

**SOCIETY OF THE MISSIONARIES OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD**  
**PROVINCE OF TANZANIA**



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**FORMATION PROGRAM**

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## Abbreviations

**C.PP.S** *Congregatio Missionariorum Pretiosissimi Sanguinis Domini Nostri Iesu Christi*

**CIC** *Codex Iuris Canonici*

**NT** Normative Texts

**OT** *Optatam Totius*

**PC** *Perfectae Caritatis*

**PDV** *Pastores Dabo Vobis*

**PO** *Presbiterorum Ordinis*

**RFIS** *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*

## Preamble

Good formation of the C.PP.S future missionaries was one of the issues given a great attention by St. Gaspar. He expressed this concern in his various letters to the missionaries whereby he never ceased to remind that the candidates must be well formed.<sup>1</sup>For St. Gaspar, the acquisition of the C.PP.S missionary identity was fundamental for every candidate before becoming a member of the Congregation. For this reason, in many of his letters which were dealing with the specific identity of the missionary of the precious Blood, the saint never forgot to give some important insights to the candidates. Some of the qualities he wanted them to acquire for the fruitful mission in the Church were; humility and sanctity of life, obedience, and dedication to studies.<sup>2</sup>

In the same spirit of our founder and according to the demands of the Church and our Congregation, the Tanzanian province dedicates itself to the formation of the future missionaries as one of its major priorities. Departing the cultural context and referring to various instructions from the documents of the Church and of our Congregation, the Tanzania Formation Program interprets the formative activity within the province. The words of Fr. Barry Fischer (by then the Moderator General) to our Tanzanian province (by then Tanzanian Vicariate) remain to us as a great reminder and challenge on the work of formation as he said, “The formation process must assure that the candidates are steeped and formed in a deep love and respect for their own culture and prepared for the delicate and challenging process of ‘inculturating’ the Gospel message in Tanzania. And a special care should be given to deepen in the candidates throughout their years of formation and in on-going formation, the theology and spirituality of the Precious Blood, and to the forging of a true C.PP.S Identity.”<sup>3</sup>

We dedicate the holy work of formation under the care and intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Lady of the Precious Blood.

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Rev. Fr. Reginald Mrosso, C.PP.S  
**Vicariate Director**

Palm Sunday

13<sup>th</sup> April, 2014

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Letter, n. 1270.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Letter, n. 1335.

<sup>3</sup>Fr. Barry Fischer, Canonical Visitation to the Tanzanian Vicariate – October, 1997.

## General Observations and Principles

- i). The “Congregation of Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ” (C.PP.S) is a Society of Apostolic Life founded by St. Gaspar Del Bufalo that includes both priests and brothers.
- ii). The spirituality of the Blood of Christ is central to their identity as members and is at the heart of their spiritual, community and apostolic life. The Eucharist is a privileged moment for celebrating their spirituality and from the Eucharistic table the members take the courage to proclaim the liberating and redeeming love of God in the Blood of Christ. The members are called to promote the kingdom of God through the apostolic and missionary activity of the ministry of the Word.<sup>4</sup>
- iii). The Society invites others who are called by God to share in this missionary task and provides for their formation in an environment which facilitates the candidate’s growth to maturity and fullness of life in Christ.
- iv). This maturity requires a formation that addresses all the dimensions of the person: human, Christian, communitarian and apostolic. It likewise promotes the development of values conducive to living and proclaiming the Gospel.
- v). Basic formation for membership in the Society is the same for priesthood and for brother candidates, since all members are called to life in community and to share in its apostolates.<sup>5</sup>
- vi). The task of formation takes place within the concrete cultural, social, political and ecclesial reality. This context challenges and enriches the entire formative process.
- vii). Before his incorporation into the Congregation, the candidate undergoes a special program of religious formation which includes a more intense experience of the paschal mystery, a study of the charism of the Congregation, of the theology and spirituality of the Precious Blood, of the history of the Congregation, its Normative Texts, as well as a practical knowledge of its community life and its apostolic endeavours.<sup>6</sup>
- viii). Living consciously within the mystery of the Precious Blood and called to be sharers of the mission of Christ in the world, the main objective of the C.PP.S formation process is to accompany every candidate and every single missionary to attain maturity in various dimensions and ultimately to attain conformation to Christ.<sup>7</sup> Thus Jesus Christ is

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<sup>4</sup>NT, C 3.

<sup>5</sup> C.PP.S General Formation Program, 5.

<sup>6</sup>NT, C 35.

<sup>7</sup>NT, C 28.

the true model to be imitated and followed in his total self-giving with the total and undivided love to God and His people.

ix). The Tanzanian C.P.P.S formation programme is divided into two, namely, the Basic Formation and the Ongoing Formation. The Basic Formation is the formation process which a candidate undergoes in his preparation to become a full member of the C.P.P.S Congregation. The Basic Formation is divided into *initial formation*, *special formation*, and *advanced formation*. The Ongoing Formation is the permanent formation which a C.P.P.S missionary undergoes throughout his life and ministry until death.

