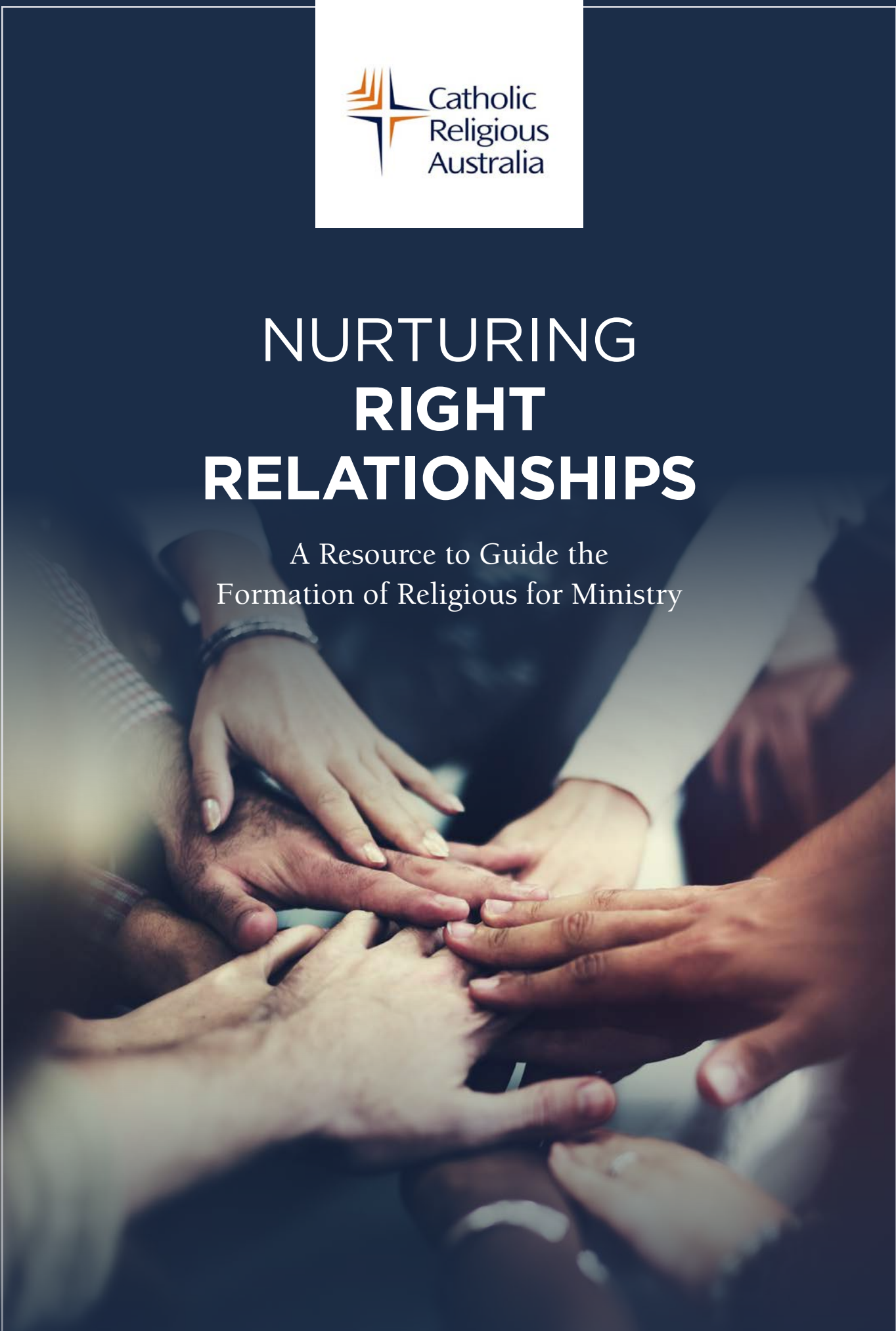




# NURTURING RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS

A Resource to Guide the  
Formation of Religious for Ministry



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The document *Nurturing Right Relationships: A Resource to Guide the Formation of Religious for Ministry* was developed by a committee of Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) and endorsed for publication at a General Meeting of CRA on the....

