who devotes himself / to the study of the law of the Most High.
He seeks out the wisdom of all the ancients / and is concerned with prophecies;
he preserves the sayings of the famous / and penetrates the subtleties of parables;
he seeks out the hidden meaning of proverbs / and is at home with the obscurities of parables.
He serves among the great / and appears before rulers;
he travels in foreign lands / and learns what is good and what is evil in the human lot.
He sets his heart on rising early / to seek the Lord who made him / and to petition the Most High;
he opens his mouth in prayer / and asks pardon for his sins.*

(Sirach 38:34-39:5)

4.2.1 When the candidate has applied and the ordinary has accepted his application, the candidate then enters a community of formation that, in almost all cases, will be a preparation for the major seminary. The nature of this stage is decided by each diocesan bishop, who may even choose differently for different candidates. What matters is the end result, which is the readiness to enter the major seminary, and the goals and the means will be the same in most cases.

4.2.2 Given the weakness of the school system in PNG and SI, it is likely that those who are accepted by the diocese having completed Grade 12 or Form 6, as well as those who have achieved this in a minor seminary or a house of formation, will still not be academically prepared for major seminary, and in most cases will be sent by their ordinary to what in PNG is called a pre-propaedeutic centre. The biblical seeker for Wisdom can be their guide.

4.2.3 The most noticeable shortcoming will be with regard to English. The candidates are by now young adults and need a different method of learning English than that employed in High and Secondary schools.

4.2.3.1 To undertake major seminary formation, the candidate should have an IELTS equivalent of at

least 5.0.⁸ In SI, doing Foundation Level English (LLF 1.1 and 1.2) at USP is a suitable standard. When it becomes feasible to do so, individual institutes may set higher entry levels, with respect to due process. The rector is to ensure that this level is independently tested, although not necessarily through an official IELTS test, as an official award would require government registration and might attract the wrong sort of student.

4.2.3.2 A particular problem here will be the students' unwillingness to stand out from the crowd. It is an established convention that locals speak to each other in *tok pisin*, and to address one's peer in English is seen as an attempt to display superiority. Like the seeker of wisdom, the candidates need the courage to be different, and the formators, under the guidance of the rector, will need to make an effort to establish and maintain a culture where English-speaking is seen as the norm.

4.2.4 The clear need for English and the measurable standard to be attained should not draw attention away from three other major defects in the education provided in most PNG & SI schools.

4.2.4.1 Education in Melanesia tends to focus on rote learning, and its purpose is to pass an exam and get some sort of certificate that will enable further progress; the one who has learnt this content can then pass it on to others. The rector, in consultation with the other teachers, must provide opportunities for the students to learn analytical skills, problem solving skills, critical thinking skills, and public speaking skills. They need to learn to discuss, to listen, to think and then respond in a reasoned and articulate way. New knowledge must change the way they think, and often also the way they behave and speak. They must learn the virtues necessary for tertiary study, such as academic honesty and diligence in work.

Admittedly, the biblical seeker of wisdom 'preserves the sayings of the famous,' but he does not stop at memorising, for he also 'penetrates the subtleties of parables.'

4.2.4.2 As noted earlier, these lands are not like Canaan: they have no grapes or milk production; they have no walled cities. While there are many similarities between OT culture and Melanesian cultures, there are also differences. The academic programme should increase in the candidates the awareness of the cultures of the Near East and of Europe and their development over time, how they are like and unlike Melanesian cultures; their strengths and their weaknesses; for, although they are not normative, it is in the terms of these cultures that the Biblical message and the Christian Tradition have been expressed. While staying in his own country, through education, through books and other resources, he 'travels in foreign lands and learns what is good and evil in the human lot.'

4.2.4.3 Because of the lack of qualified teachers and educational resources, most subjects are poorly taught, and this includes catechetics. Beginning in the minor seminary or house of formation, and extending into the pre-propaedeutic centre, rectors are to ensure that there is a programme of thorough Catholic catechesis, not yet at the level where they can teach others, but at the level needed for living and worshipping as a Catholic, and with a particular focus on the priesthood to help in their discernment. In this context catechesis can be a form of evangelization also, leading the candidate who thus far had only met Jesus in a superficial, rudimentary way to an authentic encounter with the person of Christ.

4.2.4.4 If a student does not meet academic standards, the rector is not to promote him to the Propaedeutic year 1; releasing such students from the formation programme is an act of charity, since they are then confirmed in their vocation as laymen. However, if the bishop, having listened to the advice of the pre-propaedeutic centre, wishes to persevere with a candidate, then either, if there are places left after all new candidates have been accepted, he could repeat the year at the same or another institution, or the bishop could find some other form of instruction to help the candidate meet the required standard.

4.3

Propaedeutic Year

⁸ For comparison purposes: to get a working visa in Australia, the IELTS level of basic English required is 4.5; to enrol in a tertiary course one needs 6.5 for a "language-rich" course such as theology, but for a highly mathematical course 6.0 will suffice; master's-level students need 7.0.

4.3.1 Propaedeutic Year 1

4.3.1.1 The rector of the propaedeutic year 1 is responsible for establishing and maintaining a programme of studies and activities that meet these needs. He should ensure that his budget enables him to do so, and should, with his Governing Council, set the fees appropriately. The budget should make adequate provision for updating the library collection and for providing enough functional computers for the students to acquire basic word-processing skills.

4.3.1.2 This stage of formation is the first where human and spiritual formation can take place in a structured way.

4.3.1.3 Etymologically, 'formation' comes from the Latin *forma*, which is an entity's inmost being, that which makes it what it is, and which is the source of its actions.⁹ Therefore, formation cannot consist in merely external behaviour: it must penetrate deeply, so that the changed behaviour is a true reflection of the change within and will persist when the candidate leaves the formation environment.

4.3.1.4 Outward change is easier, and often, even in the sincere and genuine candidate, it will come first. There is nothing wrong with that as such, for outward change can help produce inward change. However, the formators should frequently remind their charges of the need for interior change, and encourage and teach them how to be open to it.

4.3.2 Spiritual Year (Propaedeutic Year 2) (called "Propaedeutic Stage" in RF)

Therefore, I will now persuade her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her.
(Hosea 2:14)

4.3.2.1 What the RF calls the "propaedeutic period" and what it considers the obligatory beginning of priestly formation in its proper sense is in PNG and SI referred to as the Spiritual Year. This is similar to a novitiate, but it is not the same. The RF says that it should take place on a site that is distinct from the academic years of the major seminary programme (at least in a different building). Similarly, to mark it as the beginning of true priestly formation, it would seem that it should not take place at the house of formation or propaedeutic centre. However, in the PNG/SI context of limited formation personnel, placing the spiritual year entirely on its own may run the risk of making it too reliant on one or two people, and would limit the choice of spiritual directors. Locating it on the same site as the stage before or after is therefore tolerated, provided that the rector on that site ensures the spiritual year is clearly distinguished by having its own formator or director, a different building, a different programme of activities and a different manner of life.

4.3.2.2 Its focus is spiritual and human formation, rather than academic or pastoral formation.

4.3.2.2.1 Building upon what has been given in the previous stage, the spiritual year will lay a solid foundation for the spiritual life. Co-operating with any other programme that may be operating on the same site, the director of the Spiritual Year will ensure that the programme provides for

- daily Mass and regular confession;
- spiritual direction;
- Lauds and Vespers, and some participation in the minor hours, as well as occasional opportunities to celebrate the Office of Readings;
- familiarity with scripture and learning to read it devotionally;
- silence;
- mental prayer;
- Rosary and other Marian and/or popular devotions;
- spiritual reading;
- self-discipline through fasting from food, mobile phone, internet, social media, freedom of

⁹ We could oppose *forma* to *figura*, the outward shape, a mere shadow, or a sign of the reality that is yet to come. Thomas Aquinas distinguishes between a mere *configuration* to Christ that happens as the direct result of a sacrament, and the *conformation* to Christ that is the saving change worked in us by our co-operation with the Holy Spirit. *Summa Theologiae* III.69.9 ad 1.

movement etc.

- group discussion of spiritual things.

4.3.2.2.2 Formators will present these outward practices to the candidate as assisting in that personal relationship in which the spiritual life consists. They shall bear in mind that, apart from perhaps the sacramental life (although for many daily Mass is not possible in their village), candidates will need careful explanation and introduction to these things, which were probably unfamiliar to them before beginning priestly formation.

4.3.2.2.3 Familiarity with Scripture has particular importance in a country where Protestant groups (SDAs and Pentecostals) are winning over Catholics. Silence and the experience of solitude that accompanies it is hard to establish among people who have never had a room of their own, and who are fond of “storying,” a deep and important value in cultures that are primarily oral.

4.3.2.2.4 As to what is taught in the classroom, the director of the Spiritual Year will see that it begins with that course on the Mystery of Christ that *Optatam Totius* 14 prescribed for the beginning of the ecclesiastical studies, which does not seek to pre-empt the more academic Christology done during the theological study but to provide an orientation to all the study and formation that lies ahead.

4.3.2.2.5 Building upon but not repeating what was taught in the propaedeutic programme, there will be a balance of subjects related to spiritual and human formation, described in more detail in 6.3.1.

4.3.2.2.6 However, the difference between the Spiritual Year and what went before must be clear to all. In the absence of exams (Grade 12 or IELTS), those in formation will have to come to terms with a different focus in their study: what they are being taught is not meant to be memorised and repeated, but rather to be internalised. This is also true with regard to the human formation issues that are addressed in the previous stage.

4.3.2.2.7 It is vital that the director ensure that the programme offers a study of basic psychology to help candidates understand the internal factors involved in their decision-making. This will need to be culturally sensitive, for these things are often expressed in terms of voices and dreams. An attention to inner processes will need to build on what the culture has provided, rather than dismiss it or ignore it.

4.3.2.2.8 The director will organize supervised pastoral experiences which, at this stage, are focussed on helping form a priestly identity of participation in the local Church and of service. This should include some corporal works of mercy (including visiting the sick and those in prison), but not activities of leading or catechizing (cf 3.8.5). These experiences could form the basis of spiritual reflection.

4.4 Major seminary: Stage of Philosophical Studies (Discipleship Stage)

Then the king commanded his palace master Ashpenaz to bring some of the Israelites of the royal family and of the nobility, young men without physical defect and handsome, versed in every branch of wisdom, endowed with knowledge and insight, and competent to serve in the king's palace; they were to be taught in the literature and language of the Chaldeans. The king assigned them a daily portion of the royal rations of food and wine. They were to be educated for three years, so that at the end of the time they could be stationed in the king's court. Among them were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. . . . But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the royal rations of food and wine, so he asked the palace master to allow him not to defile himself. . . . So he agreed to this proposal and tested them for ten days. At the end of the ten days it was observed that they appeared better and fatter than all the young men who had been eating the royal rations. So the guard continued to withdraw their royal rations and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables. To these four young men God gave knowledge and skill in every aspect of literature and wisdom. Daniel also had insight into all visions and dreams. At the end of the time that the king had set for them to be brought in, the palace master brought them into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar,

and the king spoke with them. And among them all no one was found to compare with Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah. (Daniel 1:3-6, 8, 14-19)

4.4.1 The study of Philosophy can be frightening for the seminarian: 'Will it defile me?' he may ask. 'Will it cause me to lose my faith? Why don't we just stick to the Bible and what the Church teaches?' Daniel provides the counter-example. His study of the learning of the Chaldeans enables him to enter into dialogue with the king, but the dialogue does not remain confined to the thought-world of the Chaldeans. Daniel is able to explain the messages of God that break through to the king, which no Chaldean sage can do.

4.4.2 We are in exile, simply as children of Eve in this vale of tears. There are forces outside of us and forces within us that keep us from God. Whether we like it or not, we speak the way the world speaks, and this keeps us enslaved. Even sacred scripture can be a slave master, keeping us toiling away at schoolroom tasks, for it is the Word of God in human words, which are often understood in a merely human way.

4.4.3 Like the exiles in Babylon, we cannot walk away from our captivity, but must find freedom within it, negotiate our place within it, enter into dialogue with our captors, in the hope not only of attaining some freedom ourselves, but also of setting our captors free. For there is within the human heart a yearning for the things above, and philosophy – pagan, Jewish, Muslim, Christian and post-Christian – is a great expression of that search.

4.4.4 Daniel and his companions did not begin the study of philosophy unprepared: they were already educated in their own tradition, and were handsome and without blemish in appearance. The seminarian does not come to Philosophy unprepared, but with a prior cultural worldview now thoroughly catechized, and with a beauty and purity not of the body but of the soul. Daniel exercises a discipline of self-denial to avoid defilement from the king, the source of his exile; he grasps the wisdom of Chaldea better than all the others and receives further gifts from God. The seminarian too lives a disciplined life, learning to distance himself not from the world as such, but from the world as it has been defiled by sin; he can then grasp even pagan thought with a pure mind. Daniel and his companions, as we are told later, kept praying to the one true God despite threats; the seminarian too must maintain a life of prayer. Under these conditions, the study of the language and literature of his pagan companions became for Daniel and his compatriots a deeper entry into the wisdom of God. For in the power of Christ we can 'take every thought captive and make it obey Christ' (2 Corinthians 10:5b), realising that obedience to Christ is true freedom, and to take thoughts 'captive' in this way is really to liberate them.

4.4.5 This is not a merely intellectual journey, but a human and spiritual one. The RF talks of educating 'the person in the truth of his being, in freedom and self-control,' and of attaining 'an adequate inner freedom and maturity' to embrace the next step 'with serenity and joy.' This journey is only possible through the power of the Spirit, who enables us to understand and follow Christ. The RF talks of this stage as essentially one of discipleship.

4.4.6 Daniel was not alone during these years, but he had three companions in his self-denial and the kind help of Ashpenaz. This journey takes place in a community, which consists both of formators and of the seminarian's peers, and there is help from others outside as well. Philosophy students should be encouraged by their formators to discuss during meal times or in personal sharing what they are learning. Philosophy is a time for learning how to think in new ways and for questioning whether previous ways of understanding are adequate; seminarians need help in interiorising new habits of thought.

4.4.7 Pastoral work begins to become important in this stage, but again the focus is on the freedom and maturity of the seminarian ('How am I coping with the challenges?') rather than a full theological reflection on how the Spirit is enabling me to minister as an other Christ.

4.4.8 The seminarian does not apply for candidacy for orders until after the pastoral year (see below).

4.5 Major seminary: Stage of Theological Studies (Configuration Stage)

And I saw the LORD seated on a high and lofty throne, and the whole earth was full of his glory; his train filled the sanctuary. (Isaiah 6:1)

4.5.1 With these words spoken by Isaiah, Thomas Aquinas begins the introduction to his commentary on John. He is keen to show how the vision of God enjoyed by Isaiah and John surpasses that of the pagan philosophers. Thus, he takes the descriptions of the LORD one by one and matches them with various ways that pagan philosophers came to know God, and then shows that John saw all this in one act of seeing. He takes the description of the train filling the sanctuary to show that the knowledge of God that John has is full – it embraces all the branches of philosophy: physics, metaphysics and ethics – and perfect – it does not simply tell us about God, but it unites us to him.

4.5.2 Thomas was able to see all this in one short verse because he also, in his own way, had shared the experience of Isaiah and John; he had contemplated, and was handing on that contemplation to others.

4.5.3 Having completed the course in Philosophy, the seminarians have entered deeply into the questions that human existence poses and have seen, in the light of Christ, the wisdom of the answers human reason can give. They have also seen many times that all human wisdom can do is to point out the inadequacy of a human answer. With this preparation, they are now ready to look at Christ in his glory, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and who is the 'Yes' to all God's promises. With Thomas as guide, they will see Christ and God in Christ. They will see not simply Christ, but the power of Christ, what Christ can do, and thus see the world as waiting for Christ. They will see what Christ calls us to do, for to see Christ is to hear his invitation. And, responding to that call, they will be joined to him, and their knowledge will be perfected. This is the stage of configuration to Christ.¹⁰

4.5.4 The intellectual journey is paralleled by a spiritual, human and pastoral one. It is not, of course, as if they attained freedom in Philosophy and only now turn to Christ to be configured to him. They had that freedom from the first moment that they were touched by God's grace, the freedom of the children of God given in baptism, the freedom that is configured to the Son of God; they were learning to walk in that freedom as they followed Christ as his disciples. The configuration that takes place now is an intensification of the journey that all the baptized should make, and it is also the special journey of those who are to be made in holy orders like Christ, who is priest and also servant and shepherd.