## CHAPTER ONE: FORMATORS

- i). **The Provincial Director** is the ultimate responsible person for the formation of the candidates. With the help of his Council, he appoints various personnel who take various responsibilities to accompany the candidates at various stages of their Basic Formation. The Provincial Director appoints the Vocation Director, the Formation Directors of the two formation houses and their respective Spiritual Directors. He appoints also the following personnel to be responsible for the formation at St. Gaspar College: the Rector, the Vice Rector, the Spiritual Director, and the Bursar.

The Provincial Director with the consent of his council is competent to accept a candidate into our society a person coming from another institute of consecrated life or a society of apostolic life or a diocesan priest. The provincial Director is competent to accept a person in formation program older than 35 years.<sup>8</sup>

- ii). **The Vocation Director** is the principal vocation animator in the province.<sup>9</sup> He organizes seminars and meetings for vocation promotion either in collaboration with Vocation Directors of other religious congregations or in collaboration with parish priests. He is responsible for all the communication with those who aspire to be admitted in the C.PP.S formation program. The Vocation Director is responsible to make sure that he gets some reasonable background of each aspirant. He presents to the Provincial Director the baptismal certificate and other necessary credentials of every candidate selected to begin the first year of formation. He is to work in collaboration with other formators at all levels for the sake of sharing experience and feedback.

- iii). **C.PP.S formators** in various houses of formation are to be witnesses to the candidates in living the Gospel values and the C.PP.S identity. They are to give witness through their fraternal spirit and communion, the spirit of solidarity and collaboration, simple life style, total dedication to the Lord and to the candidates entrusted to them. Above all they are to reveal a great capacity to work as a team. They are to be people who listen and challenge the candidates to growth. Apart from their good will and dedication to work as formators, they are to be well prepared with those skills and understandings needed because the success of the C.PP.S formation project heavily depends on their competence.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Tanzanian Provincial Statutes, 40

<sup>9</sup>The responsibility to animate, promote and attract vocations falls on every C.PP.S member wherever he may be. He does this through his prayer, sacrifice, word, and above all through his concrete witness by living authentically the Precious Blood spirituality. Cf. NT, S 16.

<sup>10</sup>Cf. NT, S 17.

## CHAPTER TWO: BASIC FORMATION

### 2.1. Protagonists of Basic Formation

- i). **God** is the first and the primary Subject of every formative project. Before considering formation as a duty, it is always necessary to remember that it is a gift from God. The Holy Spirit is the first Educator of the candidates and every religious formative process belongs to Him.<sup>11</sup> Thus in the formation process, both the formator and the candidate are to surrender themselves to guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- ii). **The candidate** follows in the second position as a protagonist of formation. The candidate cannot be able to grow and mature if he does not desire from deeply within. His personal involvement in the process is indispensable and irreplaceable.<sup>12</sup> Without his collaboration, the work done by the formators will be in vain. Formators play their role in helping the candidate to actively, freely, and willingly acquire values and to become authentically oneself in truth.
- iii). **All other human educators:** The Provincial Director, the educating community: the Rector, Vice Rector, the Spiritual Director, other formators, professors, the natural family, the ecclesial community from where the candidate comes, all the associations or youth organizations with which the candidate may be involved.<sup>13</sup>

### 2.2. Dimensions of Basic Formation

#### 2.2.1. Human Formation

Human formation is the foundation of the whole formation process<sup>14</sup> and it finds its foundation on Jesus, true God and true man.

It aims at acquiring psychological maturity, a sense of responsibility and of authentic freedom, self-mastery and the exercise of those virtues that are highly regarded among the human beings.<sup>15</sup> The candidate is expected to develop such values like; Sincerity of the heart, constant concern for justice, fidelity to one's word, courtesy of manner, capacity for self-disclosure, compassion, generosity and hospitality, endurance under difficulties, respect and obedience.

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. *PDV*, 69

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *PDV*, 65-68

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *PDV*, 43a

<sup>15</sup> NT, C 29



Through the psychological help the candidate should be helped to have self-knowledge and self-acceptance. The candidate should be encouraged to involve himself in various activities and hobbies.

### **2.2.2. Spiritual or Christian Formation**

The spiritual formation is the heart of all the formation process as it colours and animates all other dimensions of formation.<sup>16</sup>Candidates should be helped to know clearly that the first vocation which they have received is the vocation to Christianity. They are to be aware of this precious gift of faith, of the mystery of salvation and their response to live authentically their baptism commitment<sup>17</sup> through the acquisition of various Gospel values.

The candidate is expected to develop values such as; great interest in the Word of God, continual search for sanctity, deep appreciation of personal and community prayer, the capacity to live a simple life-style, appreciation and commitment to live a celibate life and love, and self-denial.