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# INTRODUCTION

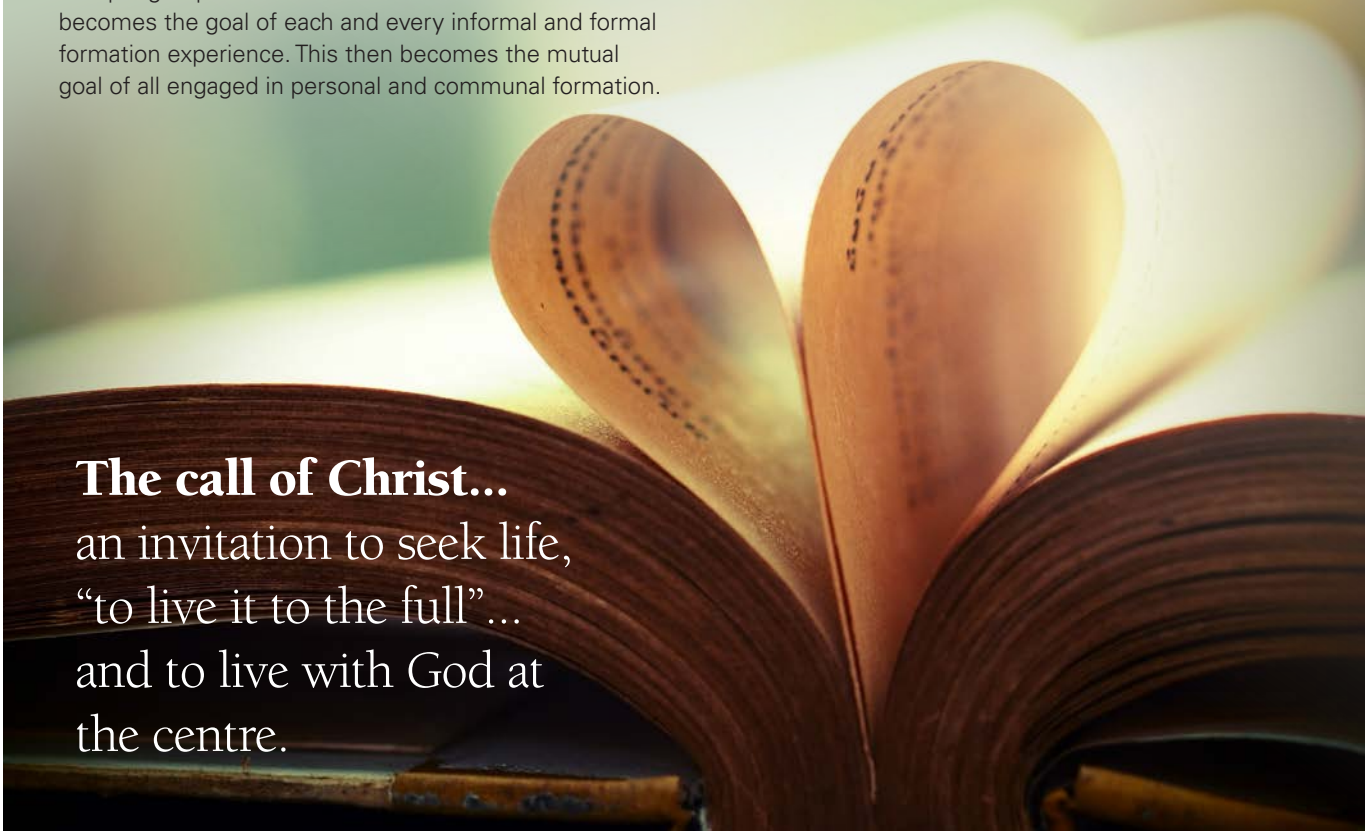
## A New Way of Being

The call of Christ within the Gospel is an invitation to seek life, “to live it to the full” (John, 10:10) and to live with God at the centre. It is a challenge to stand in right relationship with all of God’s creation, to recognize the inherent dignity of all and to relate in ways that witness to connection, values, presence, compassion and liberation and that enable mutual transformation through our genuinely human engagement. The message and model of Christ is one of acting and standing in right relationship, in nurturing the Kingdom of God as integral to life, acknowledging limitation while being attentive to experience and wisdom gained in and through life’s journey. The insights received afford us ever greater authenticity and personal freedom – our basic Christian vocation.

Formation for religious and consecrated life is a life-long journey to the invitation of Christ to proclaim and live the Gospel message within the life of the Church in the Spirit and Tradition of the Religious Institute. The ultimate goal of personal development: openness to the Spirit, being loving, compassionate, humble, courageous and accepting of personal limitations and human weakness becomes the goal of each and every informal and formal formation experience. This then becomes the mutual goal of all engaged in personal and communal formation.

## Purpose and Audience

*Nurturing Right Relationships: A Resource to Guide the Formation of Religious for Ministry* seeks to identify key concepts and promote behaviours congruent with professional standards and mature human sexuality in keeping with the professional, moral and ethical expectations within Religious Institutes and the wider Australian community. The material is offered to leaders and members of Religious Institutes in support of Policy development and the implementation of Regulatory and Procedural practices particularly with respect to the recruitment, screening and continuous formation of Institute aspirants and members. Moreover, the material has a special application for ministry activity with children and vulnerable adults and draws from the experience and recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse established in 2013.



**The call of Christ...**  
an invitation to seek life,  
“to live it to the full” ...  
and to live with God at  
the centre.

# INTRODUCTION

## The Call of Religious Life

The ultimate norm for religious life is the following of Christ set forth in the Gospels: *Faithful to their profession then, and leaving all things for the sake of Christ, religious are to follow Him as the one thing necessary, listening to His words and solicitous for the things that are His.* (cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, 5, 1965). In this context, religious are asked to look to the past with gratitude, to live in the present with passion and to embrace the future with joy, courage and hope.

The vocation of religious is to proclaim the Word of God and give witness to the world in accord with Gospel principles with full respect and love for all human beings (*Christian Witness in a Multi-Religious World*, 2011, 2016). The call to be and to build the kingdom announced by Christ is an invitation to:

**Wake up the World...**  
rather than living in some  
utopia.... find ways to  
create alternate spaces  
where the Gospel approach  
of self-giving, communion,  
embracing differences,  
and love of one another  
can thrive. Pope Francis

## A Time for Reflection and Action

We, the Religious of Australia - men and women, monastic and apostolic, sisters, brothers, priests, **while acknowledging the fact that grace builds on nature**, undertake to respect and implement these guidelines, each within our own Institute and to provide sound foundations and the most professional accompaniment to those called to follow Christ in our communities. Moreover, we recognise and commit to the challenge of our Pope to listen with open hearts to the cries of the poor and to respond in ways that develop mutual transformation graced by love, mercy and compassion.

We acknowledge and endorse the vision and norms laid down by the Holy See in the Decree *Perfectae Caritatis* (1965) and the various Exhortations and Instructions since.

We acknowledge and endorse those requirements established by the Magisterium and in particular by those bodies concerned with the protection of children and vulnerable adults

As religious congregations within the Catholic Archdioceses and Dioceses of Australia we are committed to the requirements of the Catholic Professional Standards Ltd - to the standards established, to the implementation, education and formation required, and to the reporting, auditing and assessments that may be asked of our individual congregations.

For those Religious called to minister as priests, we accept the norms of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference in their *Ratio Nationalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* (2007, Revised November 2014).