4.5.5 All that has been said about human and spiritual formation before applies here, and indeed an even greater and more beautiful self-giving is called for. Pastoral formation becomes more important, as a place of finding priestly identity in union with Christ, which then helps focus the human, spiritual and academic formation.

4.5.6 It is during this stage that, after the ordinary has responded favourably to the seminarian's written request, the ministries of lector and acolyte are conferred and exercised. Because of the difficulty of travel which makes return to the seminary impractical, it is also in the later years of this stage that the seminarian is led through the "ministerial" subjects.

4.6 Pastoral Year (Canonical Year)

(After two years of the Theology programme)

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. Whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace to this house!"

¹⁰ The RF uses the term "configuration," but as we have already distinguished "configuration" and "conformation" on the basis of Thomas' use of the terms, it seems better to use "conformation" here, so that "conformation to Christ" becomes the defining moment of the process of "formation." The RF clearly intends by "configuration" what Thomas intends by "conformation."

And if anyone is there who shares in peace, your peace will rest on that person; but if not, it will return to you. Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the labourer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and its people welcome you, eat what is set before you; cure the sick who are there, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you." But whenever you enter a town and they do not welcome you, go out into its streets and say, "Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest against you. Yet know this: the kingdom of God has come near." I tell you, on that day it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that town.'

The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, in your name even the demons submit to us!' He said to them, 'I watched Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning. See, I have given you authority to tread on snakes and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing will hurt you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.'
(Luke 10:1-12, 17-20)

4.6.1 At some time during the phase of conformation, and as an integral part of it, the classroom study of theology is set aside and the seminarian is sent on a pastoral placement in his diocese. This normally takes place after two years of theological studies, when the student has begun to have enough theology to be pastorally useful, but the exact timing, and indeed, whether it takes place at all, is up to the discretion of the ordinary.

4.6.2 It has been found that this extended pastoral placement provides both the seminarian and the formators with a good indication of how the seminarian will actually fare as a priest, and an opportunity to work on areas of particular need. It also enables a return to his own diocese, to get to know the bishop, the priests and the people in a way that cannot be achieved during the annual Christmas break. It is an excellent opportunity to exercise the ministries of lector and acolyte, which, therefore, are normally conferred in the seminary before the pastoral placement, although a bishop may also confer the acolytate on his seminarians in his own diocese as they begin the pastoral year. Distant from the seminary, the seminarian will find access to resources limited and living conditions probably less comfortable, and this should lead to a reliance upon God, as with the seventy-two sent out by Jesus. The seminarian should also return with insights and questions arising from his pastoral placement that will inspire and guide his academic studies and formation in general.

4.6.3 Wise guidance from an experienced and qualified priest and a constant routine of prayer embedded into an orderly life are essential components of the pastoral year. This is a time of growing familiarity with the diocesan and parish pastoral plans and the daily, weekly, monthly, and annual routine of a parish: regular visits to outstations, sacramental preparation, support for groups and pious associations, record keeping, meetings of parish and school boards, conflict resolution, liturgy preparation, to name a few. It is important for the pastoral year seminarian to become familiar with the catechetical materials and prayer books in use in his diocese. He may take part in diocesan-level programmes that enable him to get to know his co-workers and to feel more at home in the diocese.

4.6.4 It is only after the pastoral year that the seminarian, when his aptitude for priestly ministry is better known with ample experience in pastoral activities, can apply for candidacy to orders; indeed, this is normally done after all the seminary studies are finished and the candidate is on pastoral placement in his diocese.

4.7 Post-seminary pastoral placement: Pastoral Stage (Vocational Synthesis)

Deacons likewise must be serious, not double-tongued, not indulging in much wine, not greedy for money. They must hold fast to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them be first tested; then, if they prove themselves blameless, let them serve as deacons. (1 Tim 3:8-10)

4.7.1 Following this wise advice, those who have finished seminary studies are not immediately ordained but are tested in the environment in which they will work. A 'double-tongued' seminarian may make an outward show of compliance in the seminary, and later, among his own people, manifest problems with excessive alcohol consumption or an interest in the worldly benefits of

ministry, or simply be inadequate to the task. A seminarian at this stage is being inducted into the pastoral life of an Ordained Minister in carefully chosen parishes under the mentorship of priests who are suitable for such formation, with a gradual assumption of priestly responsibilities in a spirit of service, and making the immediate suitable preparation, with the help of a specific accompaniment, in view of priesthood. It is a time for “hands-on” training before ordination in liturgical, pastoral and administrative matters focusing on the spiritual and pastoral-liturgical aspects of formation, without neglecting the pre-requisite mature human formation. He also needs this time to re-establish relationships so that his ordination might be a meaningful event for the parish and the diocese.

4.7.2 In principle, the Pastoral Stage or Vocational Synthesis shall last one year. However, in the case of certain particular candidates, it may last longer than one year if the bishop so recommends or judges it opportune.

4.7.3 Bishops, parents and other family members, parish priests and others should not easily dismiss a candidate’s feelings of inadequacy before ordination but should address them honestly. The candidate and his family, as well as the ordinary, should be familiar with the example of discernment against ordination found in John Chrysostom’s *On the Priesthood*.

4.7.4 To allow the ordinary the true freedom he needs to discern the candidate's readiness, the candidate, his family members, parish priest and others should not begin planning for a specific ordination date until the candidate has been finally approved. A paramount question is whether the candidate has fully internalised the spirit of service in a way that can be verified. After ordination, the bishop is to ensure that the new deacon exercises his ministry for at least six months (often twelve) before priestly ordination.

4.7.5 The priest who receives a student or deacon for this pastoral placement should be prepared to provide the hands-on training mentioned in 4.7.1, particularly as difficulties of travel often prevent a return to the seminary at this stage (cf 4.5.6).

4.8 Ongoing formation

From Miletus he sent a message to Ephesus, asking the elders of the church to meet him. When they came to him, he said to them:

‘You yourselves know how I lived among you the entire time from the first day that I set foot in Asia . . . And now I know that none of you, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom, will ever see my face again. Therefore I declare to you this day that I am not responsible for the blood of any of you, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the message of his grace, a message that is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all who are sanctified. I coveted no one’s silver or gold or clothing. You know for yourselves that I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions. In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”’

When he had finished speaking, he knelt down with them all and prayed. There was much weeping among them all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, grieving especially because of what he had said, that they would not see him again. Then they brought him to the ship. (Acts 20:17-18, 25-38)

4.8.1 When seminarians finish their studies and return definitively to their distant dioceses, they share the sorrow of the Ephesian presbyters that it is quite likely they will never again see the familiar faces of many of their formators and peers. After the strong community of the seminary and the easy access to books and theological experts, the experience of many priests in these countries is one of isolation. The fierce wolves are ready to attack not only the flock but the shepherds as well. And they may be wolves in sheep’s clothing, parishioners who, in offering friendship to the priest, actually lead

him astray. For this and other reasons, many begin wavering in their priestly identity soon after ordination. The need for ongoing accompaniment and formation is urgent.

4.8.2 The means mentioned in the *Ratio Fundamentalis* are to be encouraged by the bishop in each diocese: fraternal meetings, Spiritual Direction and confession, retreats, common table and common life (recognising the difficulty of the last two in most dioceses). The bishop may appoint a suitable priest to assist him in this area.

4.8.3 As well as an annual retreat, the bishop should, with appropriate assistance, organize annual workshops to assist in human and/or pastoral and/or intellectual formation, co-operating with other dioceses where this would be useful.

4.8.4 Bishops should deal with priests who repeatedly fail to attend on-going formation sessions, seeking out the underlying issues and even using canonical sanctions as a final measure.

4.8.5 *Programmes for Recently Ordained Priests*

Bishops are to take special care of priests in their first five years after ordination, regularly checking that they are receiving adequate support and guidance and that too much is not asked of them too soon.

All seminaries are encouraged to continue offering workshops for the recently ordained and other similar cohorts. The Vangeke Institute is likewise encouraged to continue its workshop for the human formation of clergy. Bishops are to encourage their priests to make use of these workshops.

Should these entities no longer run programmes for priests, the CBC is to make other arrangements.

4.8.6 The Bishops Conference and those institutes running these programmes should also consider from time to time whether it would be useful to have separate programmes for national clergy, or at least to provide opportunities to discuss issues in appropriate groups.

4.8.7 *Providing resources for priests and keeping networks alive*

The Senate for Priestly Formation, with advice from the Board, will recommend to the CBC a suitable priest to produce a regular magazine for priests (4 or 6 times a year). He will receive an annual budget for this from the CBC, although he should look for other sources of funding too. This magazine will contain articles suitable for priests of this region, for example: homiletic hints, examples of good pastoral practice, answers to questions (moral, liturgical, canonical, etc.), interviews with notable priests, spiritual reading, information about new bishops, obituaries, summaries of recent papal and important curial documents, information about ordinations and movements of priests. Although the priest in charge may invite experts in various fields to write for the journal and seek some assistance from qualified journalists, he should make an effort to encourage local priests to contribute, continuing the skills in writing and reflection that they developed in the seminary. The bishops will assist in suggesting and obtaining contributions from the clergy.

Chapter Five The Means Adopted to Provide for Each Dimension of Formation

5.1 Human formation in general

5.1.1 *It is not good for the man to be alone*

Human beings are radically social animals, and our development as humans take place in a community. This community must model the sorts of behaviours that are desirable in priests, and in particular, those behaviours that will be new to the candidates. When choosing formators, the bishops responsible and those advising them should look for people who are adequately prepared and ready to live together in the community; they must be people to whom a seminarian can talk openly. Formators themselves must also be ready to learn from the candidates.

5.1.2 As courses for formators work better with younger candidates, bishops should identify suitable priests and have them begin training within four years of ordination.

5.1.3 A seminary rector should have both pastoral experience and at least three months of training as a formator before taking up the position. If an appointment needs to be made quickly, the party making the appointment should provide for an acting rector to allow the new permanent appointee time to attend some course in formation before taking up office or during his first year.

(i) Personal accompaniment

5.1.4 Personal accompaniment begins with the regular contact between the interested young man and the promoter of vocations. At all stages in the major seminary, the seminarian needs to have one of the formators, designated by the rector, who can talk to him about his progress in formation on a regular basis, normally monthly. The rector should explain this role beforehand to the one who will do the accompanying and, if necessary, see that he has some training.

(ii) Community accompaniment

5.1.6 Priests assigned to a seminary must be willing and able to live as part of a formation community so that by their very lives they provide examples of priestly and communitarian behaviour to the seminarians. This applies *mutatis mutandis* to those who have merely an academic role, even if they are not members of the seminary as such, but simply teachers in a theological institute. Rectors should ensure that no formator or lecturer is a cause of scandal by his or her way of life, and should not be slow in bringing difficult cases to the governing council, who, observing due process, are to keep always in mind the good of those in formation. It is forbidden for priests who are living as laity (by dispensation or otherwise) to have a role in the formation of priests.

5.1.7 Similarly, the community of seminarians has a significant role which the formators must teach and encourage. Seminarians should not turn a blind eye to inappropriate behaviour among their brothers, and still less should they approve it or encourage it. (This can easily happen when formation challenges students to move beyond what most of them find to be their comfort zone, even, as we have seen, in as simple a matter as initiating a conversation with a peer in English rather than *tok pisin*.) Formators need to teach and model fraternal correction and instruct in appropriate ways of reporting faults of seminarians to formators. Seminarians also need to understand that treating fraternal correction as betrayal is a sign of immaturity.

5.1.8 Formators who have skills in running groups are encouraged to use group discussion about human formation issues, such as addictive behaviours (smoking, pornography, etc.).

5.1.9 *The Family*

To a greater or lesser degree, it is the candidate's family that has shaped him to hear God's call and respond. The initial meetings of the vocations director with the parents and other family members should prepare them to continue this role once the young man has entered the seminary. They know well his virtues and vices, and the vocations director and later, as appropriate, the seminary rector should help them to see their role in general as supporting and complementing the seminary formation, rather than uncritically accepting the seminarian's complaints and providing a point of resistance. An agreement to take any complaints through proper channels could be included in the

waiver mentioned in 4.1.6.

5.1.10 *The Role of Women*

For the man who was alone, God created the woman. John Paul II held that the image of God is found in human beings, male and female, as they relate to each other. Healthy relations with women are essential for the human formation of the candidates, and rectors should see that the programme provides opportunities for modelling and learning this. This should be linked to their devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Maria Goretti, Faustina Kowalska, Teresa of Calcutta and other women saints.

5.1.11 Rectors and deans are reminded that it is good that women are given roles in formation, and particularly in positions of authority, for example as teachers. Where circumstances allow the seminarians to be in class with women, this should be considered a useful opportunity. Where theology classes are open to non-seminarians, women should be encouraged to take part, with encouragement extending even to some sponsorship from the institute itself or from the woman's diocese.

5.2 The use of psychologists

Ask advice of every wise person. Bless God at all times, and ask him to guard your ways and bring your paths and purposes to their end. (Tobit 4:19-20)

The expertise of psychologists is helpful, but care needs to be taken. As well as giving input in formation sessions for the seminarians, or general advice to the formators, psychologists are important both for conducting a general psychological evaluation of candidates and for helping individual candidates cope with personal problems. They may be able to identify signs of clinical issues such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, psycho-sexual disorders or compulsive behaviour.

5.2.1 Psychological evaluation

5.2.1.1 The director of the spiritual year, in co-operation with the relevant bishops, should ensure that psychological evaluation takes place during the spiritual year. (Some aspects, such as the intelligence tests, could even be done during the propaedeutic period). If this has not been done, the seminary rector is to see that the evaluation takes place during the first year of philosophy.

5.2.1.2 A careful balance is needed here between the freedom and privacy of the candidate, and the need for bishops and other formators to know enough to make good decisions about formation and vocational discernment.

5.2.1.3 Psychological evaluation is in the external forum, which means that the information gained may be used to make external decisions, such as dismissing a candidate from a vocation programme. It is, however, highly confidential, and should be revealed only to the candidate's ordinary and to the rector and spiritual director of the formation community. Where an institute's legislation requires that the ordinary or rector consult about a candidate's admission or dismissal, he may make some general remarks about the psychological report to those whom he must consult, but should keep silence about more sensitive issues. Results of IQ tests done as part of psychological evaluations, for example, could be shared with those whom he must consult, but details of sexual behaviour should never be shared.

5.2.1.4 To guard against the possibility of a candidate later taking civil action against the psychologist for breaching his privacy, the one organising the evaluation should ensure that, before undergoing the evaluation, the candidate sign a document giving permission for the information to be shared under the strict conditions mentioned above. If the candidate objects before or after that he was forced to give this permission, the rector should explain that this testing is an integral part of the priestly formation programme, and that if he does not want to do it, then he does not want to take part in the formation programme, and he has total freedom to leave. Rectors are advised to give careful explanation long in advance so that such a crisis may be avoided.

If possible, those organizing the evaluation should give candidates a choice of psychologists.

5.2.1.5 Nonetheless, those in charge of formation should be aware, and should let the psychologist concerned know, that Canon 630 § 5 forbids a superior asking in any way for a manifestation of

conscience, which would seem to exclude obtaining the information through a proxy. Thus, while the psychologist is free to ask about external acts, he should not be enquiring about interior motives that would normally be considered of a private nature.

5.2.1.6 Formators should be aware that psychological tests are culture specific, and that there are as yet no psychological tests that have been standardised against a Melanesian population. These tests, and the results of the psychologist's interviews, are not infallible in their own countries, and even less so here. The psychological evaluation should be but one piece of evidence among many others of the candidate's character and ability.