### **2.2.3. Communitarian Formation**

The communitarian formation intends to help the person to be vitally and dynamically involved in the Congregation, absorbing its missionary spirit, making its ideals his own, and together with other members they can promote mutual progress, respect and kindness.<sup>18</sup>

The candidate should learn and take responsibility to develop harmony, peace, tranquillity, reverence, tolerance and love in the community, the values which were much willed by St. Gaspar.<sup>19</sup>Furthermore, through the communitarian formation, the candidate is expected to develop the following values: ability to dialogue, that is to listen and to value other's perspectives, readiness to pardon and to ask pardon, love for the community, ability to live in community, humility and patience, social awareness, solidarity with the world, concern for justice, cross-cultural sensitivity.

### **2.2.4. Intellectual Formation**

The intellectual formation is the instrument for the pastoral activity. The intellectual formation helps the candidate to acquire quality knowledge in order to understand better the divine mysteries and be able to express our Christian faith in a valid and sound way. Their intellectual formation should help them to proclaim well the Gospel.

The candidates should seek an ever deeper knowledge both in class and in their personal research activities.

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. *PDV* 45d

<sup>17</sup> Cf. NT, C 30

<sup>18</sup> NT, C 31

<sup>19</sup>Praxis of the Rule of St. Gaspar, Article 9

### **2.2.5. Pastoral Formation**

The pastoral formation is the end which determines the unity of all the formative process in its various dimensions.

It aims at enabling the candidate to acquire those necessary virtues for personal commitment to the spreading of the Kingdom of God: love of God and neighbour, generosity in self-giving, simplicity of life, adaptability to the various environments and cultures, and ardent zeal for helping others. Moreover it demands that in the spirit of Christ, the missionary know how to harmonize a profound spiritual life with exterior activity and always to be alert to discover the signs of the times.<sup>20</sup>

Other values to be acquired include; initiative in ministry, the capacity to collaborative ministry with laity and with religious men and women, ability to read the signs of the times, sensibility and readiness to respond to the surrounding cries of blood.

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<sup>20</sup> NT, C 32

## **CHAPTER THREE: PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS OF FORMATION**

The internal disposition of the candidate is the most privileged area for the formation is the internal disposition of the candidate. All the formation process is geared to address and educate the heart or the conscience of the person. However, there are some specific external environments important for the formation of the candidates.

The two houses of formation (Formation I and II), St. Gaspar College, the C.PP.S communities are specific environments with specified C.PP.S members responsible for the work of forming the candidates.

The natural family and home parish are also other physical environments for the formation of the candidates. Thus, the Basic Formation period is an intensive and permanent whereby the formation process remains uninterrupted. Every place the candidate finds himself should be a place for learning whether within or outside formal structures of the Congregation.

### **3.1. Natural Home**

Beginning with the natural home and parish environment, the candidate should find means and support to cultivate his vocation gift and to find genuine motivation to become a missionary in the Congregation. The Vocation Director is responsible to have a reasonable family and parish background of the candidate who manifests the desire to join the Congregation. The Rector of St. Gaspar College keeps on the communication with the original ecclesial community of the candidate to get some feedback of the candidate's development during the vacation time.

### **3.2. Formation Houses**

Two separate houses are set for the first and the second year of formation. Essentially, each formation house has its Formation Director and the Spiritual Director. These formation houses can have other personnel who act as educators or members of the supporting staff in the formation program. They need, however, to be people who acknowledge their responsibility as formators.

### **3.3. St. Gaspar College**

St. Gaspar College is the main formation community where candidates have a specific opportunity to have an integrative formation program as far as the human, spiritual, communitarian, intellectual, and pastoral dimensions of formation are concerned.

## **The Nature and the Structure of St. Gaspar College**

### **i). The Rector**

The Rector is the head of the formation community in the College and he represents the Provincial Director in his responsibility of formation. The Rector is the first responsible person in the whole life in the College and he is the representative of the College both to the ecclesial and civil authority.<sup>21</sup> He enters into a vast network of relations – with the Provincial Director, with other formators and educators, with the candidates as a group and with each individual candidate, with the local ecclesial authority, with other congregations and civil society.

Although his formative approach to the candidates is to be general in nature, it is part of his specific mission to take care and to promote the integration of all various aspects of life and formation of every candidate. Thus he is to know in person the reality and situation of each candidate. The Rector holds weekly meetings with all the candidates, Rector's conferences. The nature of the Rector's conference can be informative, educative, or dialogic. He holds personal conversation with every candidate at least twice in each semester.

The Rector takes care of the harmony and the solidarity of all the formators in the College in making sure that they all collaborate as a team. With the help of other formators, the Rector prepares a written annual College Report and of each candidate and presents them to the Provincial Director. He is also to give the recommendation to the Provincial Director on all those candidates who apply their requests to be admitted into various stages of their formative process.