In the context of the Australian Government's Royal Commission into the Institutional Response to the Sexual Abuse of Children and similar investigations and inquiries in many countries, we acknowledge with shame and sorrow the crimes and abuse committed by Religious against children and vulnerable adults. We acknowledge also too frequent failures by our Institutes and their leadership to take appropriate action. We are committed to learning from these flaws and failures of the past and to establishing standards and systems that will promote formation within a culture that safeguards and protects the dignity and rights of all.



# A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS FORMATION

Religious formation is a continuous, dynamic, holistic and complex process of transformation which shapes and nurtures a deeper appreciation of self, relationships (socially and with the earth) and the challenge to develop self, live authentically and to make a difference in the world.

It is experienced formally and informally, occurs in the predictable and unpredictable events and experiences of life and is shaped by the Gospel of Christ as expressed within the life of the Church and the Traditions of the Institute. It is seldom linear nor is it ever completed. It is a continuing and interdependent process which engages individuals, specialists, Institute communities and Superiors and entails the creation of a culture which supports, challenges and renews all of its constituent elements. *Whenever we make the effort to return to the source and to recover the original freshness of the Gospel, new avenues arise, new paths of creativity open up, with different forms of expression, more eloquent signs and words with new meaning for today's world (Evangelii Gaudium, n11).*

The goal of creating a culture of continuous formation begins with identifying starting points, the responsibilities of those involved and the roles of key people engaged in its processes: establishing foundations, the responsibilities of the Institute and defining expectations. Within this overall framework, the process of continuous formation for Religious is founded on following Jesus Christ, engaging the Charism, facilitating accompaniment on the Journey and preparing for Mission. This process is supported systemically through the provision of Policy, the appointment of a formator and the support of the host community. In turn, these responsibilities are articulated in the expectations of the candidate and the requirements of the designated formator.

The three tables that follow: *Foundations of Formation, Responsibilities of the Institute, and Expectations of the Candidate and Formator* constitute a practical perspective to the development and provision of a culture of continuous formation. While each focus area and accompanying descriptors possesses a unique focus, each contributes to a view of formation which is characterised as dynamic in its application, comprehensively systemic in its nature and scope, and holistic in the outcomes it seeks for all involved.

Formation is a continuing and interdependent process which engages individuals, specialists, Institute communities and Superiors and entails the creation of a culture which supports, challenges and renews all of its constituent elements.

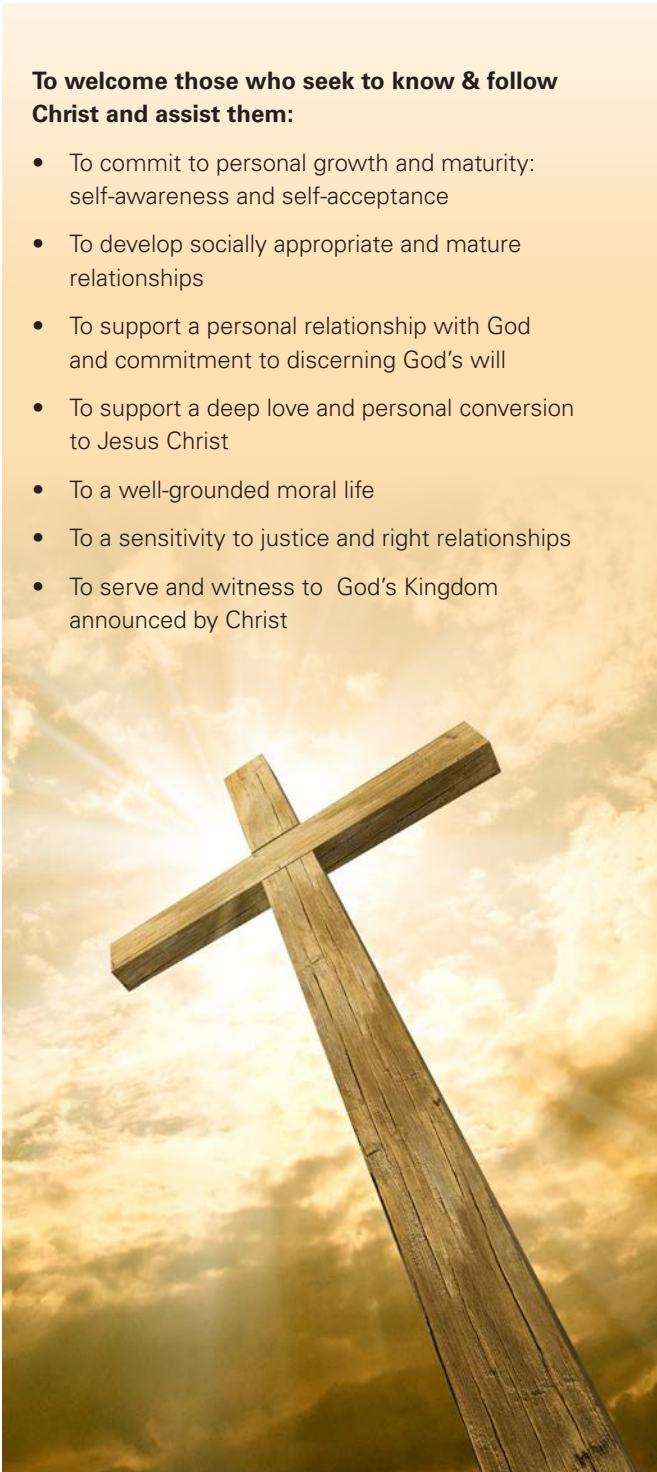
# FOUNDATIONS OF FORMATION

## FOLLOWING Jesus Christ



### To welcome those who seek to know & follow Christ and assist them:

- To commit to personal growth and maturity: self-awareness and self-acceptance
- To develop socially appropriate and mature relationships
- To support a personal relationship with God and commitment to discerning God's will
- To support a deep love and personal conversion to Jesus Christ
- To a well-grounded moral life
- To a sensitivity to justice and right relationships
- To serve and witness to God's Kingdom announced by Christ