5.2.2 Psychological Therapy and Counselling

5.2.2.1 Rectors and other formators should, in the first instance, deal with behavioural and emotional problems through the normal processes of accompaniment and spiritual direction, perhaps with more frequent meetings.

If the rector arranges for a candidate to have counselling or therapy, before the sessions begin all the parties involved should agree what sort of report the counsellor or therapist will make to the seminary, and what will be considered internal forum. In general, the seminary is not the place for people undergoing therapy, and the rector, consulting the specialist and others, will need to discern when the candidate is best served by taking time out of the seminary until the problem might be resolved.

5.3 Mobile phones, internet and other means of communication

The apostles gathered around Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. He said to them, 'Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.' For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in a boat to a deserted place by themselves.
(Mark 6:30-32)

5.3.1 Mobile phones, the internet, and other means of communication are helpful to the seminarian and will be valuable tools in his priestly ministry. However, particularly in the early stages of formation, they can be a major distraction and can encourage behaviour inappropriate for the priest and even for the Christian.

5.3.2 Regulation is necessary, but it can be counter-productive. The *Ratio Nationalis* cannot give universal and fixed rules for something that is changing so rapidly. Rectors, in consultation with the other formators, will draw up and explain to the students a policy that has the following characteristics:

- It will be accompanied by explanation and by formation in good use.
- It will focus on fostering priestly virtues (e.g., silence and detachment from worldly and tribal affairs).
- It will move to a greater degree of self-regulation, preparing men to be priests who can use these media well.
- It will provide reasonable opportunities for the good use of these media.
- Where penalties are attached, it should be for offences that can readily be noticed, so that the regulation does not become a dead letter.

5.3.3 Formators should provide good models of usage of these media in their personal lives and by incorporating these new media in their formation activities: PowerPoint, research on the internet, a web presence for the institute.

These media present particular dangers with regard to chastity, such as pornographic images and phone sex. This behaviour can easily be compulsive or addictive. Not only must formators give regular warnings, but they should also offer seminarians practical strategies for avoiding and/or dealing with these addictions.

5.4

Spiritual formation

He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.' He said to them, 'When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins,

for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us.

And do not bring us to the time of trial.

And he said to them, 'Suppose one of you has a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say to him, "Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; for a friend of mine has arrived, and I have nothing to set before him." And he answers from within, "Do not bother me; the door has already been locked, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything." I tell you, even though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, at least because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs.

'So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? If you, then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!'

(Luke 11:1-13)

5.4.1 This *Ratio Nationalis* endorses what *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation* 101-115 says about spiritual formation, particularly how it has its heart in personal union with Christ; the importance of knowing Christ through the Scriptures and being united to him through the sacraments – particularly the Eucharist and Penance – and spending time with him in the Liturgy of the Hours, in silent prayer, in the annual retreat; it does not forget how this spirituality is lived through the obedience, poverty and chastity appropriate to a diocesan priest, nor the value in attaining this of spiritual direction, devotion to the saints, popular devotions, familiarity with the Church Fathers, and a careful cultivation of the virtues.

It has these comments to be made in addition.

Bishops and seminary rectors are to ensure that spiritual directors are properly trained for their work, and should not let them start in the job until at least some training has been undertaken.

5.4.2 The rector is to ensure that the formation programme teaches seminarians about various methods and approaches to prayer and praying. In particular, they should be taught not to become focused on feelings, but on developing a willingness to spend time with God, developing a personal relationship. A "cargo cult," instrumental, or manipulative approach to prayer should be identified and warned against. Nothing less than the Holy Spirit is God's gift to those who ask him.

5.4.3 Ascetical practices such as silence, fasting, self-denial for the sake of others, and the works of mercy need to be taught along with prayer as part of an integral whole. These should be part of the seminary programme, particularly in Lent. As charity begins at home, rectors should make it a priority that the seminarians provide for the physical and spiritual needs of their sick brothers

5.4.4 Before seminarians go on holidays or any time away from the seminary, rectors, supported by the other formators, are to remind these men that the life of prayer knows no holidays; they should address the real difficulties to be faced in maintaining a rhythm of prayer outside the seminary structure.

5.4.5 A strong sense of the priest's spiritual identity is essential. The number of priests (and ministers in other Christian denominations) who stand for political office indicates that at a cultural level there is lack of clarity about the distinction between political leadership and service and the leadership and service of the priest. Formators must regularly put before the seminarians the image of Christ, who came not to be served, but to serve, and whose kingdom is not of this world. They must explain the historical reasons why priests were allowed to stand for election in the early days of independence and the changed situation. Where possible, rectors could invite politicians who can give sincere personal testimonies of priesthood as the more noble vocation, or priests who attempted politics and realised its dangers and its inability to deliver. Vocations promoters and, as appropriate,

later formators need to carefully explain to family members and leaders of the seminarian's community from the early stages of his vocation these aspects of priestly identity. Seminarians and priests need to be aware of recent pastoral letters of the Bishops Conference on this issue and on political life in PNGSI in general.

5.5 Intellectual formation

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgement. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. (Romans 13:1-3a)

5.5.1 The weaknesses of secondary education in PNG & SI have already been mentioned. There is a great need for academic rigour and demanding standards, not in a way that excludes suitable candidates from studies, but rather in a way that enables the student to progress not merely by learning more things, but by gradually working to a higher and higher standard, and instilling in him a long-lasting pattern of study that is part of his priestly service, a reflective lifestyle.

5.5.2 The governments of Papua New Guinea and of the Solomon Islands have approached this problem by adopting the means used in most countries: requiring all tertiary institutes to register (which requires meeting numerous standards), requiring all courses for awards to be accredited, and producing a national qualifications framework.¹¹ The legislation covers all bodies that grant degrees – the PNG act specifically covers even seminaries. If approached in the right spirit, this legislation can be of great assistance in helping major seminaries reach and maintain the standards appropriate to this part of the world. As well as providing standards for the governance and administration of the institute, and the welfare of the students, these standards address specific academic issues such as qualifications of lecturers, provision of libraries and information technology, and descriptions of what can be called a diploma or a degree – both in terms of the amount of study undertaken and its depth and rigour. The rectors of the PNG major seminaries, assisted by their deans, will need to lead their institutes through these processes of registration and accreditation, either themselves or by being affiliated to an institute that has already done this.

5.5.3 When registering their institute, rectors with their deans should provide programmes or tracks of study that correspond to the differing backgrounds, abilities and aspirations of their students.

5.5.3.1 Normally the two years of philosophy lead to a diploma. For the four years of theology (or five if the pastoral year is included), the final award should be at least an associate's degree, but more commonly a bachelor's degree. It is not only the length of the studies, but also the depth and the autonomy of the learning that makes a bachelor's degree. If priests are to be considered on an equal footing with other professionals, they should at least reach this level. The criteria are given in the appendix.

Rectors and deans are encouraged to consider exit awards for students who do not complete the entire programme, at least for the completion of every two years of study.

5.5.3.2 Historically in Melanesia, major seminary studies have been divided into a three-year Religious Studies programme (which included philosophy) and, after a pastoral year, a three-year Theology programme. For institutes that choose to retain the three years of religious studies, there are two options.

A Where the norm is that students enter religious studies after two years of propaedeutic and the spiritual year, the first two years of religious studies should be focussed on philosophy and the third year should correspond to the first year of theology as described in Chapter 6. Students transferring after the three years of religious studies (and pastoral year) to an institute with a two-year philosophy and four-year theology programme would enter as second-year theology students.

¹¹ At the time of writing, the SI qualifications framework has not yet been gazetted.

B Where the norm is that students go straight from Grade 12 to the spiritual year and then do religious studies, the first year of religious studies should be devoted to introductory studies in English, methodology, catechetics, and philosophy, while years two and three are devoted more intensively to philosophy. Students finishing this Religious Studies programme would transfer into the first year of Theology.

5.3.3.3 Where an institute offers only religious studies and then sends its students to another institute, the dean of the sending institute, supported by the rector, should align the curriculum with the curriculum of the receiving institute.

5.5.3.4 It is desirable that at least one theological faculty in PNG and SI offer the STB (Bachelor of Sacred Theology), in order to make it easier for graduates to study for a licentiate overseas. Bishops and major superiors are recommended to keep the needs of the STB programme in mind when assigning priests who are capable of lecturing.

5.5.4 Generally accepted academic standards require that a teacher is always at least one level higher than a student; that some form of graduate study is required to teach at bachelor's level, and a bachelor's degree to teach at diploma level. However, the Church's own standard is higher: the normal qualification for a lecturer in a major seminary is the licentiate, which is equivalent to a research master's degree. Where possible, an ordinary who sends a priest for further studies with a view to teaching should enrol him in a programme for a licentiate. Deans, supported by rectors, should ensure that teachers teach in the areas for which their higher studies and further research have prepared them. The dean, supported by his rector, should never allow someone to teach a major subject in a seminary if he has no formal qualification higher than standard seminary studies. The rector of a formation institute is to ensure that there is a policy for professional development of the formators, teachers and other key personnel, and that a sufficient sum is allocated each year in the budget.

5.5.5 Accreditation will require institutes to give desired learning outcomes for each unit, and to devise assessment that will test whether that outcome has been achieved. Under the leadership of the dean, lecturers are to co-operate with this process and guide students into providing their own understanding of what the academics say, rather than reproducing material without understanding.

5.5.6 The dean of studies, supported by the rector, is to ensure that, as far as possible, studies in the major seminary are based upon primary sources.

A detailed description of the content, distribution and method of the studies will be found in chapter 6. It is the responsibility of the rectors of propaedeutic centres, directors of the spiritual year, and deans of studies of major seminaries to implement these instructions.

5.5.7 The dean of studies, supported by all the faculty, will explain the dishonesty and vanity of plagiarism to students, and the policies for dealing with it. The dean should also provide training for lecturers in detecting plagiarism and in following policies regarding it.

5.5.8 Each candidate who participates in the propaedeutic programme or the spiritual year will be given an official record of his attainments, but no government recognised academic award will be given for completing these stages of formation, thereby avoiding the need for accreditation. Nonetheless rectors or directors of these courses, and the teachers they engage, should take heed of general academic standards, particularly with regard to the use of learning outcomes, the provision of academic resources, and the qualifications of teachers. For those teaching English, this means some training in teaching English as a Second Language.

5.5.9 Specialised Studies

5.5.9.1 The rector and/ or dean of studies, as appropriate, should indicate to the bishop or major superior a candidate's suitability for higher studies (licentiate or doctorate) or for further studies in a particular field in the regular academic reports or the annual reports from the seminary. The rector and the dean of studies should offer reasonable assistance to their graduates in choosing appropriate places and in making the application.

5.5.9.2 Bishops and major superiors should consult with the Senate and Board for Priestly Formation before sending priests for higher studies to avoid over-supply in some areas of studies and shortages

in others.

5.6

Pastoral formation

I am an elder myself, and with you I am a witness to the sufferings of Christ, and with you I shall have a share in the glory that is to be revealed. Be the shepherds of the flock of God that is entrusted to you. Watch over, not simply as a duty, but gladly; not for sordid money, but because you are eager to do it. Never be a dictator over any group that is put in your charge, but be an example that the whole flock can follow. When the Chief Shepherd appears, you will be given a crown of unfading glory. (1 Peter 5:1-4)

5.6.1 Supervised pastoral formation takes place at two different levels of intensity during the major seminary.

5.6.1.1 There is weekly pastoral work done at or near the seminary, under the direction of the seminary's pastoral director, and supervised by a priest, religious, teacher or catechist on site. The director of pastoral formation, supported by the rector, is to provide opportunities for seminarians to reflect on this work with himself or another formator, individually or in groups. The rector is to ensure that the director of pastoral formation has had enough training to undertake this task.

At first this reflection will be at the level of human reactions, but over the years it should become more truly theological. The director of pastoral formation should ensure that there is a gradation in pastoral work: in the early years it should be with people who are generally receptive (e.g. catechizing children), but later it will be with people who have deeper problems, and who may even in certain ways resist the students' efforts.

Similar to this is the pastoral work done in nearby parishes during the term breaks.

5.6.1.2 There is the pastoral year, already described at 4.6.1-2. In this case, the site is chosen by the bishop, who also appoints the supervisor, who is normally the parish priest of the site or his equivalent. Taking into account the age and experience of the seminarian, the bishop may assign him to a particular apostolate or activity at diocesan level.

5.6.1.3 Seminarians normally spend the long break each year in their home parish, where the seminarian is to make himself open and available to the parish priest. The report sent back to the seminary by the parish priest merely attests that the seminarian's behaviour has been appropriate while on holidays; it is not an evaluation of his pastoral ability.

5.6.2 The requirement of the acolyte to exercise his ministry is fulfilled by doing those things that ordinarily belong to an acolyte. The distribution of Holy Communion, which an acolyte can do as an extraordinary minister, should only take place when there are insufficient ordinary ministers.

Similarly, the homily at Mass is a liturgical ministry reserved to the ordained, although breaking open God's Word at other prayer services is encouraged.

5.6.3 *Supervision and reporting of pastoral placements*

5.6.3.1 It is the bishop's responsibility to ensure that the priest receiving a seminarian during his pastoral year is adequately prepared to give good example, to pray with him, to provide work for the seminarian, to supervise him, and to write up a report.

5.6.3.2 It is strongly recommended that, before the seminarians arrive in the parishes, the bishop, with the assistance of others as appropriate, should meet with the priests who will be supervising the seminarians and explain to these priests what will be expected of them. In particular he should remind these priests that the report should not gloss over the seminarian's weaknesses and faults: this renders the report useless for the ordinary and does a disservice to the seminarian. Priests taking a seminarian for a pastoral year for the first time may need a longer period of preparation. The seminarians themselves may attend some of these sessions, as appropriate.

5.6.3.3 Neighbouring dioceses may combine for these preparatory sessions, particularly if the numbers involved are low.

5.6.3.4 At the beginning of the pastoral placement, the supervising priest should discuss with the seminarian what his strengths and weaknesses are, and what he hopes to gain from the pastoral placement, so that the priest may choose appropriate activities during the placement.

5.6.3.5 For a diocesan seminarian, it is often important that these placements take place in his own diocese, to strengthen the bonds, particularly when the seminary is distant from the diocese; however, the bishop may choose to send a seminarian outside of the diocese, which would help him learn that the priest is meant to serve all people, not only his *wantoks*. He could also consider using half of the pastoral year to send the seminarian for a pastoral experience in another country.

5.6.3.6 It is important that, when on pastoral placement, the seminarian does not lose his identity as a seminarian, particularly in terms of prayer and avoidance of inappropriate behaviour. The bishop should choose as the supervising priest one who has a strong commitment to his priestly life and is willing to share it with the seminarian, making of the presbytery a community of formation. Moreover, both the bishop and the supervising priest should remind the seminarian that the short pastoral placements outside the seminary campus are not holidays from being a seminarian. Prayer, like breathing, knows no holiday.

5.6.3.7 If the supervising priest offers no support in maintaining a regular rhythm of prayer, the seminarian may need to look to a religious or other community in the parish for help.

5.6.3.8 The bishop, either personally, or through the pastoral director of the seminary or some other suitable priest, religious or layperson, will make regular checks on the seminarian. The first of these checks, which should be done by a visit in person, should take place between three and six weeks after the student has started the placement.

5.6.3.9 If it becomes clear that this site is not an appropriate one for a pastoral placement, the ordinary should move the seminarian to another site.

5.6.4 The rector should ensure that the seminary programme provides opportunities for all seminarians to have some preparation for the pastoral year while at the seminary, and the opportunity to reflect theologically, spiritually, humanly and pastorally on it when they return: lecturers in particular should bear this in mind. The dean may give more capable students a research project to do under an appropriate supervisor, which would be integrally related to their pastoral work, complementing and assisting it. The first stage of this project would be research into the history, structure and demography of the parish and its current state.