### **ii). The Vice Rector**

The presence of the Vice Rector is vital as a member of the formative community in the College. Apart from being a formator the Vice Rector may have another specific role in or outside St Gaspar College. He works closely with the candidates and their leadership in the human growth of the candidates. In the absence of the Rector, the Vice Rector assumes his responsibilities.

### **iii). The Spiritual Director<sup>22</sup>**

The Spiritual Director is an official figure in the College appointed by the Provincial Director. He acts on two levels:

On the communitarian level, he acts on the *external forum* by animating the spiritual life of all the College, by coordinating various exercises of piety and liturgical functions,<sup>23</sup> giving various instructions about the spiritual life in general, by transmitting the knowledge about both the C.PP.S and priestly identities. Above all he organizes various spiritual moments for

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<sup>21</sup>Cf. Directives for the Preparation of Educators in Seminaries, 43b; Canon Law numbers 238 §.2; 260

<sup>22</sup>Cf. *CIC*, 239 § 2

<sup>23</sup>Cf. *RFIS*, 44

the candidates. He holds weekly conversation with the candidates as a group (spiritual conferences) and he holds personal conversations with each candidate at least twice a semester.

On the personal level, he acts on the *internal forum*<sup>24</sup> as he accompanies every single candidate who chooses him as spiritual accompanier in the searching for God's will, in the vocational discernment, in the education of the personal prayer, and in the personalization of the entire formation.<sup>25</sup>

#### **iv). Spiritual Accompanier<sup>26</sup>**

A spiritual accompanier is freely chosen by the candidate as a guide of spiritual life. This guide can be among or outside the formative team in the College. The accompanier may or may not be a C.P.P.S member but is to be available for monthly colloquial with the candidate. The accompanier of each candidate is to be approved by the Rector of the College.

#### **v). The Bursar**

The bursar is the main responsible person as far as the material needs of the community are concerned and keeps all the accounts of the community. He is directly responsible with the supporting staff and he organizes work and various projects.

#### **vi). Other Members of the Formation Community**

These are other C.P.P.S missionaries who make part of the formation team at St. Gaspar College while having also other ministries in or outside the College. They include Lecturers at the Jordan University, pastor/s at the Body and Blood of Christ sub parish, and those who reside in the community for specific academic programs.

### **Integrated Nature of Formation at St. Gaspar College**

The candidates are expected to grow harmoniously in various dimensions of their life; human, spiritual, communitarian, intellectual, and apostolic. The candidates admitted to the College should be those who have shown their sincere desire and aptitude to respond to God's call within the Congregation and be ready to offer themselves for the service of God and His people. Formators at St. Gaspar College, generously and fraternally accompany the candidates to reach this noble goal.

#### **i). Intellectual Formation**

Specifically, at Jordan University College (JUCO), next to the St. Gaspar College, the candidates have the opportunity to attain their intellectual formation as far as the ecclesiastical studies are concerned; three years of philosophy, four years of theology, three

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<sup>24</sup>Cf. *RFIS*, 14

<sup>25</sup>Cf. *PDV*, 66d

<sup>26</sup>Cf. *CIC*, 246 §.4

years of religious studies and any other studies as directed by the Provincial Director. Each candidate is to work to the best of his ability to obtain good academic results. The Rector is to follow personally the academic development of each candidate. Failure to accomplish the academic requirements is considered to be an obstacle for promotion to the next stage of formation. The candidates are also exposed to the international reality as they come into contact with professors and students of other African countries and from other continents. At the University, they have the opportunity to learn several international languages offered. Each candidate is encouraged to learn well at least one of the modern languages other than English (French, Spanish, German, and Italian). The opportunity is also given to the candidates to attend other academic and formation programs outside the academic curriculum. These programs are organized by the university or other congregation or institution in the form of seminars or symposium. During the vacation period, St. Gaspar College or the Provincial Director may use part of the vacation period to those programs which will help the candidates acquire more and more the knowledge of our patrimony and spirituality.

### **ii). Spiritual or Christian Formation**

At the university the candidates follow different courses within the academic curriculum which are destined for their spiritual and Christian formation. Within St. Gaspar College, all the spiritual life is organized by the Spiritual Director. Through meditation, personal and community prayer the candidate has an opportunity to develop personal relationship with the Lord and to remain united with him. The celebration of the Eucharist is the highest moment of the life in the College. All the community members are united together for the Eucharistic celebration. Furthermore, each candidate is required to have his personal program for spiritual aspect other than what is arranged by the community.

Spiritual direction is acknowledged to be an important means for spiritual growth of every candidate. The Rector has to make sure that each candidate chooses his own spiritual accompanier to whom he can freely reveal his conscience. The candidate is to consult his spiritual accompanier regularly, at least once a month. The Rector of the College does not need to know the content of the spiritual direction but he is responsible to make sure that the candidate meets his spiritual director regularly. The spiritual accompanier may or may not be the personal confessor of the candidate.