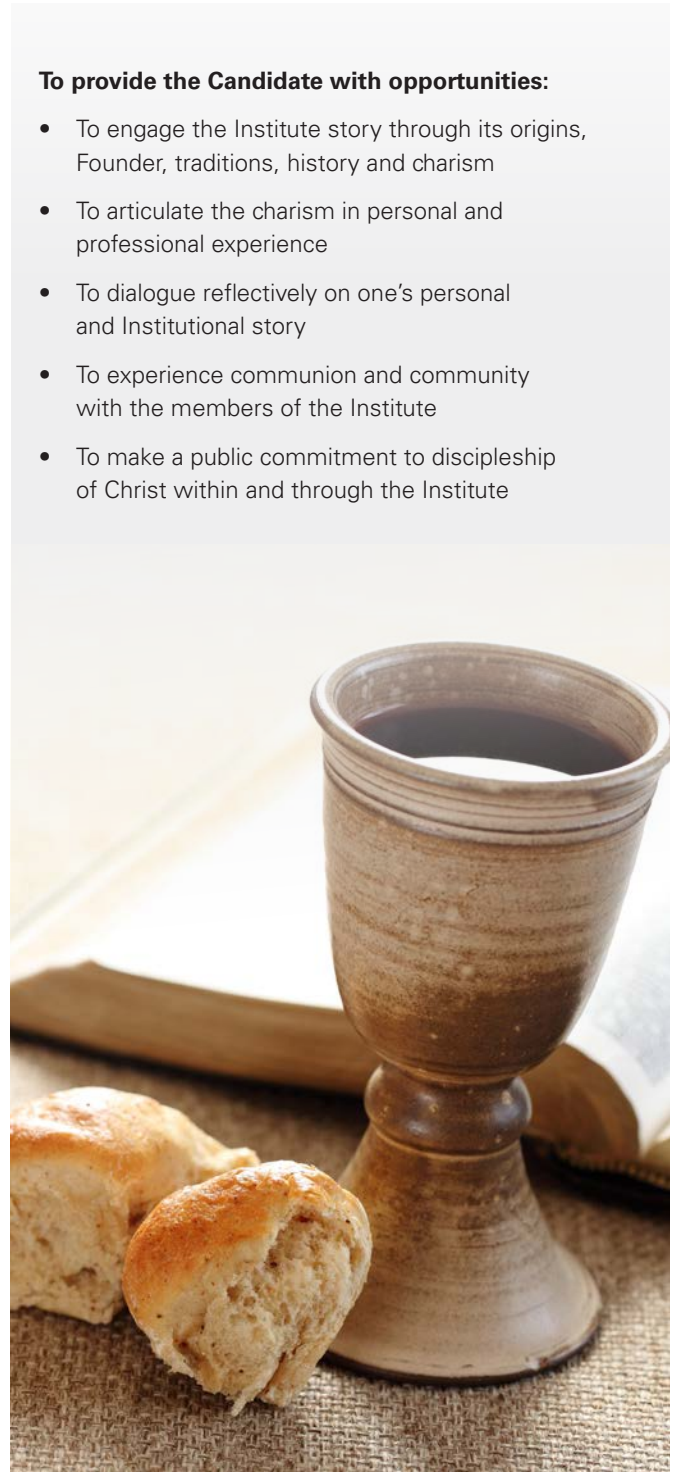


## ENGAGING the Charism



### To provide the Candidate with opportunities:

- To engage the Institute story through its origins, Founder, traditions, history and charism
- To articulate the charism in personal and professional experience
- To dialogue reflectively on one's personal and Institutional story
- To experience communion and community with the members of the Institute
- To make a public commitment to discipleship of Christ within and through the Institute





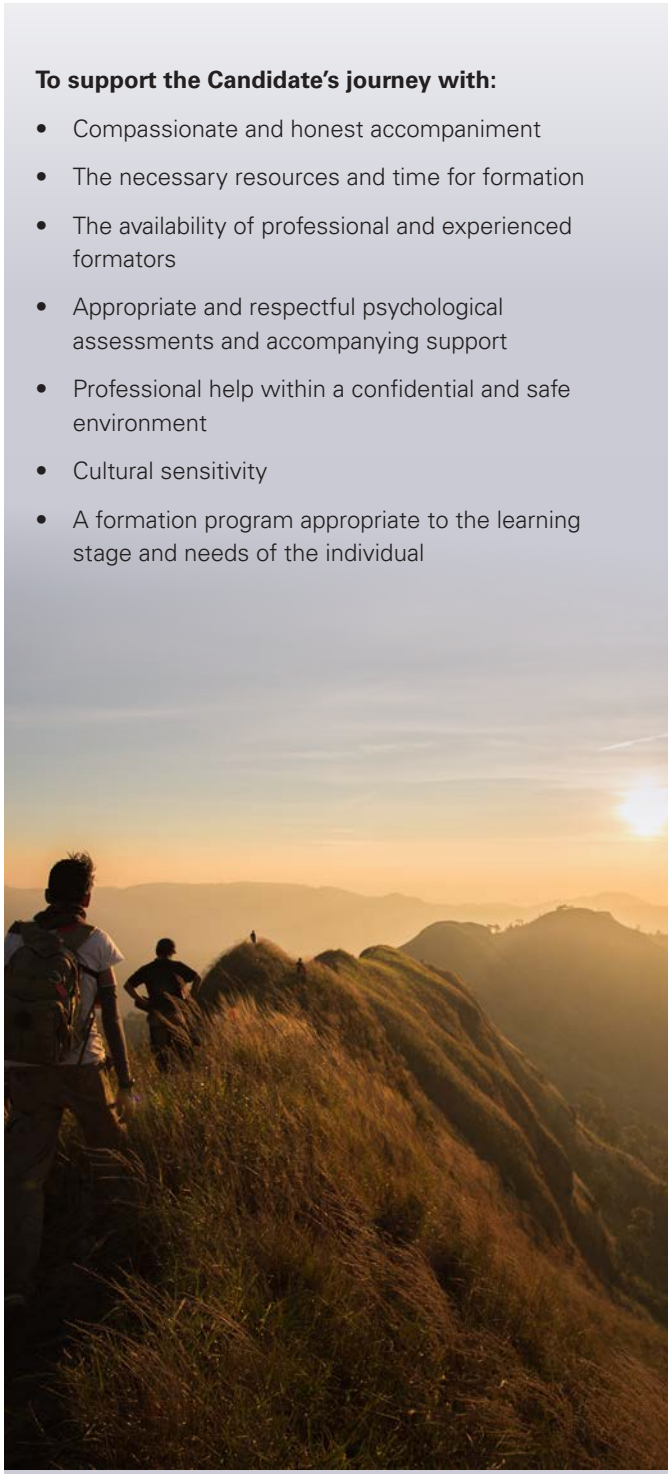
...a practical perspective to the development and provision of a culture of continuous formation.