5.7 The Protection of Minors and the Accompaniment of Victims

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to anyone by whom they come! It would be better for you if a millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea, than for you to cause one of these little ones to stumble.' (Luke 17:1-2)

5.7.1 The rector of the first formation community that the candidate enters should ensure that the candidate knows the procedures to follow in case a formator or other staff member behaves inappropriately towards him. The rector of every formation community should ensure that, once the candidates have reached legal adulthood, the basic guidelines contained in *Right Relationships* about being alone with minors, etc., are explained to them.

The dean will ensure that a broader course on child protection, including the responsibilities of Church workers, is given before the seminarian goes on the pastoral year, and the rector, with other formators, will arrange regular input to refresh and deepen that awareness in later years. Those organizing on-going formation should also deal with the topic regularly.

5.7.2 Speaking about child sexual abuse may open old wounds for those who suffered themselves. Those running courses or workshops should be prepared for this possibility, so that during the sessions candidates may be informed that confidential counselling is available if the need arises.

5.7.3 This issue will raise many other related ones about use of power, clericalism, institution vs people, fraternal correction, confidentiality, chastity, and so on. PNG and SI should learn from the

mistakes made in countries such as Australia and the United States.

5.8 Observation and assessment of candidates

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. (1 John 4:1)

5.8.1 Involvement of bishops

Bishops are reminded of their obligation under canon 259§2 to regularly visit the seminary and talk with their candidates. Realising the difficulties of transport, cost and time, this visit should take place at least twice a year, although the bishop could delegate the vocations promoter or another suitable priest to carry out one of these annual visits.

5.8.2 The Scrutinies

5.8.2.1 The formation community at the propaedeutic centre, spiritual year centre or seminary should come together to assist the rector to write a report on each seminarian at the end of each academic year. These reports should be sent to the bishop concerned, who is free to discuss the matter further. These reports should recommend whether the candidate should return, or should have a year or more out of the formation programme for discernment.

5.8.2.2 Candidates should be evaluated by the formation community before each major step: entry into the spiritual year, entry into major seminary, lectorate, acolytate, candidacy, diaconate and presbyterate.

5.8.2.3 In evaluation, the formators should seek input from the laypeople who know the seminarian through pastoral work, etc., particularly women.

5.8.2.4 Parishioners should be regularly reminded by those who visit the seminarian on pastoral placement that they should inform the visitor or the bishop if they have noticed behaviour in the seminarian that is not appropriate for a priest. Before ordination, the ordinary should ensure that banns are proclaimed in the seminarian's home parish and in any place where he has stayed for an extended period of pastoral work.

5.8.3 Dismissal

5.8.3.1 What needs to be in writing

When the formation community decides that it is necessary to dismiss a seminarian, after consulting with the bishop, the rector is to explain the decision to the seminarian and to give the decision in writing with a prudent explanation, at least in summary, of the circumstances leading to the dismissal and a synthesis of the discernment process, and to leave a copy in the seminarian's file. The rector should also write up and keep on file an explanation of a spontaneous departure of a seminarian; in both cases there should be enough information so that the file may be used to make an adequate response in the future to legitimate queries concerning the reasons for the seminarian's departure.

5.8.3.2 Evaluations not to be taken lightly

Bishops are reminded that, although they may retain a seminarian whom a formation community has decided to dismiss and make other arrangements for the rest of his formation, experience has shown that it is dangerous to ignore the formation community's recommendation.

5.8.4 Keeping of records in general

When a candidate moves from one stage of formation to another, the one in charge of the current stage should send a copy of the candidate's file directly to the one in charge of the next stage, and, where academic records are kept by a dean, the dean should send them to the dean of the receiving academic institute before Christmas.

Chapter Six Academic Programmes

6.1 Minor seminaries and other similar institutes

Minor seminaries and houses of formation will offer a standard school curriculum. In a minor seminary, there will also be extra classes on prayer, catechetics and particularly priesthood, to aid in discernment. The same needs will be addressed in a house of formation, adapted to reduced opportunities their situation offers in terms of time and personnel. At enrolment, the rector of a minor seminary is to ensure that parents and students are aware that this is not just another secondary school.

6.2 Pre-Propaedeutic and Propaedeutic Centres

6.2.1 *The main academic focus of the pre-propaedeutic and propaedeutic centres*

Each rector, in consultation with the other formators and teachers, is to develop a manner of life and programme of studies appropriate to his propaedeutic centre and the availability of teachers. However, these guidelines are to be followed, in the light of 4.2:

- The primary academic focus will be the mastery of English, to an independently tested IELTS level of at least 5.0. They need to become familiar with the style of academic English, especially how to cite quotations and summaries of the works they are writing about using basic Chicago (also known as Turabian) style.
- Of equal importance, but taking up less teaching time, will be courses in catechetics. There will also be some instruction in prayer, liturgy and the spiritual life sufficient for this stage of formation. Candidates should learn something about the priestly vocation to assist in their discernment. As noted earlier, there is also some input on human formation.
- When a competent teacher is available, they should have a gradual and systematic introduction to Latin, which will be useful in its own right in liturgy and for later theological studies, and will also to assist in logical thinking, in the study of English (both in terms of words and of understanding grammar), and as a stepping stone towards other ancient and modern languages.

6.2.2 *Minor subjects in the pre-propaedeutic and propaedeutic centres*

Beyond this, however, there should be other studies of a general nature, to awaken their curiosity, to whet their appetite for knowledge, to enrich them as human beings by introducing them to the best achievements of human thought and imagination. Some or all of the following areas should be covered, according to the availability of teachers and other resources. There may be scope for students to choose between alternatives.

- The classics of East and West, as shining examples of good literature, and of societies moving from tribalism through the city state to much larger political units, and also to provide a background for their philosophical studies.
- Great works of drama and poetry, both studied in class and also performed, to improve ability and confidence in public speaking; regular screening of great movies, followed by discussion. This should include poetry, drama and movies from PNG and SI.
- Musical notation and the rudiments of musical theory, and an introduction to great works of music, and reproductions of major works of art.
- Puzzles and logic games and debating. (These sorts of skills feature strongly in university entry tests.)
- General knowledge about the natural sciences, accompanied by some observations (especially, if possible, in astronomy). Some further work in mathematics will be useful.
- An introduction to world geography and history.
- Critical analysis of newspaper articles, television documentaries etc., on current events.

6.2.3 *Hours devoted to each subject*

The number of hours in the classroom for each field of study would depend upon whether or not Latin is offered.

	With Latin	Without Latin
English	35% ± 5%	50% ± 5%
Catechetics (inc. human formation)	25% ± 5%	25% ± 5%
Latin	20% ± 5%	
General studies	20% ± 5%	25% ± 5%

6.2.4 *Method of teaching*

English is often most effectively learned through repeated acts of reading works written in good English and writing about them. Students need to become familiar with the English terms used in Scripture and Catholic theology. Therefore, students can improve their English through the study of Scripture and the Catechism, while also having classes on English grammar. Increased proficiency in English must be combined with learning basic academic skills, such as how to read a document, how to quote from a document, and how to cite a document in a basic way. For example, students might write short reflections on Scripture and be required to accurately quote and cite verses of Scripture in those reflections. In the process, students will be introduced to properly citing quotations and summaries of the works they are writing about, using basic Chicago (also known as Turabian) style.

6.3 The Spiritual Year (Propaedeutic Year II)

I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect. (Rom 12:1-2)

6.3.1 *Content*

6.3.1.1 *The Mystery of Christ*

The Spiritual Year begins with the course on the Mystery of Christ, in which ‘the mystery of salvation should be so proposed that the students perceive the meaning, order, and pastoral end of their studies. At the same time they should be helped to establish and penetrate their own entire lives with faith and be strengthened in embracing their vocation with a personal dedication and a joyful heart’ (*Optatam Totius* 14).

6.3.1.2 *‘Do not be conformed to this world. . .’*

Students need to understand the world they have come from, to discern what in it is truly good and provides a foundation for life as a seminarian, and what seems good but may impede their progress. Sometimes referred to as the “Melanesian Seminar,” this covers topics such as:

- family life (including domestic violence and polygamy);
- celibacy;
- addictions;
- corruption;
- *Papa graun* (relation to ancestral land);
- environment;
- male identity and sexuality;
- *sanguma*;
- technology;
- dreams and visions;
- cultural diversity;
- history of the local church.

6.3.1.3 *‘But be transformed by the renewing of your minds.’*

Students need to learn how to allow this transformation to take place. In their classes on spirituality they should cover:

- spiritual life (purgative, illuminative, unitive);
- prayer (vocal prayer, meditation, contemplation);

- *lectio divina*;
- liturgy (particularly the Liturgy of the Hours, whose regular recitation will be new to them);
- lives of saints (e.g. Sts Peter & Paul, Charles Borromeo, John Paul II, Peter ToRot);
- Marian spirituality;
- forming conscience;
- virtue;
- selected passages from Catholic spiritual classics.

6.3.1.4 The director of the Spiritual Year is to consult the rectors of the propaedeutic centres so that unnecessary repetition can be avoided; at the same time he should be aware of any gaps – especially in background for the Bible and basic catechesis on the Church and sacraments – that would normally be presumed in the Spiritual Year and the major seminary (cf 6.6.1.2). It is the duty of the director of the Spiritual Year to fill those gaps.

6.3.2 *The method of study*

6.3.1.2 The focus of the Spiritual Year is interiorisation (cf. 4.3.2.6). The learning tasks given to the students will focus not on memorising and giving back to the teacher what was said in class, but in applying it to oneself. Exercises for assisting this include group discussion and the writing of a spiritual autobiography (as a response to reading spiritual classics). In a very special way, the study of this year is meant to be influenced and to influence the activities that are part of the human, spiritual and pastoral dimensions of formation.

6.3.2.2 In order to achieve this reflection and interiorisation, contact hours should not be too heavy. Three to four hours each morning will suffice. There should be roughly equal time devoted to the “Melanesian Seminar” as to the more directly spiritual subjects.

6.4 Major Seminaries in General

6.4.1 Since each major seminary has its own system of calculating credits, and since some seminaries use terms and others use semesters, the guidelines given below for the academic programme will be expressed in terms of learning hours. A full explanation of learning hours is given in Appendix 2.

6.4.2 The dean of each seminary is to ensure that the seminary's transcripts, handbooks, etc., explain its equivalence of credits and learning hours, to make curricula easily comparable across seminaries.

6.5 The Philosophy Curriculum

6.5.1.1 It is in the study of philosophy that the restlessness of the human heart (Augustine, *Confessions* 1.1) becomes evident in its longing for ultimate explanations (Aristotle, *Metaphysics* A.1-2). And it is in that same study that this desire to know is wedded to a persistent refusal to be satisfied with the idols or sham wisdom endlessly offered up by our own human hearts. Together, the desire and the critical discernment rely on a prior, tacit connection to the truth, a connection which John Paul II calls “the fundamental relationship that exists between the human spirit and truth, that truth which is revealed to us fully in Jesus Christ.”¹²

6.5.1.2 To recognize this relationship as basically human – one that reaches all cultures and eras – is an integral part of the preparation for missionary priesthood. Furthermore, to reflect on the human ‘fundamental relationship’ to truth is part of the intellectual formation that enables future priests both ‘to enter into fruitful dialogue with the contemporary world’ and, by understanding the voices of our neighbours, ‘to uphold the truth of the faith by the light of reason, thereby revealing its beauty’ (RF 116). This path of loving others by listening to them and inviting them into the beauty of the truth is

¹² John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (1992), par. 52.

one way in which the seminarian's intellectual formation remains 'a necessary expression of both human and spiritual formation.'¹³

6.5.1.3 In its 2011 update to *Sapientia Christiana*, the Congregation for Catholic Education emphasises that philosophical formation includes certain habits of mind as well as specific content.¹⁴ Habits of mind certainly include critical discernment, but also docility and the intellectual courage to face reality as it is, in its complexity. These habits are central to the discipleship stage of seminary preparation (RF 62-63). The philosophical content in question both draws on the Church's philosophical heritage and openly engages with contemporary philosophical and cultural currents, guided by the conviction that all truth is God's truth. This stage of formation bears its own unity, distinct from that of theological study. The *Decree* adds, 'for each area, the proper field of study and the specific method must be respected'; maintaining these boundaries is for the sake of 'consonance with reality and [with] the variety of human ways of knowing.'¹⁵ The stage of specifically philosophical preparation is also distinguished by its aim, namely, to develop 'an adequate inner freedom and maturity' in following Christ, who is the truth, so that seminarians can subsequently choose to focus on configuring their minds to Christ in theological study (RF 67).

6.5.1.4 *General Requirements*

For these reasons, the philosophy programme must have its own integrity, though it may be combined with introductory theology units, some study of the human sciences, and the teaching of general academic method.

6.5.1.5 Approximate weight given to each subject area:

Methodology and Languages	10%, 240 Learning Hours (LH)
Social Sciences	10%, 240 LH
Introductory Theology	20%, 480 LH
Philosophy	60%, 1440 LH, consisting of:
Area 1: History of Philosophy	25%, 360 LH
Area 2: Logic, Philosophy of Nature, and Metaphysics	25%, 360 LH
Area 3: Philosophical Anthropology and Practical Philosophy	25%, 360 LH
Additional Philosophy (including further study in the above areas)	25%, 360 LH

6.5.1.6 These are general guidelines. The only strict requirement is that the minimum amount of purely philosophical study for such a programme be 1440 learning hours, which must take place during the first two or three years of major seminary, depending on the institution; if philosophical studies are focused in two years, they must constitute at least 60% of the course load.

6.5.1.7 While the subjects listed below must be covered, they do not need to have their own unit but may be combined. For example, Philosophy of Beauty could be covered with Philosophical Anthropology or Epistemology. Because the Solomon Islands do not fall under the PNGNQF, the percentages apply to them, not the learning-hour requirements.

¹³ *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, par. 51.

¹⁴ Congregation for Catholic Education, *Decree on the Reform of Ecclesiastical Studies of Philosophy* (2011), par. 11.

¹⁵ *Decree*, par. 4.

Specific Requirements

6.5.2 History of Philosophy

6.5.2.1 The foundation of meaningful engagement with the philosophical tradition lies in the study of its emergence and development. For seminarians to be able to enter this long conversation, they must first have a synthetic sense of what has already come up in that conversation. That sense should consist, not in empty memorisation of which philosopher said what, but in an encounter with the life of philosophical debate through the centuries. As far as possible, such an encounter should take place by working through the struggle to find a way to the truth that marks the tradition's primary texts. Because of the difficulties with English among PNG and SI students, faculty should make every effort to provide readable translations, along with assistance in carrying out that reading. Relying solely on lecturer-provided summaries does a disservice to future priests, who will need to be able to read (at least) Church documents as part of their ministry.

6.5.2.2 Familiarity with the terminology of ancient Greek and medieval Christian, Jewish, and Muslim thought, along with a felt appreciation of the problems centrally encountered by these thinkers, is especially important in preparation for the study of Catholic theology, which has long made use of their philosophical language and distinctions. Students of this history should particularly be asked to consider the emergence of philosophy out of various tribal mythologies that bear striking resemblances to their own local contexts.

6.5.2.3 In view of the developments of modernity that constitute the conceptual background for the plurality of Christian denominations found in PNGSI and for the Vatican Councils, study of what is designated 'modern' philosophy should attend to the breaks and continuities with previous traditions of thought. Significant attention must also be given to more recent work in philosophy, in both European and Anglo-American traditions, since these traditions shape the global philosophical conversation today. They also offer ways of thinking through contemporary pastoral challenges regarding the environment, cultural pluralism, sexual self-understanding, and racial justice.

6.5.2.4 Required Subjects: Ancient, Medieval, Modern, and Contemporary Philosophy

6.5.3 Systematic Philosophy

6.5.3.1 The other approaches to philosophical investigation necessary for future priests to form their own, synthetic philosophical standpoint are:

1) synoptic attention to central areas of philosophical problems and

2) various ways of offering Melanesian students entry into their own place in the conversation.

The second approach involves an initial introduction to philosophy at the beginning of their studies, and, towards the end of the philosophy programme, a research project requiring some level of mature contribution to the broader philosophical conversation. In addition, the philosophy curriculum should consider local philosophy, such as the possibility of a distinctive Melanesian philosophy, or Eastern approaches to philosophy from China, Japan, or India.