### **iii). Human Formation**

Building on those human and Christian values which the candidate has already acquired, human formation at St. Gaspar College aims at helping the candidate to develop his sense of discipline, responsibility, and accountability. He is guided to love and take care of the community through specific responsibilities he is assigned to.

#### **iv). Communitarian and Fraternal Formation**

The communitarian and fraternal formation are part and parcel of the human dimension of formation. They stress more about the social or communal dimension of the human nature and the need to develop those values necessary for community life.

Life in the College is organized in such a way that apart from living the communion of all the community members, candidates are divided into four small communities.<sup>27</sup> They are named after St. Felix, St. Francis Xavier, St. Vincent de Paul, and St. Jude Thaddeus. Each small community has its own leadership and to each one of them is assigned one formator who acts as the patron or animator. Through these small communities, the candidates come to know each other better and they become closer to the life of each other. These small communities are useful means to foster charity, fraternity, sharing of personal gifts and developing the spirit of generosity in service. Within the small communities, each candidate has an equal right and opportunity to participate and offer his contribution to the group and to the whole community at large. Manual work, meditated Word of God (*lectio divina*), liturgical preparation and animation, pastoral experience, and revision of life are basically organized within these small communities.

#### **v). Pastoral Formation**

Apart from the full year of pastoral experience in the C.PP.S communities before their incorporation, candidates at St. Gaspar College have the opportunity to have some pastoral experiences within the surrounding area of the local society. Pastoral formation in the College aims at enabling the candidate to integrate the various dimensions of formation in order to enter into communion with the charity of Christ, the good Shepherd. The candidate is expected to employ his personal gifts, the human and Christian values so far acquired and the results of his academic reflection into the practical application. The spiritual formation which aims at the life of intimacy with God, the interior life of prayer and contemplation should culminate in meeting Christ among the people especially the poor and the marginalized.

Organized in their small communities, the candidates do some pastoral experience with the orphans, the street children, poor and other apostolate in the Sub Parish as directed by the pastor. There is the opportunity to have a pastoral experience with the sick and the inmates. As they come into the direct contact with these realities especially with the suffering people, their first ministry is that of presence, to be in solidarity with the suffering humanity. The focus is on being with the people rather than doing for the people. At the second place, the candidates are challenged to see how they can be a voice of the marginalized and how they can be agents of change in the society.

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<sup>27</sup>These small communities have been created in line with the pastoral priority given by the AMECEA (the acronym of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa. It is a service organization for the National Episcopal Conferences of the nine countries of Eastern and Central Africa, namely Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia) to the small Christian communities as the true and effective way of living Christianity in Africa.

Some candidates are involved with some association and movements which give them more opportunity to experience the reality of their future ministry. Candidates who belong to the Pro-Life movement have the opportunity to know some of the moral problems within the society and they are challenged to see how their holistic oriented type of formation can help them to promote life against the culture of death.

As part of preparation for celebration of the solemnity of the Precious Blood, the College celebrates the Precious Blood Week. This is a special moment of coming together as a Precious Blood Family. Thus all C.PP.S members and those with whom we share the same spirituality are invited to participate. It is also an important occasion to make our spirituality known and be shared by the lay people. Through a given theme for reflection and through all the activities done in the week, the candidates have an occasion to integrate their intellectual, spiritual, and pastoral experiences in the light of the Precious Blood spirituality.

### **3.4. C.PP.S Communities**

All the C.PP.S communities are basically “formative communities” for both Basic and Ongoing Formation. C.PP.S communities should be really places of growth and acquiring values for all candidates who temporarily visit the communities or who are assigned for specific pastoral experience. It is therefore the duty of every C.PP.S member to remember his responsibility as a formator.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Although the appointed formators have a special responsibility to form candidates in the day-to-day accompaniment in various stages of their formation process, every C.PP.S member is a formator. Thus our communities should be “formative communities” through the witness of life and by creating an environment which motivates candidates to respond positively to God’s call within the Congregation. Cf. C.PP.S General Formation Program, 22.



## CHAPTER FOUR: STAGES OF BASIC FORMATION

### 4.1. Early Preparation

#### Criteria for Accepting Candidates

The Tanzanian Province accepts the following aspirants;

- i). Those who have already completed their advanced secondary level of education with the qualified pass mark to enter into the university. It accepts as well aspirants who have completed their university education or an equivalent institute. They are all to be baptized Catholics and they are to present their Baptismal certificate to the Vocation Director.
- ii). Diocesan priests or religious from other Congregations. It is the duty of the Provincial Director to make sure that these candidates undergo a particular discernment process before they are admitted into the C.PP.S formation program. This is to help them to have a deep discernment process in order to clarify their vocation motivation to become missionaries of the Precious Blood.

Priests and religious from other congregations are welcome. They spend 6 months in C.PP.S communities assigned by the Provincial Director. During this period the aspirants will share the life and pastoral ministry of the community. At the end of this period, the community will evaluate the aspirants and draw a report to be submitted to the Provincial Director.