## ACCOMPANYING the Journey



### To support the Candidate's journey with:

- Compassionate and honest accompaniment
- The necessary resources and time for formation
- The availability of professional and experienced formators
- Appropriate and respectful psychological assessments and accompanying support
- Professional help within a confidential and safe environment
- Cultural sensitivity
- A formation program appropriate to the learning stage and needs of the individual



## PREPARING for Mission



### To support collaborative preparation for mission by:

- Assessing one's potential for prophetic witness in lifestyle and ministry
- Seeking to know the agenda of the community which engages mission
- Identifying the personal educational and resources for mission
- Discerning the nature of professional accompaniment and supervision and provision for this
- Determining one's accountability and responsiveness to reflection in action



# RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INSTITUTE

## Generate Policy

---

### To develop and authorise a policy that:

- Has clarity of process and stages, with definite markers and transitions
- Has clear and accessible expectations and outcomes
- Proceeds on 'gradualism' – increasing responsibilities and accountabilities at each new level of formation
- Takes into account the particular needs and gifts of the individual
- Is able to provide for a mixture of age, cultures, backgrounds
- Has the appropriate number of formators for the number of candidates
- Recognizes language proficiency challenges for formators &/or candidates
- Provides clear lines of authority and processes for appeal by the candidate
- Reflects the policies of the Institute for bullying, harassment, discrimination, and use of social media
- Is evaluated, approved and assessed under the authority of the Major Superior

## Provide a Formator

---

### Provide a trained and experienced formator with professional qualities and processes:

#### Qualities:

- Commitment to the formation experience
- Able, mature and experienced religious
- Professionally prepared for this ministry
- Appropriately resourced personally and professionally
- Committed to their own personal supervision and spiritual direction
- Able to give the appropriate priority to the Ministry of Formation
- Be accountable for their ministry and provide regular reporting to the appropriate formations boards and to the Major Superior

#### Processes:

- Ensure the candidate is in a safe environment
- Have regular individual conferences with the candidate
- Ensure the personal, health and other needs of the candidate are met
- Put in place regular assessment procedures, with appropriate feedback to the candidate and to the Major Superior
- Maintain the confidentiality of all documentation and reports on the candidate
- Ensure all canonical and congregational requirements are understood and met at every stage of formation

## Confirm Community Support

---

### To establish a formation community that can:

- Be open to and supportive of the diversity and uniqueness of each individual
- Be prayerful and balanced in its life and ministry
- Exercise informed judgement regarding the presence and consequences in the community of religious who are dysfunctional
- Be prepared to assist the candidate and support the Formation Ministry
- Be an authentic witness to the Charism of the Institute in action
- Respect and keep appropriate boundaries in their relationship to the individual and in accord with the formation process



# EXPECTATIONS OF THE CANDIDATE AND FORMATOR

## The Formator

### **Religious Institutes seek and appoint formators who are committed to:**

- Provision of professional processes and maintenance of systems and documentation required by church and congregation
- A professional and thorough assessment of the candidate – this will usually involve psychological testing and reference checks. When a candidate has already been in a formation program for religious life or priesthood, references must be sought from those responsible for their formation
- For candidates in Australia, the appropriate Safety with Children Check is made; and police check or equivalent for those from overseas
- Address and assess sensitively the personal and sexual history of the aspirant, respecting the privacy of the formator and appropriate confidentiality
- Address family history before entry or during formation to assist in personal integration
- Inform all candidates, especially those from overseas, of the importance of Professional Standards and Child Safety protocols required in Australia, and by their congregations. Candidates with a criminal history of abuse or confirmed allegations cannot be accepted

## The Candidate

### **Religious Institutes seek candidates who demonstrate a commitment to &/or experience of:**

- A genuine response to the Gospel call and message and a personal relationship with Christ
- a desire to find God as alive and active in the whole of life and with a maturational development appropriate to communal life and ministry
- A history of constructive and life-giving relationships unburdened by significant and ongoing responsibilities for family and personal possessions
- Sufficient and appropriate educational qualifications
- A life of faith, prayer and involvement in Church
- Appropriate life experience, affective maturity and psychosocial health
- No criminal record and capacity to meet statutory requirements for working with children and other vulnerable people
- Experience with and sufficient knowledge of the Institute
- A willingness to consider and embrace change and development in faith and religious practice as might be relevant and necessary
- An openness to psychological testing and independent commentary as to one's suitability for religious life

A life of faith, prayer and involvement in Church



# FORMATION DIMENSIONS

As a continuous process, formation will occur throughout all of religious life and reflect levels of diversity and formality in the process and experience. There are however, set periods of formation to which the Religious Institute gives particular attention: Pre-Novitiate, Novitiate and Temporary Profession; and to specific developmental domains of focus in the overall formation experience: Human, Intellectual, Pastoral and Spiritual dimensions of the candidate.