6.5.3.2 The regions of systematic philosophy arise from the real divisions of things and from differing fields of human concern. Merely on the basis of reason and general revelation, we long to know the truth about God and God's world. This calls for the study of logic (investigating the nature of truth as such and its preservation in reasoning), of natural philosophy, and above all of metaphysics. The latter receives a special emphasis as the height of human reason and as the pivot from the *logos* of the world to the divine *Logos* Who is its source and summit. Learning how natural reason can support the Catholic understanding of God, as well as the limits of natural theology, is vital, and St Thomas Aquinas should be put to the students as a model for the systematic integration of faith and reason (cf *Fides et Ratio* 43). Nevertheless, especially in the light of present crises concerning the nature and accessibility of truth and the ecological question, logic and the philosophy of nature retain their distinctive importance.

6.5.3.3 Finally, and of particular importance in the Melanesian communal context, philosophical anthropology and the broadly political side of philosophy, including ethics, are to be worked out as

preliminary to theological anthropology, theological ethics, and the theological view of human community as transformed by the Church. Certain fundamental truths are at stake here: the human unity of body and soul, human dignity, the role of freedom in nature, the knowability and persuasiveness of natural law, and ‘the necessary conformity of civil law to moral law.’¹⁶

6.5.3.4 In each of these areas of systematic philosophy, there should be two overarching goals: first, to invite students to an existential commitment to the pursuit of truth and to living well in community; second, to enable their recognition of various patterns of response to the problems encountered in the discipline, along with the difficulties facing each pattern. Such recognition will be crucial pastorally for noticing the ways that people implicitly live out certain sorts of answers to life’s problems. For example, the ethical commitment to utilitarianism in someone’s life, whether reflectively adopted or not, will run aground in certain ways that priests should be prepared to anticipate and humbly interpret.

6.5.3.5 Required Subjects:

General: Introduction to Philosophy, Philosophy Research Paper¹⁷

Area 2: Logic, Cosmology, Metaphysics of Being and of God (the latter is also called Theodicy or Natural Theology), Philosophy of Religion

Area 3: Philosophical Anthropology, Epistemology, Ethics, Political Philosophy, and Philosophy of Art & Beauty (Aesthetics)

6.5.3.6 Auxiliary Subjects:

Melanesian Philosophy, Eastern Philosophy, Philosophy of Science, Economic and Social Thought, Great Book Seminar

6.5.4 *Non-Philosophical Subjects*

6.5.4.1 The remainder of the time spent in the discipleship phase focuses on human and academic formation. Namely, some study of the human sciences (psychology, anthropology, and so on) should prepare students to engage with the breadth of culture pastorally and appreciatively. Such study may also enable future priests to contribute to their communities via local research. Moreover, due to the variety of educational experiences prior to entering the seminary, students in the Melanesian context need special guidance in the methods of formal education and formal writing. Such guidance must extend to simple matters of initiation (how to use a library catalog, what are the components of an academic book, what needs to be included in a footnote, and so on), but these rule-governed behaviours should be rooted in the development of intellectual virtues (honesty, curiosity, openness, and discernment, among others).

6.5.4.2 At the discretion of the seminary, introductions to the subject areas detailed below under Theology Studies may also be taught. These units build upon the foundation laid at the propaedeutic centres. This is also the time to begin studying the classical languages. Admittedly, the students are still learners in English, but the study of these languages, especially Latin, assists in their mastery of English and helps their studies in ways listed at 6.6.3.11. As a preparation for their theological studies, students should be introduced to Ecclesiastical Latin, though weaker students may be exempted from this requirement.

6.5.4.3 Required Subjects:

Methodology, English, Psychology, Cultural Anthropology, Religious Anthropology, Basic Ecclesiastical Latin.

6.5.4.4 Auxiliary Subjects:

¹⁶ Decree, par. 11.

¹⁷ Students on a lower academic track who will probably not earn a Bachelor’s Degree may be exempted from this paper.

Sociology, Computer Literacy, Public Speaking, Communication Skills, Greek; introductory theological subjects, especially Liturgy and Scripture.

	CTI 1 credit = 30 learning hours	Credits	Learning Hours	%	Ratio
Philosophy - General	Introduction to Philosophy		90		
	Research Paper		90		
	Elective		90		
		9	270	17%	
History	Ancient		90		
	Medieval		90		
	Modern		90		
	Contemporary I: Analytic		90		
	Contemporary II: Continental		90		
			15	450	28%
Speculative	Logic		90		
	Cosmology		90		
	Metaphysics I: Being		90		
	Metaphysics II: God		90		
	Phil of Religion		90		
			15	450	28%
Practical Philosophy	Human Person		90		
	Epistemology		90		
	Phil of Beauty		90		
	Ethics		90		
	Political Philosophy		90		
			15	450	28%
Philosophy Total			1620		
Methodology & Languages	Methodology 1: Study and Reading Skills		90		
	Methodology 2: Research Methods		90		
	Academic English		90		
	Basic Latin 1		90		
		12	360		
Social Science	Introduction to Psychology and Counselling		90		
	Cultural Anthropology		90		
	Religious Anthropology		90		
		9	270		
Intro to Theology	Introduction to Old Testament and Biblical Archaeology I		90		
	Introduction to the New Testament and Biblical Archaeology II		90		
	Introduction to Liturgy		90		
	Catechetics and Evangelisation		90		
Ministerial – not required	Liturgical Year		30		
	Ministry of Lector		30		

for the	Liturgy of the Hours	P/F	15		
	Musical Notation	P/F	15		
	Ministry of Cantor	P/F	15		
		14	420+45		
Summary of Philosophy Diploma	Methodology & Language	12	360	13%	240/10%
	Philosophy	60	1620	60%	1440/60 %
	Social Science	9	270	10%	240/10%
	Theology	14	420	16%	480/20%
	Total	90	2760		80/2400

6.6

The Theology Curriculum

Always be ready to give a convincing answer to everyone who asks for an explanation of the hope that is in you, but with gentleness and respect, having a clear conscience. (1 Pet 3:15-16)

The ability to defend our Christian hope that Peter expects from any mature Christian depends upon the stable possession both of goodness of life and trained powers of reasoning. After the discipleship stage with its study of philosophy, the seminarian moves to the area broadly termed “theology.” This is not simply becoming familiar with the “facts” of Christianity as presented in catechetical instruction, but a training in the method of argumentation proper to each of the various disciplines, which draws the student more deeply into the mystery of Christ, which guides the priest’s pastoral practice, and which manifests itself in the ability not only to defend our hope, but also to explain the Christian mystery in contexts of preaching, teaching, catechesis, counselling and pastoral planning.

6.6.1 General Requirements

6.6.1.1 A four-year theology programme should result in the average student earning a Bachelor of Theology (BTh), and thus consist of 4800 learning hours. As noted at 6.5.1, some introductory theology units, especially in liturgy and spirituality, may be taught in the philosophy programme; these units count towards meeting the required subjects listed below, although their learning hours go to the philosophy diploma.

6.6.1.2 Since seminarians will be completing Propaedeutic and Spiritual Year programmes, some foundational theology units – such as Mystery of Christ, Background to the Bible, and Introduction to Church & Sacraments – should not be offered at major seminary. The major seminaries must be able to assume that entering seminarians have a basic familiarity with Sacred Scripture and the Catholic faith.

6.6.1.3 Approximate weight given to each subject area in Learning Hours (LH):

A. Scripture –	18-24%, 860-1150 LH
B. Systematic Theology (including Fundamental and Dogmatic) –	16-20%, 770-960 LH
C. Moral Theology –	8-13%, 380-620 LH
D. Church History –	8-12%, 380-575 LH
E. Sacramental Theology –	about 8%, about 380 LH
F. Pastoral Theology (including Parish Administration) –	6-10%, 290-480 LH
G. Canon Law –	5-9%, 270-430 LH
H. Liturgy (including Homiletics) –	5%, about 240 LH
I. Spirituality –	4%, about 180 LH
J. Language –	4-6%, 180-270 LH

6.6.1.4 Between 82% and 92% of the curriculum should be devoted to the required units listed in the major subject areas.

8% to 18% of the curriculum should be reserved for comprehensive assessment (exam and research project), further language study, and auxiliary subjects. Auxiliary subjects may be taught through electives that are taught regularly, but not every year.

Because the Solomon Islands do not fall under the PNGNQF, the percentages apply to them, not the learning-hour requirements.

6.6.2 The manner of teaching theology

6.6.2.1 The historical nature of theology

The theological method given in *Optatam Totius* and repeated in the RF – of starting with Scriptures, working through the fathers and councils, seeing the contributions from the scholastics, etc., up to the present day – should be followed, in order that the student may grasp something of the historical development of dogma and be in a position to consider how best to present the truth concerned to the

people to whom he will minister, taking into account their culture, their concepts, and their circumstances. Such an approach also provides ample scope for using primary sources.

6.6.2.2 It is recommended that, to the extent possible, the theology programme be designed so that it covers most of the scriptural subjects in the first year, most of the history and patristics in the second, and then focuses on the fundamental theological subjects in the third, to look at the more applied or developed ones in the final year.

6.6.2.3 Lecturers should endeavour to follow this pattern in the teaching of each unit, but not so rigidly as to always ignore other paedagogical considerations; lecturers should also take care that the historical treatment does not lead to a historical relativism.

6.6.3 *Specific Requirements*

6.6.3.1 General Comment: When subjects are listed as required, that in no way means that there must be a separate course for that subject. Each seminary is free to combine subjects according to its own judgment and academic schedule. For example, one seminary may have short units (60 LH) on general sacramentology and each of the sacraments. Another seminary may decide to offer one 150 learning-hour unit on sacramentology and the sacraments of initiation, one 90 LH unit on the Eucharist, and one 150 LH unit on the other sacraments. Or, for another example, one seminary may have units that cover all of St. Paul's letters, Hebrews, and the catholic epistles, whereas another seminary focuses on Hebrews during its Introduction to the New Testament unit, covers the catholic epistles as examples in its Biblical Hermeneutics unit, and offers individual units on the Pauline epistles.

Auxiliary topics can be the basis for additional required units or for elective units. Within the guidelines suggested, seminaries are free to place greater or lesser emphasis on the major subjects.

6.6.3.2 Sacred Scripture

6.6.3.2.1 'Sacred Scripture is the soul of theology and it must inspire all the theological disciplines' (RF 166). But what is not deeply known does not authentically inspire. Intellectual conformity to Christ cannot be accomplished except through attention to the written Scriptures that Jesus himself studied, venerated, interpreted, and fulfilled, along with those Scriptures that attest to his earthly ministry and his work in the early Church. In the study of Scripture, as much as possible with reference to the original languages, the word of God becomes living and active in us (Hebrews 4:12), gradually teaching us to judge in accord with the Spirit of Christ (1 John 3:23-4:3). Catholic theology has ever been a struggle to render the testimony of Scripture into concepts and to do so in line with what the Magisterium requires to be taught, not merely through blind trust in the Spirit, so priests must be steeped in the Bible if they are to interpret it faithfully in the local context.

6.6.3.2.2 The entire Catholic canon must be covered, though not all books to the same level of detail, and some of this coverage can take place in introductions to the Old and New Testaments as a whole. It is especially important for students to have a unit on Biblical Hermeneutics, which teaches them how to read Scripture according to the traditional exegetical practices of the Church, as initiated and modelled by the Church Fathers, so that students do not fall into a fundamentalist literalism. Since PNG and SI are majority Protestant countries, lecturers should teach with an apologetic interest, so that students are aware of the strength of the biblical arguments used for and against Catholic doctrines about the sacraments, the Virgin Mary, the papacy, the end times, and other matters of serious dispute with our separated brethren. Finally, the way in which the Abrahamic covenant is fulfilled in Christ such that Christians are the true heirs of Abraham should be emphasized, so as to combat current misunderstandings of the place of the modern nation of Israel in the economy of salvation.

6.6.3.2.3 Because Sacred Scripture is the foundation of theology, no other theological subject area should receive more learning hours than Scripture. So that they enter more deeply into Biblical ways of thinking, interested students should have the opportunity to learn some Greek and Hebrew before they have finished all their Scripture studies. Additionally, due to the plurality of languages in PNG and SI as well as the presence of Protestant Bible translators, some instruction of qualified students in linguistics and Bible translation would be beneficial.

6.6.3.2.4 Required Subjects:

Biblical Hermeneutics, Pentateuch, Historical Books, Prophets, Psalms & Wisdom Literature, Synoptic Gospels, Johannine Literature, Acts, Pauline Epistles, Hebrews, Catholic Epistles, Revelation and Apocalyptic Literature, Introduction to Biblical Hebrew, Introduction to Biblical Greek¹⁸

6.6.3.2.5 Auxiliary Subjects:

Bible Translation, Apocryphal and Intertestamental Literature, additional Hebrew and Greek

6.6.3.3 Systematic Theology

6.6.3.3.1 Systematic Theology units should strive to create a theological synthesis, which combines the revelation of God and of humanity in God's image – as recorded in Scripture and elaborated in Church tradition – with the conceptual resources of philosophy, while remaining open to the insights of the indigenous cultures and responsive to the challenge of ways of thinking that enter through contact with the global community. Systematic theology aims not simply at the imparting of information, but, through God's grace, at the renewing of the mind, such that the seminarian is able to think with the Church and apply the teachings of the faith to the intellectual controversies of here and now. Special attention must be paid to currents of thought contrary to the Gospel from within and without. From within there are local attempts to use aspects of Christianity to address unevangelized cultural yearnings, resulting in cargo cults, sorcery accusations and other forms of violence that make themselves respectable and attractive with a covering of Christianity. From without are the secular ideologies driving current global struggles – whether the hedonistic atheism of the West or the statist atheism of the East, and especially contemporary attempts to redefine the nature of the family and human gender and sexuality.

6.6.3.3.2 In Fundamental Theology, students are taught the sources of the Faith and the manner in which Catholicism is a synthesis of faith and reason, as well as the manner in which Christian faith is a fulfillment of natural and pre-Christian theology. Emphasis must be placed on the Catholic doctrines of creation and human nature, which serve as a foundation for sacramental and moral theology as well as providing a basis for dialogue with contemporary science and for responses to secular ideologies. In their classes on Ecumenism and World Religions, students should develop a 'culture of encounter' (*Fratelli Tutti* 215) in which they are open to conversing with and learning from people of other faiths, while also being able to respond to common critiques of the Catholic faith.

6.6.3.3.3 At the heart of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ are the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation. These doctrines must be taught in such a way that they are incorporated into the students' Melanesian worldviews. Therefore, Theology of Inculturation and a correct Missiology must be an essential aspect of the Systematic Theology curriculum, not necessarily as standalone classes, but as shaping the way theology is taught. Lastly, direct engagement with traditional and contemporary spiritual beliefs through a unit such as Pneumatology would be beneficial.

6.6.3.3.4 Required Subjects:

Fundamental Theology, Ecclesiology, Creation, Christian Anthropology, Trinity, Christology, Mariology, Ecumenism and Comparative Religion, Missiology/Theology of Inculturation, Theology of Grace, Eschatology

6.6.3.3.5 Auxiliary Subjects:

Pneumatology, Apologetics, Melanesian Theology, Great Theologian Seminar

6.6.3.4 Moral Theology

6.6.3.4.1 Moral Theology is principally the intellectual aspect of the formation of the cardinal and

¹⁸ Students must have the opportunity for at least an introduction to Greek and Hebrew. Students not seeking a bachelor's degree may be exempt from studying them.

theological virtues during the priestly formation process. Students are guided in how to reason correctly about moral issues – how to apply moral principles found in Scripture and clarified by the Magisterium to their own lives and communities. By learning how to think critically and in the light of the Gospel about both traditional Melanesian values and Western values introduced by colonization, globalization, and mass media, students can develop an authentically Melanesian Christian way of virtuous living. Priests must be able to respond courageously to social problems caused by a corruption of traditional Melanesian principles, such as Sorcery-Accusation-Related Violence, the commodification of women in bride wealth exchanges, and tribal fighting. Of special importance in Melanesia is a correct understanding of sex, marriage, and gender, so that graduates can guide their parishioners in Catholic family life and respond to both pre-Christian and secular practices that are contrary to the Gospel. Cultivation of the virtue of chastity is of paramount importance. Finally, future priests must be clear about their Christian duty to protect and serve those who lack power in society – the unborn, children, the disabled, the mentally ill, widows, the elderly.