Assured of their suitability, the aspirants are enrolled to the First Year of Formation, Second Year of Formation and the Pastoral Year consecutively. An evaluation is secured on completion of every stage of formation.

#### The Period of Preparation

The first year of formation is preceded by a period of preparation known as, “come and see” or “orientation course.”<sup>29</sup> This is the time when the aspirants come for one month to know something about the Congregation and the Congregation comes to know something about them. After a process of discernment, a reasonable number among these aspirants are selected ready to begin the first year of formation.

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<sup>29</sup> In case of a diocesan priest or religious who requests to enter into the C.PP.S program, the orientation course lasts for six months before he begins the first year of formation.

## **4.2. Initial Formation**

The initial formation begins with the first year of formation and ends with the third year of philosophy and it is divided in two parts: First Year of Formation and Philosophical Studies.

### **4.2.1. First Year of Formation**

The official program of formation begins at John Merlin House of formation, Dodoma. The first year of formation is an intensive year in which the candidate is to be helped to discern properly God's call in his life and his total dedication to respond to God's call within the C.P.P.S Congregation.

During the first year of formation, more emphasis is centred on human, Christian, communitarian and fraternal dimensions of formation. It is expected that at the end of the year the candidate will acquire those fundamental human and Christian values necessary for a healthy vocation. The Congregation is dedicated to prepare future missionaries who are healthy spiritually, physically, and psychologically.

The class sessions during the first year of formation include material on the Christian faith and Bible knowledge, personal and community prayer life, sacramental life, spiritual direction, community life, and introduction to the C.P.P.S patrimony. With the help of developmental and vocational psychology, the candidate is to be helped to have a deep knowledge of the self in terms of identifying his personal gifts and recognizing both his points of strength and weaknesses.

Apart from class work, the candidates are assigned various manual activities of which each one is required to take full responsibility. All candidates are strictly required to participate in sports according to the program set.

The candidate is required to take full responsibility to take care of his health by learning to live a virtuous life. He is to be educated to avoid every kind of life which can easily destroy his health. At any stage during the period of formation, the Congregation has the right and duty to know the health of each candidate but at the same time respecting the dignity of the individual.

### **4.2.2. Philosophical Studies**

The second part of initial formation takes place at St. Gaspar College under the title "Philosophical Studies". Our Mother Church wishes to impart a grounded perennial valid philosophical heritage taking into account philosophical investigations over the course of time.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Cf. *CIC* 551

### **4.3. Special Formation**

Special formation is understood by the C.PP.S Province of Tanzania as the “Second Year of Formation.” It is done after the candidate has undergone the philosophical studies.<sup>31</sup>The Province is still looking for a permanent house for the second year of formation. Temporarily the special formation is done at Chibumagwa.

During this particular stage, the candidate acquires a deeper knowledge of the spirituality and charism of the Congregation. This is done through the study of the patrimony of our society: the history of St. Gaspar our founder, the history of the Congregation in general, the theology and spirituality of the Precious Blood, and the Normative Texts. The candidate is to be introduced to enter into the language of the Covenant, Cup, Cross and Lamb with special reference to the cultural, social, political and ecclesiastical contexts. Motivated by the celebration of the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation, the candidate is invited to have a deep experience of what it means to live the “bond of charity” within the local community.

Towards the end of the year, through a deep discernment process and evaluation, the decision is taken to approve the candidate for the advanced stage of the formation program.

At the end of this year the candidate receives a copy of the Normative Texts and the cassock and sash from the Provincial or his delegate as the sign of his dedication to further formation toward becoming a C.PP.S missionary.

### **4.4. Advanced Formation**

The advanced stage of formation in the Tanzanian Province begins with the first year of theological studies or with the beginning of specified studies for brotherly candidates. It lasts until the end of the pastoral year, precisely with one’s definitive incorporation into the Congregation.

#### **4.4.1. Theological Studies**

The candidates spend the first four years of advanced formation at St Gaspar College studying theology. During these years the candidates are installed to the ministries of Lector and Acolyte<sup>32</sup>.

#### **4.4.2. Pastoral Year**

After four years of theological studies, the candidates are assigned to different C.PP.S communities. They are to participate in the daily life and mission of the C.PP.S members and

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<sup>31</sup>In case of a lay/religious candidate who requests to join the C.PP.S formation program after his philosophical studies outside the Congregation, the special formation is done immediately after the first year of formation. The same case applies for a priest who joins the program.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. *CIC* 1035

they are assigned different tasks. The candidates are to be invited into house conferences and meetings though they have no right to vote. While they are in the pastoral experience, the Vocation Director is responsible to organize various established meetings among them for the sharing of experience and for their group retreats.