What follows is an elaboration of four developmental dimensions on which continuing and integrated formation is based. While identified separately, each of the dimensions, and the nominated characteristics which define them, come together fully in the integrated development of the candidate and the processes supported by the formator.

## HUMAN DIMENSION

### Developmental Characteristics

#### Formation in Human attributes will entail:

- Affective maturity and personal integration appropriate to age and stage of development
- Personal care and social integration
- Balanced and supportive interpersonal relationships inside and outside the institute, within and between genders, and across cultural and religious norms
- Experience of relationships both within and outside the work-related environment
- The ability to live simply, to respect the practices and processes of those in authority, and to exercise personal leadership
- The capacity to be self-motivated and to develop self-insight and proactive personal leadership and advocacy
- The capacity to look towards long-term personal and ministry goals in the process of formation
- The ability to nurture a culture of reflection and capacity for reflexivity with others outside the formation experience

### Process Elements

#### Accompaniment with the formator will occur through:

- Regular and consistent individual conference and spiritual direction experiences
- Professional and psychological assistance where needed
- Education in the various dimensions of psychosexual development
- Formation in communication and conflict resolution
- Assistance in the establishment of a developed Theology of the Vows, with particular reference to chastity
- Supporting an understanding and attentiveness to the importance of:
  - Self care
  - A balanced lifestyle
  - Provision of opportunities to establish healthy mutual relationships across gender
  - Maintaining physical and emotional boundaries



## INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION

### Developmental Characteristics

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**Formation of intellectual attributes will involve:**

- Formation in biblical, systematic, pastoral theology and spirituality, and in particular, a constant growth in understanding and meaning of consecrated life and of the charism of the institute
- Participation in academic, professional and vocational education in accord with ministry needs with particular relevance to the vocational works of the Institute
- Developing skills in identifying justice and social issues, social analysis, theological and pastoral reflection and praxis
- A commitment to ongoing personal growth and development within ministry as it unfolds with community engagement
- Education in the duty of care for those with whom ministry is shared

### Process Elements

---

**Support for professional development will entail:**

- Ensuring academic and pastoral programs are faithful to the requirements of the Church and the particular norms of the Religious Institute
- Identification and preparation of religious for work with the economically poor, vulnerable or marginalised people in keeping with the charism of the Institute
- Monitored and guided supervision of the candidate in ministry, particularly with those suffering and in need
- Engagement and awareness of the context of ministry experienced by the candidate and the ability to discern between authentic and unauthentic experience in pastoral supervision and formation processes
- The ability to engage in group dynamics and the practical experience of shared discernment on pastoral activities

## PASTORAL DIMENSION

### Developmental Characteristics

---

**The basis for Christian mission and witness entails:**

- Acceptance of Jesus Christ as the supreme witness
- Sharing in the witness of Christ through the proclamation of the Kingdom, service to neighbour and the wholehearted gift of self
- Demonstration of the joy, hope and compassion that are integral to Gospel service
- Recognising Christian witness in a pluralistic world and engaging in dialogue with people of different religions and cultures
- Acting in solidarity with one another in community and ministry activity through witness to Christ
- Recognising that personal transformation in Christ is ultimately the gift of the Holy Spirit

### Process Elements

---

**Preparation for pastoral works will entail:**

- Establishing a culture of learning from experience and developing awareness of the revelation of God in the day-to-day experience of authentic living and loving
- Provision and or facilitation of education in justice and social issues, skills in social analysis, theological reflection and pastoral reflection
- Facilitation of experiences where the candidate can work with economically poor, vulnerable or marginalised people
- Securing from candidates an acceptance and commitment to supervision and continued professional training

# SPIRITUAL DIMENSION

## Developmental Characteristics

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### Awakening the interior life and its connection to authentic love (John 15: 12-13; Jam. 1:22):

- *Seeking God solely and before everything else, (the members of every community) should join contemplation, by which they fix their minds and hearts on Him, with apostolic love, by which they strive to be associated with the work of redemption and to spread the kingdom of God*
- *Seek and love above all else God who has first loved us...strive to foster in all circumstances a life hidden with Christ in God. This love of God both excites and energises that love of one's neighbour which contributes to the salvation of the world and the building up of the Church. This love, in addition, quickens and directs the actual practice of the evangelical counsels. (Perfectae Caritatis 5-6)*

## Process Elements

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### Supporting a healthy spirituality through:

- Encouragement of a rich Eucharistic and sacramental life, reading the Scriptures, attentiveness to the Liturgy of the Hours, personal meditation, spiritual reading, engagement with solitude, regular retreats, spiritual direction, practical charity, and a devotion to Mary
- Encouraging prayer within the community the Local Church and within the ministries of the Institute

Seek and love above all else  
God who has first loved  
us...strive to foster in all  
circumstances a life hidden  
with Christ in God.



# WELLBEING, PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND CULTURE

Nurturing the development of the Human, Intellectual, Pastoral and Spiritual dimensions of religious unfolds with due recognition to psychosexual wellbeing, attentiveness to professional standards and a sensitivity to cultural situations in which ministry finds expression. These areas continue to signify the dynamic nature of formation and constitute further and important considerations for effective service in ministry.