6.6.3.4.2 Due to the confusion wrought by the collision of Melanesian values and secular values from both the West and East, a correct understanding of Catholic Social Teaching is necessary. Strong connections exist between the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity and traditional Melanesian practices. Reflection on the ‘ecological question’ (RF 172; *Laudato Si’*) is also needed. There is great hardship caused by climate change in the South Pacific, and religious leaders need to protect their communities from being exploited by international commercial interests in the false name of “development”.

6.6.3.4.3 Required Subjects:

Fundamental Moral Theology, Marriage and Sexuality, Virtues, Bioethics, Social Doctrine of the Church

6.6.3.4.4 Auxiliary Subjects:

Environmental Ethics, Peace and Reconciliation, Contemporary Social Issues, Priestly Celibacy, Integral Human Development, Church and State

6.6.3.5 Church History

6.6.3.5.1 Church History should invite students into the fascinating process of historical research based on primary sources and proper research methods, so that they are able to converse with the saints and doctors of the Church and understand how past controversies are relevant for thinking through the controversies of today. There are four areas of special importance. First, the relations between Eastern Christianity and Roman Catholicism, since Melanesians have almost no contact with Eastern Christians. Second, the historical origins of the main Protestant groups now active in Melanesia and the recent attempts at ecumenism. Third, the missionary ventures of the 19th and early 20th centuries which resulted in the evangelization of Melanesia. Fourth, the heart and spirit of the Fathers of the Church, who set the foundations of Catholic practice, thought, and institutions. Since Melanesia is bordered by a Muslim country and since Islam is a growing religion in Papua New Guinea, the rise of Islam, its historical relationship to Christianity and Judaism, and current Catholic-Muslim relations should be discussed.

6.6.3.5.2 Required Subjects:

Ancient, Medieval, Reformation, and Modern Church History; Patristics; Melanesian Church History. [Note that Patristics, as the theology of the Church Fathers, should remain separate from Ancient Church History and come later in the curriculum.]

6.6.3.5.3 Auxiliary Subjects:

Seminar on a Doctor of the Church or the documents of Vatican II; Eastern Orthodoxy; Islam.

6.6.3.6 Sacraments

6.6.3.6.1 'What was visible in the Saviour has passed over into the mysteries.'¹⁹ The sacraments renew in us the memory of Christ, make Christ graciously present and give us the Spirit, the pledge of our future glory.²⁰ Our reception of salvation in Jesus cannot be understood without a study of the sacraments. Sacramental Theology units are synthetic in nature because they discuss the Biblical origins and historical development of each sacrament, explain the theology behind the sacrament, review the relevant Canon Law, make clear the place of the sacraments in liturgies, involve some role-playing of ministering the sacraments (if this is not covered in liturgical classes), and seek connections between the sacraments and traditional Melanesian practices.

6.6.3.6.2 Sacramental Theology should be covered from three perspectives:

- i) general sacramentology and its connection to Christology and other areas of theology;
- ii) how to prepare parishioners to receive the sacraments of initiation (this should be studied prior to a seminarian's pastoral year);
- iii) the sacraments from the vantage point of a senior student looking towards his ordination as a deacon and then a priest.

Thus, a unit on the Sacraments of Initiation should come early in the curriculum, and units covering the others (particularly Eucharist, Reconciliation, and Holy Orders) should come near the end of the theology programme.

6.6.3.6.3 Required Subjects:

General Sacramentology, Sacraments of Initiation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, Marriage

6.6.3.7 Pastoral Theology

6.6.3.7.1 Pastoral Theology certainly involves theoretical aspects, especially questions of inculturation and interpersonal communication, but should be as practical as possible, because it is training for how to serve one's parishioners and neighbours. Students are to be trained in the methods and spirit of the New Evangelisation, in which one proclaims the Gospel through word, prayer, and charitable service. Students should learn how to use modern media in their pastoral work, through formal instruction and/or practice during pastoral work. Since many seminarians will engage in catechesis and religious education during their pastoral year, it is important that instruction in catechesis and teaching (including supervised classroom experiences) take place early in the curriculum. One of the primary duties of a priest is to be a teacher of the Faith.

6.6.3.7.2 Pastoral work also includes the correct maintenance and use of the material resources of the Church. It is important for seminarians to receive hands-on training in book-keeping for both finances and the sacraments. Since many priests will be involved in the running of Church institutions, some introduction to the principles of administration, leadership, and management is essential. Instruction in Parish Administration received at the seminary must be supplemented with more detailed instruction and the supervised completion of administrative and book-keeping tasks during the Post-Seminary Pastoral Placement.

6.6.3.7.3 Lastly, seminarians should receive some introduction to basic pastoral activities, such as pastoral counselling, spiritual direction, youth ministry, retreat ministry, and various forms of chaplaincy, although the most effective way to learn how to perform some pastoral activities (e.g. prison ministry) is to perform them as a part of pastoral formation. Learning how to reflect upon one's own performance of pastoral work and how to receive feedback from one's parishioners are central aspects of becoming a more effective priest.

6.6.3.7.4 Required Subjects:

Catechetics, Evangelisation, Teaching Ministry, Pastoral Theology, Parish Administration and Finances

6.6.3.7.5 Auxiliary Subjects:

Youth Ministry, Pastoral Counselling, Spiritual Direction, Retreat Ministry, Leadership and

¹⁹ Leo the Great, *Homilies* 74.2.

²⁰ Cf Thomas Aquinas, *Magnificat Antiphon* for Corpus Christi.

Communication, Chaplaincy, Social Communications in Pastoral Ministry

6.6.3.8 Canon Law

6.6.3.8.1 Canon Law must be taught in a practical manner so that students grasp the general principles and norms of the law in the light of its ultimate goal – ‘the salvation of souls’ (RF 174). Seminarians are not expected to master the entirety of the Code, but must be aware of the canons that are most applicable to their future priestly ministry, such as the canons governing the sacraments. They must be able to apply the Code of Canon Law to normal situations of pastoral ministry and have the prudence to judge when a situation requires a consultation with a canon lawyer. According to *The Study of Canon Law in light of the Reform of the Matrimonial Process*, article 21, seminarians must study at least 270 learning hours of Canon Law total, with 90 of those hours being dedicated to “Matrimonial and Procedural Law.” While the study of canon law is important, its place in the curriculum must not crowd out the major subjects listed above.

6.6.3.8.2 Required Subjects:

Introduction and General Norms; Sanctifying Office; Canonical Processes and Sanctions; Marriage Tribunal; Selections from People of God, Teaching Office and Temporal Goods

6.6.3.8.3 Auxiliary Subjects: Case Studies

6.6.3.9 Liturgy

6.6.3.9.1 Liturgy is ‘the participation of the people of God in the work of God’ (CCC 1069). In liturgical worship, humans offer the best of their culture to God and receive back God Himself under the appearance of wine and bread. Instruction in liturgy should be an ongoing aspect of seminary formation. As they advance towards Holy Orders and their leadership role in liturgical worship increases, seminarians must also grow in their understanding of the significance of liturgical actions and in their awareness of and humility before the Divine presence. Students should be led to make connections between liturgical actions, sacramental theology, spiritual theology, and the mystery of the Incarnation. In addition to a general introduction to the liturgy early in the curriculum, formal instruction (even if only brief) should be given concerning each step towards priestly ordination. Lastly, lecturers should see that liturgical instruction has some apologetic elements, particularly in the defence of Sunday (not Saturday) as the Lord’s Day. The distinction between *Lotu Communio* and Catholic Mass should be clearly explained.

6.6.3.9.2 An important aspect of liturgy is the delivery of the homily. Seminarians should be trained to combine what they are learning in their Scripture and theology classes with good techniques of public speaking. One effective paedagogical technique is to video-record seminarians giving homilies and then play the recording back to them for self-critique.

6.6.3.9.3 Building on the study of aesthetics from the philosophy programme, opportunities should be given for students to experience and discuss sacred art and music. Seminarians will be more effective liturgists if they are aware of the riches of the sacred music of other cultures (such as Gregorian chant) and if they are able to properly incorporate Melanesian art, dance, and song into their liturgies. The liturgical use of Latin for select prayers, creeds, and songs is recommended.

6.6.3.9.4 Required Subjects:

Introduction to Liturgy; Liturgical Year; Liturgical Ministries of Cantor, Lector, Acolyte, Deacon, and Presbyter; Homiletics.

6.6.3.9.5 Auxiliary Subjects: Funeral Rites, Sacred Music and Art, Liturgical Planning.

6.6.3.10 Spirituality

6.6.3.10.1 Spirituality cannot be divorced from academic formation, since the goal of theology is the renewal of the mind so that a student actively participates in the life and thought of the Church. Liturgy without an animating spirit is but an adorned corpse. Pastoral work devoid of the theological virtue of charity devolves into heartless duties. In moral theology, the development of the virtues finds its completion in a mature spirituality, by which a future priest is anchored in his attachment to God and is able to maintain an appropriate level of detachment from worldly goods. Only by passing

through the purgative, illuminative, and perfective levels of virtue can a priest live out the evangelical counsels. Metaphysics and systematic theology alike point to the foundational truth that God cannot be captured through human words and concepts, such that the end of the human search for truth is receptive silence before the Word made flesh.

6.6.3.10.2 Seminarians should have an Introduction to Spirituality that builds upon the Spiritual Year and a unit on the Theology of the Consecrated Life (RF 169) towards the end of their studies. Some knowledge of the spirituality appropriate to different states of life (e.g. religious, clerical, lay) is necessary for future priestly ministry. A first-hand acquaintance with some of the classics of Christian spirituality is invaluable, though some of these texts may be incorporated into Church History, Systematic, and Moral Theology units.

6.6.3.10.3 Required Subjects: Introduction to Spirituality, Theology of the Consecrated Life

6.6.3.10.4 Auxiliary Subjects: Contemplative Practices, Great Book Seminar

6.6.3.11 Languages

6.6.3.11.1 Language study is an important aspect of Catholic education. A grasp of Ecclesiastical Latin will open doors for further study for qualified students, enabling them to read the official language of the Roman Catholic Church. Elementary study of Greek and Hebrew enables the use of lexicons and other scholarly aids for Biblical interpretation. Simply knowing some key theological terms in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew will make reading works of Catholic theology less daunting. It is strongly recommended that all students receive an introduction to Latin, and that interested and able students have the opportunity to study some Greek and Hebrew and to develop the ability to read Ecclesiastical Latin. If it is judged that such language study is not appropriate for the average student, electives or independent studies should be offered to students who may go on for further studies.

6.6.3.11.2 Required Subjects²¹:

Basic Latin, Introduction to New Testament Greek, Introduction to Biblical Hebrew

6.6.3.11.3 Auxiliary Subjects:

Intermediate and Advanced Latin, additional Hebrew and Greek, Introduction to Italian

6.6.3.12 Other Subjects

6.6.3.12.1 Comprehensive Exam

All seminarians need to pass a comprehensive exam during their final year which covers the major subjects and the way of arguing proper to each discipline. Ideally students will show that they have made their own synthesis of the doctrines they have studied. The comprehensive exam should be conducted by a panel of faculty experts. Failure of the exam must be a real possibility for students who have not adequately prepared themselves for it. A minimum of 240 LH should be allocated for exam preparation.

6.6.3.12.2 Theological Research Methods

In addition to the introductory methodology instruction given in the Philosophy programme and to specialized research instruction given in individual units, a unit devoted to theological research methods is helpful. Students should receive some instruction on how to use computer and online resources for theological research. With the advent of advanced applications on cell phones, it is possible for students to have personal access to language tools, concordances, and church documents which can be used throughout their priestly ministries in the preparation of homilies and teaching materials.

6.6.3.12.3 Research Project

If a seminarian is to earn a bachelor's degree, he must undertake a research project which results in the writing of a paper of at least 5000 words. This paper must follow the normal academic conventions for research methodology and the citing of sources. It is a work of original research. A minimum of 120 LH should be dedicated to the research project

6.6.3.12.4 Contextualisation

²¹ Students not seeking a bachelor's degree may be exempt from these requirements.

Since Christianity is relatively new to Melanesia, and since Melanesia boasts a rich variety of cultures and languages, extra units on Pastoral Studies and Contextual Theology, which seek a synthesis of the methods and results of the social sciences with pastoral and systematic theology, are appropriate. Seminarians need to be able to understand how their parishioners think if they are to reach them effectively. Jesus is the divine *Logos* who enlightens every human in every culture. Only through careful research, critical thinking, self-reflection, and prayer can a Christian discern which aspects of Catholic thought and practice are essential and which aspects are determined by Western culture and thus open to a new fruitful synthesis with the good and true aspects of the Melanesian Way.

Typical Progression through the Bachelor Theology Programme					
	CTI 1 credit = 30 learning hours	Credits	Learning Hours	%	Ratio
Dogmatic / Fundamental	Fundamental Theology		90		
	Ecclesiology		90		
	God and Creation		90		
	Trinity		90		
	Christology		90		
	Christ, Mary, and the Church		90		
	Theology of Grace		90		
	Missiology		90		
	Ecumenism and World Religions		90		
	Eschatology		90		770-960
		30	900	18%	16-20%
Sacramental	Sacraments of Initiation		90		
	Sacrament of Eucharist		90		
	Sacrament of Reconciliation		90		
	Sacrament of Holy Orders & Anointing		90		
		12	360	7%	8%
Scripture	Biblical Hermeneutics		90		
	Pentateuch		90		
	Matthew and Mark		90		
	Prophets		90		
	Luke and Acts		90		
	Psalms & Wisdom Literature		90		
	Johannine Literature		90		
	1st and 2nd Corinthians		90		
	Book of Revelation and Apocalyptic Lit		90		
	Galatians and Romans		90		860-1150
			30	900	18%
Moral Theology	Foundations of Christian Morality		90		
	Child Protection		30		
	Moral and Theological Virtues		90		
	Catholic Social Teaching		90		
	Sexuality and Marriage		90		
	Bioethics		90		380-620
		16	480	10%	8-13%
Spiritual Theology	Spiritual Theology		90		
	Theology of the Consecrated Life		90		180
		6	180	4%	4%
Church History	Early Church History		90		
	Medieval Church History		90		
	Reformation		90		

	Modern Church History		90		
	Melanesian Church History		90		
	Patristics		90		380-575
		18	540	11%	8-12%
Pastoral Theology	Ministry of Teaching		90		
	Youth Ministry		30		
	Pastoral Theology and Practice		90		
	Parish Administration		30		
	Parish Finances*		60		290-480
		10	300	6%	6-10%
Canon Law	Canon Law I: Introduction and General Norms		90		
	Canon Law II: People of God		90		
	Canon Law III: Sanctifying Office		90		
	Canon Law IV: Teaching Office, Temporal Goods & Canonical Sanctions		90		
	Canon Law V: Processes and Marriage Tribunal		90		270-430
		15	450	9%	5-9%
	Homiletics I.1: Sunday and Weekday		30		
	Homiletics I.2: Advent and Christmas		30		
	Homiletics II.1: Lent and Easter		30		
	Homiletics II.2: Baptism, 1st Communion, Weddings		30		
	Homiletics II.3: Funerals		30		
	Homiletics III: Solemnities		30		
	Ministry of Acolyte*		30		
	Ministry of Deacon*		30		
	Ministry of Presbyter*		30		240
		9	270	5.5%	5%
Languages	Basic Biblical Greek 1		90		
	Basic Hebrew 1		90		180-270
		6	180	3.5%	4-6%
Comprehensive	Theological Research Methods		30		
	Theology Paper Planning		30		
	Research Paper		90		
	Comprehensive Exam: Written		120		
	Comprehensive Exam: Oral		120		
		13	390	8%	
		165	4950		4800