Before they are incorporated into the Congregation, they are to present a written report of their pastoral experience and they are to write the letter of request for the incorporation. The community in which the candidate has exercised his pastoral experience is required to give an evaluation report of the candidate. Although they are still in their formation process, candidates in the pastoral year are expected to live and exercise their respective ministry with the identity of the missionary of the Blood of Christ. They are to be prayerful persons, dedicated to the study especially the Word of God and the C.PP.S heritage, and dedicated to the celebration of the sacraments especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation, ready to take initiatives, simple, people of service, affectively matured persons, sincere, honest and trustful, open, great love for the community, humble persons, respectful, etc.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: ONGOING FORMATION**

God wants to use us as efficacious instruments in responding to the demands of our mission and challenges presented by a rapid ever-changing world. All this obliges us to have a constant reflection on the world and on ourselves in order to realize what needs to be changed in ourselves and what needs to be modified in our knowledge, our attitudes, and our apostolic methods in order to remain always at our best of what we can offer to our mission. This does not simply mean the theoretical improvement of our academic knowledge and practice but rather it is something wider and more profound since the ongoing formation is grounded in a more deeply reality of the spirit. The goal for the ongoing formation is to attain an integrated spiritual, intellectual, and apostolic renewal to enable the missionary to be and to do mission according to Jesus's style.<sup>33</sup>

### **5.1. Protagonists of Ongoing Formation**

Every missionary should take initiative of being responsible for his own ongoing formation. The missionary should be internally convinced of the need for an ongoing program of formation for self-renewal in various aspects of his life.

At the second place, the leadership at the provincial level is responsible to animate the members to make sure that every member has his own personal program for ongoing formation. The Provincial Director and his council is expected to organize periodically some programs which involve the members as a whole or which regards some specified groups of members. The Provincial Director and his council have a special responsibility to organize those ongoing formation programs for the members within ten years of incorporation.

### **5.2. Foundation and Constitutive Dimensions of the Ongoing Formation**

#### **5.2.1. Foundation**

The necessity of the ongoing formation is based on the exigency to have a continuous revival of the vocation gift received from God. A missionary who does not grow anymore and whose life has no room for renewal is like a dead person and thus he cannot generate life in others. The ongoing formation then is geared to help the person acquire an integrative maturity as well as improvement of his knowledge for apostolic mission within the ever changing circumstances.

#### **5.2.2. Constitutive Dimensions of the Ongoing Formation**

The subject of the ongoing formation is the person himself in the totality of his being throughout all his life stages. The ongoing formation includes the following dimensions:

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<sup>33</sup>Cf. *PDV*, 73 a

- i). The primacy is given to the spiritual dimension which is the centre of life and mission of every missionary.
- ii). The human and fraternal dimension, which requires personal and constant effort and involvement for personal growth and maintaining solidarity with the community. There is a need to continue to grow in self-knowledge and in the capacity to make one-self known to others, especially those with whom one lives and shares the ministry.
- iii). The apostolic dimension which requires in practice, the updating of the objectives and methods in the ministry according to the C.P.P.S theology of mission.
- iv). The intellectual dimension which is founded on solid and sound theological formation.
- v). The dimension of our spirituality and charism. The missionary needs to have a constant study and reflection of our spirituality and charism throughout his life as the most important and constitutive element of our ongoing formation.

### **5.2.3. Locus for the Ongoing Formation**

The local community is the most privileged place for the continuous formation of the missionary. It is from the community where the missionary gets the impulse and support. The local community should be the place for personal growth and fraternal communication.

### **5.2.4. Stages and Means for Ongoing Formation**

#### **Stages**

Formation by its very nature accompanies the life of a missionary throughout his whole life. The missionary passes through different stages of his missionary life whereby every stage has its own characteristics and presents different occasions and challenges to which the ongoing formation should pay attention and consideration. Apart from the community program provided for ongoing formation, every member should have his own ongoing formation program.

- i). The period which corresponds to the first years of missionary life special support should be given in accompanying the young missionaries. They are to be assisted in acquiring more knowledge of our Patrimony, in theological and spiritual studies especially those connected with our Precious Blood Spirituality and pastoral skills to foster their growth as persons and in their ministry according to our charism.
- ii). The age which ranges from 45 to 65 years of age may present, together with the growth of the person, a strong tendency towards individualism. Sometimes this stage can be characterized by tiredness and some kind of frustration as the result of not being able to fulfil the objectives foreseen during the youth age. In this case the ongoing formation should be concentrated on a more profound spiritual experience

which allows the person to resume his personal history in the light of God and to see the present moment as the moment of grace, with the hope that in the future years everything can be possible with God's grace.

- iii). When reaching the time of retirement, the spiritual and the human aspects are very important for discovering the sense of this stage of life so as to accept it with humility and joy.
- iv). The old and sick members need to be given a special attention. Apart from the affection and gratitude we should have to these our brothers who have worked hard to serve the Congregation and the Church, we need to encourage them to accept the fact that even the decline of life has a mission and that it is important to live this phase with the attitude of ongoing formation. The sick and the old members continue to be fruitful as they impart into younger missionaries their personal wisdom they have acquired in their ministry. The sick and the old members should remain in the communities until when they really need a special attention.