## PSYCHOSEXUAL WELLBEING

### Developmental Characteristics

#### Psychosexual wellbeing is evidenced in:

- A spirituality of intimacy, sexuality, physical needs, sexual satisfaction and gratification as manifested in the characteristics of a loving person
- Avoidance of pornography and abuse of alcohol, food and/or drugs to suppress psychosexual needs

### Process Elements

#### The formator will promote:

- The physiological, emotional and psychological understanding of human sexuality
- The meaning and value of the vow of chastity
- Guidance and formation in lifelong growing to sexual maturity and living with the self-sacrifice involved in a life of chastity
- Guidance in setting and respecting appropriate boundaries in relationships and awareness of the warning signs of a personal life out of balance
- An awareness of the risks and dangers of pornography
- Awareness that problematic personal behaviour may be symptomatic of deeper personal issues



# PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS IN **SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN** AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

## Developmental Characteristics

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### Candidates for ministry will commit to:

- Undergoing a Working with Children Safety Check or its equivalent
- Maintaining the legal requirements of Commonwealth and State governments in regard to Protection of Children
- Meet Church requirements of: Towards Healing, Integrity in Ministry, Integrity in the Service of the Church
- Accepting the policies and protocols of their particular Congregation and Province
- Acknowledging their legal obligations for responding, recording, and reporting any forms of harm or abuse

## Process Elements

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### The formator ensures candidates are informed of:

- Commonwealth and State laws on bullying, harassment and discrimination
- The Policies of Institutes in regard to the above areas, and in particular, to those related to Child safety
- Where appropriate, the policies and norms of Dioceses in relation to the above areas
- The expectations of compulsory and regular in-service on professional standards
- Appropriate and inappropriate use of social media





# CULTURAL ISSUES – FORMATION WITHIN AND OUTSIDE AUSTRALIA

## Formation Awareness

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### Candidates coming to Australia for formation will be advised of:

- The multicultural nature of Australia and the nature and scope of religious life within the Australian context
- The expression of multiculturalism taking many forms - ethnicity, gender, age, expression of faith and spirituality
- The Increasing presence of institutes and candidates from overseas within the Australian community
- The variety of pastoral situations within which mission and ministry find expression
- Communities in Australia needing education in dealing with people from other cultures.

### Formation expectations for Australian residents ministering overseas will involve:

- Accepting the legal and church requirements with regard to professional standards and the protection of children and vulnerable adults in the country where formation occurs
- Engagement with Australian civil requirements and the policies of the home province which they are obliged to follow wherever their formation occurs

## Formation Support


---

### Candidates from other cultures will be assessed as to their adaptive capacity for:

- Use of the English language and its many nuances (idiom, accent and comprehension)
- Understanding power, authority, sexuality, relationships, faith and its expression, ministry, Church, religious life and lifestyles
- Accepting cultural demands - dignity of the person, respect for women, setting boundaries and appreciating and accepting appropriate behaviour
- Engaging in spiritual direction and accompaniment on a regular basis.

### Formation support for Australian residents ministering overseas will involve:

- Proper preparation and education in the language, customs and culture of the country
- Education in local requirements with respect to ministry, canon law and diocesan requirements
- Accompaniment and support to ensure the religious in formation are sensitive to the culture in which they are living



The expression of multiculturalism  
taking many forms - ethnicity, gender, age,  
expression of faith and spirituality

# ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Assessment and evaluation occurs at two levels: the assessment and support of the individual and the associated discernment as to Institute membership and capacity for ministry; and the appropriateness and effectiveness of the Institute's endeavours in its support of the individual's formative process.

The assessment of candidate suitability will be transparent in its operation and confidential in its application. Resources, both personal and financial, will be brought together to discern the appropriateness of candidates and the effectiveness of processes integral to their continuing formation. Meaningful and positive relationships based on truthful and loving conversations will support candidates in their personal journeys in response to the call of the Gospel as it finds expression within the life of the Institute.

The assessment of the Institute's capacity and endeavour to provide the necessary systemic support to formation will reflect the Religious Institute's ultimate responsibility for the Formation program, the appointment and training of formators, and the implementation of Formation Policy. This systemic responsibility will entail regular and substantial assessment and evaluation and it will inform on-going formation goals and processes arising from the Institute's commitment to continuous openness to the changing ecclesial and societal demands in the living of the charism.

The tables that follow give an overview of the elements making up the assessment and evaluation of candidates, and the overall assessment and evaluation of the Institute's performance in the provision of formation processes.

Meaningful and positive relationships based on truthful and loving conversations will support candidates in their personal journeys in response to the call of the Gospel as it finds expression within the life of the Institute.



# ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES

04

## Developmental Characteristics

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Growth in the relational, intellectual, affective, pastoral and spiritual dimensions of religious life is gradual, has its own rhythm and is characterised by:

- Continuing reflection, discernment and assessment is asked of the candidate, the formators and the religious community as all engage personally and mutually in the process of formation
- Acknowledging that evaluations can deepen the self-knowledge of the candidate and assist the Institute in discerning the candidate's readiness to move to the next stage of their formation
- Encouraging the candidate to set goals, review progress and to discern new goals that assist development and support progressive evaluation

## Process Support

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Formation programs will provide clear markers for transition and where appropriate, be ritualised and celebrated with due regard to the following:

- Regular individual conferences with the formator and other appropriate resource people, health professionals, counsellors and psychologists
- Regular assessments by the formator, appointed boards, and the religious community, with appropriate feedback given to the candidate
- Self-assessments, peer review, assistance in personal goal setting and evaluation, behaviour modification and psychosocial evaluation

Continuing reflection, discernment and assessment is asked of the candidate, the formators and the religious community as all engage personally and mutually in the process of formation



# ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION OF INSTITUTE PROCESSES

## Institute Leadership

Religious Institutes oversight the formation program, appoint and resource formators, and implement Policy. These responsibilities entail:

- Development and implementation of a formation policy to meet the norms and requirements:
  - Of Church Authority
  - Of Social Science research and experience
  - Of Civil Legislation
  - Of best practice with regard to Professional Standards and Protection of children and vulnerable adults
- Periodic review of the Formation policy to ensure it meets the requirements of the Institute, the Candidates, changing Commonwealth and State legislation and the learnings from the Royal Commission
- A duty of care towards the religious in formation, that their formation is meeting the highest standards, is in accord with personal and communal expectations and utilizes independent appropriate expertise and support
- Follows the protocols laid down by Church Authority and Government legislation for reporting of allegations of abuse of a child or vulnerable adult
- *Care needs to be taken to ensure that matters which belong to the internal forum, that is to the level of conscience, remain in the internal forum. Only those matters that are public and open, that is in the external forum, can be used in the discernment of the suitability of students for ordination. Because of this, canon law makes it very clear that in the admission of students to orders or their dismissal from the seminary, the vote of the student's spiritual director or confessor can never be sought (Canon 240 §2)*