APPENDIX 1

List of Responsibilities

Catholic Bishops Conference

To set up the PNGSI Vocations Office, to provide it with an annual budget, and, through its general secretary, to appoint a director (3.2)

To make arrangements for workshops for priests if the seminaries and/or the Vangeke Institute are no longer able to provide them (4.8.5)

To appoint a priest to produce a magazine for priests and to provide him with a budget (4.8.7)

To ensure that a newly appointed rector in a minor or a major seminary gets the proper and adequate training necessary, an interim rector can be appointed to allow the new appointee time to attend a formation course (5.1.3)

To ensure, as appropriate, that the topic of child protection is covered in programmes of on-going formation run at a national level, and that counselling is available as needed (5.7.1-2)

The Senate and Board for Priestly Formation

To recommend to the CBC a suitable person as director of the PNGSI Vocations Office (3.2)

To recommend to the CBC a suitable priest to produce a regular magazine for priests (4.8.7)

Archbishops

To organize an annual meeting of the vocations promoters of his ecclesiastical province (3.5)

Diocesan Bishops

To appoint and materially support a diocesan vocations promoter (3.3.1)

To appoint and fund a director of the Diocesan Vocations Office (3.4.1)

To encourage families to be generous if a member thinks he has a vocation (3.6.3.3)

Are encouraged to promote the Missionary Childhood and other organizations that promote vocations (3.6.2.3)

To discern whether to maintain a minor seminary that has permitted school status (3.7.1.2)

To discern whether or not to send a candidate to a minor seminary (3.7.1.2), and to make alternative arrangements where appropriate (3.7.2.2)

To discern the appropriate pre-seminary formation of a mature candidate (3.9), and indeed of every candidate (4.2.1)

To ensure that candidates who have been in a formation programme have had at least a year out, and to make diligent enquiry about the reason for the candidate's leaving the programme (3.10)

To promptly give information to another ordinary who is considering accepting someone who had been in his diocese's formation programme (3.10)

To decide when (if at all) in the course of Theology, each seminarian should undertake a pastoral year (4.6.1), and whether it should begin with the conferral of the acolytate in the diocese (4.6.2)

To honestly address rather than easily dismiss a candidate's feelings of inadequacy for ordination, bearing in mind John Chrysostom's *On the Priesthood*. (4.7.2)

To ensure that a new deacon exercises his ministry for at least six months before priestly ordination (4.7.3)

To encourage the means of on-going formation mentioned in the RF (4.8.2)

To organize for priests an annual retreat and formation workshops (4.8.3)

To address the concerns of priests who repeatedly fail to attend on-going formation sessions (4.8.4)

To take special care of priests in their first five years after ordination (4.8.5)

To assist the editor of the clergy magazine by suggesting contributors and encouraging the contributors to submit (4.8.7)

To ensure that a newly appointed rector in a minor or a major seminary gets the proper and adequate training necessary, an interim rector can be appointed to allow the new appointee time to attend a formation course (5.1.3)

To talk regularly with his seminarians about formation issues (5.8.1)

Not to divulge the details of a psychological evaluation to anyone except the candidate's rector and/or spiritual director, and, if it is necessary to consult, to avoid mentioning any details that of their

nature must be treated as confidential (5.2.1.3)

To ensure that spiritual directors are properly trained, and not to let them start work until they have done at least some training (5.4.1)

To keep in mind the needs of the STB programme when assigning priests who can lecture (5.5.3.4)

To aim toward priests destined for teaching in the seminary obtaining a licentiate (5.5.4)

To consult with the Senate and Board for Priestly Formation before sending a priest to do higher studies (5.5.9)

To choose the site and supervisor for a seminarian's pastoral placement during the annual long break and the pastoral year (5.6.1.3, cf 5.6.3.5-6)

To ensure that priests receiving a seminarian on a pastoral placement are adequately prepared (5.6.3.1-3)

To remind the seminarian about the need for regular prayer when on pastoral placement, and to visit him, in person or through a delegate, regularly during his placement, and to move the seminarian to another site if necessary (5.6.3.6, 5.6.3.8, 5.6.3.9)

To ensure that the topic of child protection is regularly covered in the programme of on-going formation, and that counselling is available if the need arises (5.7.1-2)

To talk regularly with his seminarians about formation issues (5.8.1)

To remind the parishioners of their duty to inform about inappropriate behaviour in the candidate, and to ensure that the banns are proclaimed before ordination (5.8.2.4)

To seriously heed advice from a formation community about dismissal (5.8.3.2)

Federation of Religious

To be consulted about the establishment, funding and appointment of a director of the PNGSI vocations office (3.2)

Major Superiors

To ensure that candidates who have been in a formation programme have had at least a year out, and to make diligent enquiry about the reason for the candidate's leaving the programme (3.10)

To promptly give information to another ordinary who is considering accepting someone who had been in his congregation's formation programme (3.10)

Not to divulge the details of a psychological evaluation to anyone except the candidate's rector and/or spiritual director, and, if it is necessary to consult, to avoid mentioning any details that of their nature must be treated as confidential. (5.2.1.3)

To keep in mind the needs of the STB programme when assigning priests who can lecture (5.5.3.4)

To aim toward priests destined for teaching in a seminary obtaining a licentiate (5.5.4)

To consult with the Senate and Board for Priestly Formation before sending a priest to do higher studies (5.5.8)

To choose the site and supervisor for a seminarian's pastoral placement during the annual long break and the pastoral year (5.6.1.3, cf. 5.6.3.6)

To ensure that priests receiving a seminarian on a pastoral placement are adequately prepared (5.6.3.1-3)

To remind the seminarian about the need for regular prayer when on pastoral placement, and to visit him, in person or through a delegate, regularly during his placement, and to move the seminarian to another site if necessary (5.6.3.6, 5.6.3.8, 5.6.3.9)

To ensure that the topic of child protection is regularly covered in the programme of on-going formation, and that counselling is available if the need arises (5.7.1-2)

To remind the parishioners of their duty to inform about inappropriate behaviour in the candidate, and to ensure that the banns are proclaimed before ordination (5.8.2.4)

To seriously heed advice from a formation community about dismissal (5.8.3.2)

The Director of the PNGSI Vocations Office

- maintaining an up-to-date website and/or Facebook page for vocations;
- publishing every two years an updated edition of *Come, Follow Me*, and distributing copies to the dioceses;
- gathering and distributing resources for vocations promoters, including arranging expert guest speakers who could help at meetings;

- producing a booklet, *Pikinini bilong yutupela i laik skul long kamap pater*, designed for parents of interested young men;
- producing booklets of lives of the saints, both for inspiring vocations and to give families examples of letting their children follow God's call;
- assisting at regional meetings of vocations promoters. (3.2)

Diocesan Promoters of Vocations

To be easy to contact (3.3.1)

To recruit for the diocese, but also to discern if the man is called to be a religious or missionary priest (3.3.2)

To work closely with the Director of the Diocesan Vocations Office (if that role is not also his) (3.4.1)

To attempt to visit families of young men considering the priesthood, and go through with them the booklet *Pikinini bilong yutupela i laik skul long kamap pater* (3.6.2.4)

To try to be in touch with both the natural and the adoptive parents of an adopted child considering a vocation (3.6.2.5)

To encourage meetings of altar servers at parish, deanery or diocesan level (3.6.3.2)

To ensure that interested young men are in regular contact with a suitable priest (3.7.2.2)

To ensure that candidates who have been in a formation programme have had at least a year out, and to make diligent enquiry about the reason for the candidate's leaving the programme (3.10)

To collect the necessary documentation of each candidate and provide it to the rectors (4.1.2)

To inform the candidate's family of his decision, to seek their consent, and to explain the implications (4.1.3)

To diligently check the candidate's background (4.1.4)

To inform and guide the candidate (4.1.5)

To have the candidate and family sign a waiver (4.1.6)

To prepare the family to support and complement the seminary formation programme (5.1.9)

To explain carefully to family members and community leaders the special nature and dignity of the priestly vocation, particularly in comparison to the political vocation (5.4.5)

Director of the Diocesan Vocations Office

To collect resources and to organize vocations promotion events at a diocesan level, particularly for Vocations Sunday, and to direct enquirers appropriately. (3.4.2)

Rector of a minor seminary, the house of formation or propaedeutic centre

To ensure that there is a programme of human, spiritual and pastoral formation adapted to the age and background of the students (3.8.1)

To establish a rhythm of daily prayer (3.8.4.1)

To provide a choice of confessors and arrange times of retreat and days of recollection (3.8.4.2)

In co-operation with the other formators, to encourage and arrange participation in local Church activities as appropriate (3.8.5)

(For a minor seminary or a house of formation) to organize some extra catechetical and spiritual instruction to assist in living the life of their minor seminary or house of formation, and in discerning their own vocation (3.8.6.1)

To encourage the use of English (4.2.3.2)

To establish and maintain an appropriate academic curriculum, and to set up a budget and fee levels that enable this (4.2.4.5)

To ensure appropriate distinction between propaedeutic programme and the spiritual year, if they are on the same site (4.3.1, cf 4.3.2.1)

To deal with behavioural and emotional problems through normal means first before seeking psychological intervention; to make clear to all parties beforehand about future sharing of information and what will be external or internal forum, and to consult with the specialist and others to see if the seminarian would be better served by some time out (5.2.2.1)

To draw up, in consultation with the other formators, and explain to those in formation, a policy about mobile phones and other means of communication (5.3.2)

To ensure that spiritual directors are properly trained, and not to let them start work until they have done at least some training (5.4.1)

To ensure that the formation programme teaches seminarians about prayer and praying and ascetical practices (5.4.2-3)

To ensure that seminarians care for the needs of their sick brothers (5.4.3)

To remind seminarians to keep up a rhythm of prayer during holidays and other times away from the seminary (5.4.4)

To put before those in formation the special nature and dignity of the priestly vocation, particularly in comparison with the political vocation, and to explain this to family members and community leaders, as appropriate (5.4.5)

To ensure that the programme of studies is sufficient and recognised for university entrance (minor seminaries and houses of formation (3.8.6.1)) or at least that it has the equivalent academic rigour, even if not officially recognised (propaedeutic centres) (5.5.7)

To take the necessary steps to ensure that the students develop English skills to a standard of at least an IELTS score of 5.0 (4.2.3.1, 4.2.4.5))

To ensure that there is a policy for professional development of the formators, teachers and other key personnel, and that a sufficient sum is allocated each year in the budget (5.5.4)

To inform each candidate of the procedures in case of inappropriate advances by staff, and to explain to those who are adults the basic guidelines in *Right Relationships* (5.7.1)

To write an annual report on each candidate, in consultation with the rest of the formation community, and to evaluate the candidate's readiness for the spiritual year, consulting laypeople who know him well (5.8.2)

To write up and keep on file a record explaining a dismissal or a spontaneous departure (5.8.3.1)

To send a copy of each student's file to the rector of the next formation house he goes to, and a copy of his academic records to the dean, as appropriate (5.8.4)

To ensure at enrolment that parents and students are aware that a minor seminary is not just another school (6.1)

Director of the Spiritual Year

To establish and maintain an appropriate programme for the Spiritual Year, co-operating with the rector of the propaedeutic centre or seminary if necessary (4.3.2.1)

To ensure that the Spiritual Year includes a course on the Mystery of Christ (4.3.2.4)

To co-operate with the rectors of propaedeutic centres to prevent un-helpful repetition and to fill in gaps (6.3.1.4, cf 4.3.2.5).

To ensure that the programme offers a culturally sensitive study of basic psychology to help candidates understand the internal factors involved in their decision-making (4.3.2.7)

To organize appropriate pastoral experiences (4.3.2.8)

To ensure that psychological evaluation of candidates takes place during the spiritual year (5.2.1.1)

Not to divulge the details of a psychological evaluation to anyone except the candidate's bishop rector and/or spiritual director, and, if it is necessary to consult, to avoid mentioning any details that of their nature must be treated as confidential. (5.2.1.3)

To explain in advance to candidates about the psychological evaluation, and to obtain written consent from each seminarian about the strictly controlled sharing of the evaluation, and, where possible, to give the candidate a choice of psychologists (5.2.1.4)

To inform the psychologist about the canonical prohibition of asking for a manifestation of conscience (5.2.1.5)

To be aware of the limitations of psychological testing (5.2.1.6)

To deal with behavioural and emotional problems through normal means first before seeking psychological intervention; to make clear to all parties beforehand about future sharing of information and what will be external or internal forum, and to consult with the specialist and others to see if the seminarian would be better served by some time out (5.2.2.1)

To draw up, in consultation with the other formators, and explain to those in formation, a policy about mobile phones and other means of communication (5.3.2)

To ensure that spiritual directors are properly trained, and not to let them start work until they have done at least some training (5.4.1)

To ensure that the formation programme teaches seminarians about prayer and praying and ascetical practices (5.4.2-3)

To ensure that seminarians care for the needs of their sick brothers (5.4.3)

To remind seminarians to keep up a rhythm of prayer during holidays and other times away from the seminary (5.4.4)

To put before those in formation the special nature and dignity of the priestly vocation, particularly in comparison with the political vocation, and to explain this to family members and community leaders, as appropriate (5.4.5)

To ensure that the teaching staff have proper qualifications (5.5.4)

To implement the principle of learning outcomes for each unit in the curriculum (for propaedeutic centres) (5.5.5)

To inform each candidate of the procedures in case of inappropriate advances by staff, and to explain to him the basic guidelines in *Right Relationships* (5.7.1)

To write an annual report on each candidate, in consultation with the rest of the formation community, and to evaluate the candidate's readiness for major seminary, consulting laypeople who know him well (5.8.2)

To write up and keep on file a record explaining a dismissal or a spontaneous departure (5.8.3.1)

To send a copy of each student's file to the rector of the next formation house he goes to, and a copy of his academic records to the dean, as appropriate (5.8.4)

Rector of a Seminary

In co-operation with the dean of studies, at the appropriate time to raise the minimum level of English required for entry, after all necessary consultation and observing due process (4.2.3.1)

To appoint a formator, who has training for this role, to accompany each seminarian (5.1.4)

To ensure that no formator or lecturer is a cause of scandal (5.1.6)

To see that the programme provides opportunities for modelling and learning healthy relations with women (5.1.10)

To include women in the formation programme, particularly in positions of authority, and, where possible, as fellow students (5.1.11)

To arrange, before the end of his first year, a psychological evaluation for any seminarian who missed it in the spiritual year (5.2.1.1)

Not to divulge the details of a psychological evaluation to anyone except the candidate's bishop, and/or spiritual director, and, if it is necessary to consult, to avoid mentioning any details that of their nature must be treated as confidential (5.2.1.3)

To explain in advance to candidates about the psychological evaluation, and to obtain written consent from each seminarian about the strictly controlled sharing of the evaluation, and, where possible, to give the candidate a choice of psychologists (5.2.1.4)

To inform the psychologist about the canonical prohibition of asking for a manifestation of conscience (5.2.1.5)

To be aware of the limitations of psychological testing (5.2.1.6)

To deal with behavioural and emotional problems through normal means first before seeking psychological intervention; to make clear to all parties beforehand about future sharing of information and what will be external or internal forum, and to consult with the specialist and others to see if the seminarian would be better served by some time out (5.2.2.1)

To draw up, in consultation with the other formators, and explain to those in formation, a policy about mobile phones and other means of communication (5.3.2)

To ensure that spiritual directors are properly trained, and not to let them start work until they have done at least some training (5.4.1)

To ensure that the formation programme teaches seminarians about prayer and praying and ascetical practices (5.4.2-3)

To ensure that seminarians care for the needs of their sick brothers (5.4.3)

To remind seminarians to keep up a rhythm of prayer during holidays and other times away from the seminary (5.4.4)

To put before those in formation the special nature and dignity of the priestly vocation, particularly in comparison with the political vocation, and to explain this to family members and community leaders, as appropriate (5.4.5)