### **Means**

- i). The spiritual exercises constitute the principal instrument for the ongoing formation. They enable a missionary to have a deep and concrete experience of being a sinner but a forgiven sinner who is called by the Lord to be with him and to work for him. Spiritual exercises help the missionary to develop and strengthen his personal friendship with Christ who is the centre of our life and ministry.
- ii). Living intensively and fruitfully the sacrament of Reconciliation and the Eucharist.
- iii). Personal and community prayers together with meditation.
- iv). Regular spiritual direction.
- v). Annual retreats and other periodical programs for ongoing formation organized by our Congregation, other religious congregations or the respective local diocese.
- vi). Constant self-updating on resources for our Patrimony and spirituality through personal study, meditation, and fraternal sharing of personal experience with other members of the local community.
- vii). In the occasion of the change of particular duty/responsibility in the Congregation or after a long period of work, taking into account the possibilities, a sabbatical period can be useful.

## **Appendix: Profile of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood**

The Society of the Precious Blood is a Society of Apostolic Life. It is dedicated to the apostolic and missionary ministry of the word (C3). Our mission and our community life are sustained and directed by the spirituality of the Precious Blood.

This profile lists the qualities of a Precious Blood missionary. It serves as an aid to envisioning the ideals toward which we strive. A profile is general in nature and is intended to be developed in each concrete cultural circumstance. This *Profile of the Missionary of the Precious Blood* will help vocation directors and prospective candidates discern their call to our Congregation. It serves to guide formation directors and candidates in elaborating programs of formation. In a spirit of ongoing renewal, each member is urged to use this profile for ongoing growth and renewal. This profile is seen within the context of the spirit of our Founder, St. Gaspar, our C.P.P.S. heritage, the Normative Texts, and the General Formation Program.

### **I. Mission**

Missionaries of the Precious Blood evangelize through the apostolic and missionary ministry of the word. The Precious Blood missionary hears the cry of the Blood. Our mission calls us:

- to be evangelized by the revealed Word of God in Jesus Christ and by the living Word of God present in the people and in the values of the culture to whom we are sent;
- to evangelize
- in the ministry of the Word;
- in witnessing by life style;
- in promoting peace, justice, and reconciliation;
- in human promotion;
- in defending human rights and dignity.
- to read the signs of the times and to hear the cry of the Blood;
- to defend life in a culture of death;
- to respect and promote the inculturation of the Church in every society;
- to collaborative ministry with all the faithful;
- to intercultural and international sensitivity;
- to educate ourselves in other cultures and languages;
- to allow God's Word to transform the patterns of human living;
- to an ecumenism disposed to dialogue (S13) and to collaboration with other religions;



- to stand in solidarity with those who suffer: the alienated, the poor, the disempowered, victims of oppression, the marginalized;
- to work with perpetrators and victims to recover their full humanity;
- to be prophetic: to resist deceit, injustice, and whatever is contrary to God's reign;
- to mobility, flexibility, and availability to various situations and cultures.

## **II. Community**

We embrace community life which supports our mission. Our community life is sustained and directed by a spirituality of the Precious Blood. In community we pursue the perfection of charity through the bond of charity as sons of St. Gaspar. Our community life is characterized by:

- the bond of charity;
- living together, as long as the needs of the apostolate do not demand otherwise (C7);
- a spirit of dialogue;
- a sharing of personal faith, gifts, and talents;
- mutual encouragement;
- a simple lifestyle;
- reconciliation;
- conversion;
- hospitality;
- shared meals, prayer, ministry, and study;
- embracing intercultural, international, and intergenerational community living;
- an exchange of candidates and members in the international community.

## **III. Spirituality**

The spirituality of the Precious Blood motivates us and focuses our mission. The missionary finds at the centre of his vocation the Blood of Christ. The spirituality of the Precious Blood includes:

- individual and communal prayer and study, especially with the Sacred Scriptures and C.P.P.S. heritage;
- our gathering at the Eucharistic table where our bond of charity is celebrated, and we are healed and strengthened for mission, and where the Cup of the Covenant creates communion and calls us to places that would challenge us;
- reconciliation;
- inclusivity and multicultural diversity;

- openness;
- interior freedom and poverty of spirit;
- celibate loving;
- a radical response to the call of the Blood;
- renewal of person, culture, society, and Church;
- humility which recognizes our interdependence;
- our Gasparian charism;
- deepening of our spirituality with others who share it.

We seek the Holy Spirit's guidance and grace in all the dimensions of our apostolic life as Missionaries of the Precious Blood. Those involved in the ministries of vocation animation and formation offer this profile of the Precious Blood missionary to guide and assist the Congregation in vocation and formation work. It represents our understanding of the realization of the charism of St. Gaspar at this point in time.

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