To lead the seminary through the process of government registration and accreditation (5.5.2)

To ensure that the two years of philosophy lead at least to a diploma, and the four years of theology at least to an associate degree, preferably a bachelor's degree (5.5.3)

To support the dean in ensuring that lecturers teach in their area of specialisation and are properly qualified (5.5.4)

To ensure that there is a policy for professional development of the formators, teachers and other key personnel, and that a sufficient sum is allocated each year in the budget (5.5.4)

To recommend, along with the dean, suitable candidates for further or higher studies in the academic or annual report, and to assist their graduates in applying for these studies (5.5.8)

To support the director of pastoral formation in providing opportunities for seminarians to reflect on their pastoral work, and to ensure that the director has the training to do this (5.6.1.1)

To ensure that the seminary programme provides opportunities for seminarians to prepare for and reflect on the pastoral year (5.6.4)

To inform each candidate of the procedures in case of inappropriate advances by staff, and to explain to him the basic guidelines in *Right Relationships* (5.7.1)

To write an annual report on each candidate, in consultation with the rest of the formation community, and to evaluate the candidate's readiness for lectorate, acolytate, candidacy, and diaconate at the proper time, consulting laypeople who know him well (5.8.2)

To write up and keep on file a record explaining a dismissal or a spontaneous departure (5.8.3.1)

To send a copy of each student's file to the rector of the next formation house he goes to, and a copy of his academic records to the dean, as appropriate (5.8.4)

Spiritual Director of a Seminary

Not to divulge the details of a psychological evaluation to anyone except the candidate's bishop and/or rector. (5.2.1.3)

To be aware of the limitations of psychological testing (5.2.1.6)

To deal with behavioural and emotional problems through normal means first before seeking psychological intervention (5.2.2.1)

Director of Pastoral Formation

To organize a graduated programme of supervised weekly pastoral work for seminarians and to provide for reflection upon this (5.6.1.1)

Minor Seminary (etc.) Formation Staff

To deal with negative behaviours in a way that goes beyond simple prohibition (3.8.3.1), and to be aware that the candidates will intellectualise the contents of the lessons rather than applying them to their own behaviour (3.8.3.2)

To be aware of possible earlier experiences and offer appropriate guidance or refer people to counsellors (3.8.3.4)

To encourage regular confession (3.8.4.2)

To encourage the use of English (4.2.3.2)

To assist the candidate to change inwardly as well as outwardly (4.3.5.2)

To provide examples of priestly and communitarian behaviour to the seminarians (5.1.6)

To teach, encourage and model fraternal correction (5.1.7)

To deal with behavioural and emotional problems through normal means first before seeking psychological intervention (5.2.2.1)

To provide good models of usage of new communication media, to give regular warnings about and strategies for dealing with the dangers (5.3.3)

To put before those in formation the special nature and dignity of the priestly vocation, particularly in comparison with the political vocation, and to explain this to family members and community leaders, as appropriate (5.4.5)

To assist the rector with the annual reports and evaluations (5.8.2)

Dean of Studies

To co-operate with the president/rector in raising the minimum level of English required for entry, after all necessary consultation and observing due process (4.2.3.1)

To include women in the formation programme, particularly as teachers, and, when possible, as fellow students (5.1.11)

To assist the rector in leading the seminary through the process of government registration and

accreditation (5.5.2)

To assist the rector in ensuring that the two years of philosophy lead at least to a diploma, and the four years of theology at least to an associate's degree, preferably a bachelor's degree (5.5.3)

To ensure that lecturers teach in their areas of specialisation and that they are properly qualified (5.5.4)

To lead the faculty in implementing the principle of learning outcomes for each unit (5.5.5)

To ensure that primary sources are used in teaching, as possible (5.5.6)

To implement the instructions of chapter six regarding the content and distribution of the courses (5.5.6)

To address the problem of plagiarism (5.5.7)

To recommend, along with the rector, suitable candidates for further or higher studies in the academic or annual report, and to assist their graduates in applying for these studies (5.5.8)

To consider giving more capable students a research project integrally related to the pastoral year (5.6.4)

To ensure that there is a course on child protection before seminarians go on their pastoral year (5.7.1)

To ensure that the equivalence between credit points and learning hours is stated on transcripts, in handbooks, etc. (6.4.2)

Lecturers

To provide examples of priestly and communitarian behaviour to the seminarians (5.1.6)

To provide good models of usage of new communication media, to give regular warnings about and strategies for dealing with the dangers (5.3.3)

To put before those in formation the special nature and dignity of the priestly vocation, particularly in comparison with the political vocation (5.4.5)

To co-operate with the dean in implementing learning outcomes for each unit, and in dealing with plagiarism (5.5.5-6)

Where appropriate, to present their courses so as to prepare the seminarian for the pastoral placement, and to help him reflect theologically on it on his return (5.6.4)

To teach students from primary texts, providing up-to-date translations as possible (6.5.2.1)

To teach theology in a historical manner without ignoring other paedagogical approaches (6.6.2.3)

To ensure that apologetic considerations are given ample time in class (6.6.3.5.2, 6.6.3.9.1)

Seminary Formation Staff

To be ready to learn from the candidates (5.1.1)

To provide examples of priestly and communitarian behaviour to the seminarians (5.1.6)

To teach, encourage and model fraternal correction (5.1.7)

To be aware of the limitations of psychological testing (5.2.1.6)

To deal with behavioural and emotional problems through normal means first before seeking psychological intervention (5.2.2.1)

To provide good models of usage of new communication media, to give regular warnings about and strategies for dealing with the dangers (5.3.3)

To put before those in formation the special nature and dignity of the priestly vocation, particularly in comparison with the political vocation, and to explain this to family members and community leaders, as appropriate (5.4.5)

To assist the rector with reports and evaluations (5.8.2)

Accompanying Priests

To encourage interested young men to participate in the life of the local church (3.7.2.2)

Priests or others supervising pastoral placements

To have an initial planning meeting with the seminarian (5.6.3.4)

To encourage the seminarian in maintaining a rhythm of prayer (5.6.3.6, cf 5.6.3.7)

To assist the rector in writing reports and evaluations (5.8.2.3)

To give the "hands-on" training that completes what is taught in the seminary, particularly as regards liturgical celebrations (4.7.4)

Parish Priests

To encourage family prayer (3.6.2.1)

To encourage families to be generous if a member thinks he has a vocation (3.6.2.3)

To encourage regular prayer for vocations; to encourage groups who regularly pray for vocations. (3.6.3.1)

To promote friendship, prayer and instruction about the liturgy in a special way among the altar servers (3.6.3.2)

To promote movements that encourage vocations, such as the Missionary Childhood (5.6.3.4)

To avoid planning for a specific ordination date until the candidate has been finally approved (4.7.3)

School teachers and catechists

To encourage family prayer (3.6.2.1)

To encourage families to be generous if a member thinks he has a vocation (3.6.2.3)

To encourage regular prayer for vocations; to encourage groups who regularly pray for vocations (3.6.3.1)

To honestly address rather than easily dismiss a candidate's feelings of inadequacy for ordination (4.7.2)

Other parish and youth group leaders

To encourage regular prayer for vocations (3.6.3.1)

Parents, grandparents, and others in families

To foster vocations, particularly by daily family prayer (3.6.2.1)

To teach their children about chastity (3.6.2.2)

To encourage regular prayer for vocations (3.6.3.1)

Not to seek compensation from the diocese, or to consider the presbytery as their family's house (4.1.3)

To honestly address rather than easily dismiss a candidate's feelings of inadequacy for ordination (4.7.2)

To avoid planning for a specific ordination date until the candidate has been finally approved (4.7.3)

To support and complement seminary formation (5.1.9)

Seminarians

To be willing to tell their own vocation story at gatherings promoting vocations (3.6.3.1)

To learn to trust the formators, to be honest with them, and to embark under their leadership on a journey of self-discovery and transformation (3.8.2)

To support each other in the journey to freedom (from addictive and dangerous behaviour) (3.8.3.1)

To be bold enough to speak English to his peers (4.2.3.2)

To seek support in prayer while on pastoral placement, if the parish priest fails in this regard (5.6.3.7)

Editor of the magazine for priests

To issue the magazine 4 to 6 times a year (4.8.7)

To seek funding for the magazine, and to encourage local priests to contribute (4.8.7)

To ensure that the magazine frequently addresses the issue of child protection (5.7.1)

Priests

To promote vocations to the priesthood by living their own priesthood joyfully and faithfully, by talking of exemplary priests, by praying for suitable young men, suggesting a vocation to them and assisting their enquiries. (3.6.1)

To be willing to tell their own vocation story at gatherings promoting vocations (3.6.3.1)

To fosters organizations that promote vocations, such as the Missionary Childhood (3.6.3.3)

Psychologists

Not to ask for a manifestation of conscience (5.2.1.5)

To disclose the results of the psychological evaluation to no third party except the candidate's rector,

spiritual director and ordinary. (5.2.1.3)

Appendix 2

Relevant Guidelines from the PNG National Qualifications Framework

Learning Hours (based on the PNG National Qualifications Framework, 2nd ed.)

Why do we measure volume of learning?

1 To ensure that academic qualifications meet a fixed standard.

‘The “volume of learning” is a measurement of the time spent on the learning activities to achieve a qualification. It identifies the expected duration of all activities required for the achievement of the learning outcomes specified for a particular qualification type.

The complexity of a qualification is defined by the breadth and depth of knowledge, skills, applications and autonomy that graduates are expected to acquire together with an expected volume of learning.’ (PNGNQF 6.1)

2 To make units comparable within and across institutions.

3 To assist students and administration to measure the study load, to avoid over-loading or letting things get too light. (PNGNQF 6.2)

Why don't we use other measures?

‘The 2012 edition of the PNGNQF defined the volume of learning expected for each qualification in terms of years of full-time study. However, definitions of a “year of full-time study” can vary widely. Some providers have two semesters in a year, while others may have trimesters or even four study periods. Some providers offer units in intensive mode.’ (PNGNQF 6.1)

‘The use of other means of calculating a volume of learning, such as student “contact hours” spent in lectures or tutorials, is discouraged. A measure such as contact hours does not fit well with competency-based learning, or with flexible or on-line learning. It does not help students to understand that they must contribute to the achievement of their own learning.’ (PNGNQF 6.1)

Credit points normally work well within an institution, but not across them, as different institutions measure credit points differently; in fact, there is more variation with credit point than with full-time years or contact hours.

What is counted with learning hours?

‘These hours include all types of student activities, including private study by students. Student learning activities may include: pre-lecture reading; participation in lectures and tutorials, participation in laboratory sessions, on-line learning activities; conduct of private research; work on individual and group assignments; writing essays; problem-solving and project work; individual consultation with teachers; practicums, placements and work-integrated learning; preparation for tests and examinations; taking tests and examinations.’ (PNGNQF 6.1)

How can I count how many hours students spend in private study?

‘In higher education programmes, the balance between private study and taught/tutored/supervised/facilitated learning activities will vary by discipline and unit and mode of study (face to face, intensive, online, blended). [. . .] A commonly-used “rule of thumb” for face to face learning is for one hour of teacher supported learning students should engage in 2 hours of self-study.’ (PNGNQF 6.1)

Taking into account essay/assignment writing time, class preparation time, time spent studying for tests and exams, seminars should ask whether this rule of thumb is realistic for their programme of studies. One thing to take into account is whether the seminary timetable allows enough study time so that the student can spend two hours of private study for each hour in the classroom.

How many learning hours are needed for a year of full-time study? For a diploma? For a bachelor's degree?

‘For the PNGNQF:

- The minimum number of hours for a full year of learning by a student in PNG is not less than **1200**.
- The guideline maximum number of hours for a full year of learning by a student in PNG is **1600**, although higher volumes may apply in particular disciplines.' (PNGNQF 6.1)

The minimum number of learning hours for a diploma is 2400. (PNGNQF 6.1)

The minimum number of learning hours for a bachelor's degree is 4800. (PNGNQF 6.1)

'The minimum figure of 1200 hours is comparable to the volume of learning in other qualification frameworks, for example, the Pacific and Australian Qualifications Framework.' (PNGNQF 6.1)

How do I check whether the programme demands 1200 learning hours per year?

'If students are expected to study for, say, 30 weeks a year, the expected average weekly workload would be about 40 hours. The figure of 1200 hours suggests that if a student were taking, say, 8 units per year of study (say 4 per semester), each unit should involve about 150 hours of student learning time.' (PNGNQF 6.1)

Presuming that the units concerned are simple cases, without complications such as laboratory practicals or supervised placements or field trips, then you can ask, in this case, whether each unit involves 150 learning hours. Applying the rule of thumb, this would be 100 hours of private study and 50 hours in the classroom. For a unit that meets for three hours a week over a fifteen week semester and has a 3 hour final exam (48 hours) this figure is close enough.

How do I convert learning hours into credit points?

'In the PNGNQF, one credit point equals 10 hours of student learning activity. . . . For the determination of credit points, it is recommended that institutions use the method in this document.' (PNGNQF 6.1)

The PNGNQF is merely 'recommending' their system. In reality, most institutes had an established system of credit points before they began measuring learning hours, and they may have good reasons for keeping that system. If you are not going to adopt the PNGNQF system and assign one credit point for each ten learning hours, then it is easier to work the other way around – keep your credit point system as it is, and work out how many hours each credit point represents. If under your system the standard unit has x credit points, and each unit has (to use the example above) 150 learning hours, then one credit point equals 150 divided by x learning hours.

If you can say that at your institute one credit point equals x learning hours, and another institute says that one of their credit points equals y learning hours, then conversion of credit points between the two institutes is simply an issue of keeping the ratio x:y in mind.

The next page has an extract from the PNGNQF table on the standards to be met by the various academic awards.

Level	Approved Generic Award	Knowledge and Skills	Application	Autonomy
7	Bachelor	Broad and coherent theoretical and technical knowledge with depth in one or more areas and associated critical, analytical and innovative thinking skills.	Applied in contexts that:	In conditions where there is:
		Wide range of communication skills including sharing of learning, values, skills and ideas with others.	Are diverse and subject to complex change;	Broad guidance and demonstrated self-direction;
			Require use of a wide range of analytical and diagnostic skills;	Significant planning, coordination and organization required;
			Involve the synthesis of ideas and formulation or adaptation of processes to resolve issues.	Accountability for outcomes.
6	Associate Degree/Advanced Diploma	Broad underpinning theoretical and/or technical knowledge with depth in specific areas and associated analytical skills.	Applied in contexts that:	In conditions where there is:
		Broad range of communication skills including sharing of learning and solutions to problems.	Are subject to change with some complexity	Broad guidance or direction;
			Require use of analytical and diagnostic skills;	Well-developed judgement and planning required
			Involve the formulation or adaptation of processes to resolve issues.	Accountability for personal and group outcomes within broad parameters
5	Diploma	Technical and theoretical knowledge and skills in a specific area or across a broad field of work and learning.	Applied in contexts that:	In conditions where there is:
		Broad range of communication skills relevant to the area including sharing of learning, analysis and solutions to problems.	Are both known and changing;	General guidance or direction;
			Require critical analysis, interpretation and integration of diverse information	Both judgement and planning required;
			Involve unfamiliar issues that are addressed through selection of options and adaptation of processes.	Responsibility for the quality and quantity of own outputs;
				Responsibility for the achievement of group outputs.

Appendix 3
Abbreviations used in this document

AGM	Annual General Meeting
CBC	Catholic Bishops Conference (of PNG and the Solomon Islands)
CCC	<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i>
CTI	Catholic Theological Institute
FOR	Federation of Religious
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
LH	Learning Hours
MSC	Missionaries of the Sacred Heart
NCD	National Capital District
OT	Old Testament
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PNGNQF	PNG National Qualifications Framework
PNGSI	Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands
RF	<i>Ratio Fundamentalis (The Gift of the Priestly Vocation)</i>
RN	<i>Ratio Nationalis</i>
SI	Solomon Islands
USP	University of South Pacific