## Institute Personnel

Religious Institutes ensure that the religious in formation are able to live meaningfully within the Institute, are imbued with its charism and can be entrusted with its ministries. This responsibility will entail:

- A responsibility to each religious in formation to treat them with equality, justice, respect, fairness and honesty and without prejudice or partiality
- That the religious in formation is given appropriate feedback and assistance in order to respond more knowledgeably and authentically to what may be asked of them
- That assessments and reports to the Major Superior are true and complete, not withholding information required by leadership to support their definitive decisions concerning the religious in formation
- Reporting immediately to the appropriate authority any allegations of abuse of a child or vulnerable person in accord with the protocols laid down by the Church Authority and Government legislation



# CONCLUSION

Relationships are central to all personal, interpersonal and organisational endeavour and transformation.

They manifest deeply held beliefs about human dignity and growth through interaction and serve as the principal means for knowing self and contributing meaningfully to a society, nation and earth community. They reflect the importance of all creation and call into being the foundational Gospel principle of love.

*Nurturing Right Relationships: A Resource to Guide the Formation of Religious for Ministry* is offered to Religious Institutes at a time of intense community assessment and commentary. In this light it is generated as not only a resource arising from Gospel, Church and Institute Traditions but also as a sign of the priority of learning from ministry practice where failures in people and processes warrant practical and immediate attention.

Leaders and members of Religious Institutes are encouraged to review and apply the concepts and ideas shared in this document. It is a statement for, about and by us at a time of movement into new awareness and new processes. It is both timely and important.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1.

### Practical Indicators: Personal and Emotional Health

Formation supports the growth of the fully human person with effective functioning, strength of character, maturity, positive social and emotional balance, social, emotional and spiritual intelligence, and with life satisfaction, joyful and hopeful service, resilience and self-transcendence as outcomes of the immediate and the longer term commitment.

## FORMATION OUTCOMES

### Positive



- Have a healthy sense of self with appropriate self-insight
- Able to accept authority
- Non-defensive in recognising one's gifts and also one's limitations
- Have a capacity to let go of hurts and resentments
- Able to exercise self-discipline
- In touch with one's emotions and one's motives for action and non-action
- Growth in the ability to express and share one's emotions appropriately
- Possess a clear sense of one's life goals and purpose
- Able to measure decisions against one's values and principle
- Show evidence of integration of their needs with their vocational values and attitudes
- Openness to difference in the 'other'
- Able to live with difference and to analyse and negotiate these differences
- Able to experience and express appropriate levels of intimacy with others
- Able to forgive and integrate the experience of conflict and failure into one's life experience
- Able to work towards long-term goals
- Able to maintain tension in taking and implementing decisions
- Able to live with the inevitable isolation inherent in leadership

### Problematic



- Constant levels of anxiety
- Constant feelings of depression or incompetence
- Inability to express strong negative or positive emotions in a healthy way
- Regular experience of feelings of inadequacy, guilt or anger; repression of anger
- Tendency to withdrawal and/or avoidance of contact
- Unable to be challenged and the need to always be right
- Regular difficulties with sleeping, with eating, alcohol or other substances of abuse
- Regular rather than occasional emotional outbursts.
- General disinterest in life and unwillingness to be included in group activities
- Poorly controlled aggression and competitiveness in relationships





# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 2. Psychosexual Health Indicators

Sexuality is complex. It includes gender roles, sexual orientation and is influenced by the interaction of biological, cognitive, social, cultural, religious and spiritual factors. Psychosexual health is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social wellbeing, and not merely the absence of dysfunction.

## PSYCHOSEXUAL HEALTH INDICATORS

### Positive



- A growing comfort with and acceptance of one's own sexuality and identity
- Honesty in acknowledging one's personal sexual history
- Able to discuss concerns in these areas with trusted formators or spiritual guides
- Able to both give and receive affection in appropriate ways that respect necessary boundaries
- Able to respect and be comfortable with people who appear to have a different sexual orientation or experience
- Sufficiently at-home in one's own sexuality to be able to relate comfortably to women or men
- Give evidence of having age-appropriate friendships and relationships
- Able to be alone and to enjoy one's own company as well as able to relate to others
- A healthy balance of work and relaxation, of hobbies or personal interest
- The need to regularly monitor and submit one's functioning and behaviour to the evaluation of respected others
- Able to find appropriate ways to relax, address stress and negative emotions
- Learning to laugh long and generously at life, its challenges and its failures

### Problematic



- Appearing to be a 'loner' and incapable of establishing sound, mature relationships, both professional and personal
- Unable or unwilling to work and to live within appropriate relational boundaries
- Putting down "others" - women, men or people of different cultures; being open to growth in these areas of necessary adaptation
- Use of pornography as a substitute for intimacy in real life
- Engaging in sexist, homophobic, racist or supremacist language in conversation or behaviour on a fairly regular basis
- Showing evidence of only being able to relate to persons who are younger or of the same gender

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 3. Entitlement and Clericalism in Religious Women and Men

Religious aspire to be servant leaders, those who 'smell of the sheep', who live a lifestyle that identifies them with those they serve rather than differentiates them.

The notion that religious and priests are a privileged group, whose special status sets them apart, and exempts them from the norms, rules and consequences that apply to everyone else in society is to be challenged. This sense of entitlement has its roots in narcissism. It sees some people as more important than others and is founded on the belief that one is inherently deserving of privileges or special treatment.

### Preferred

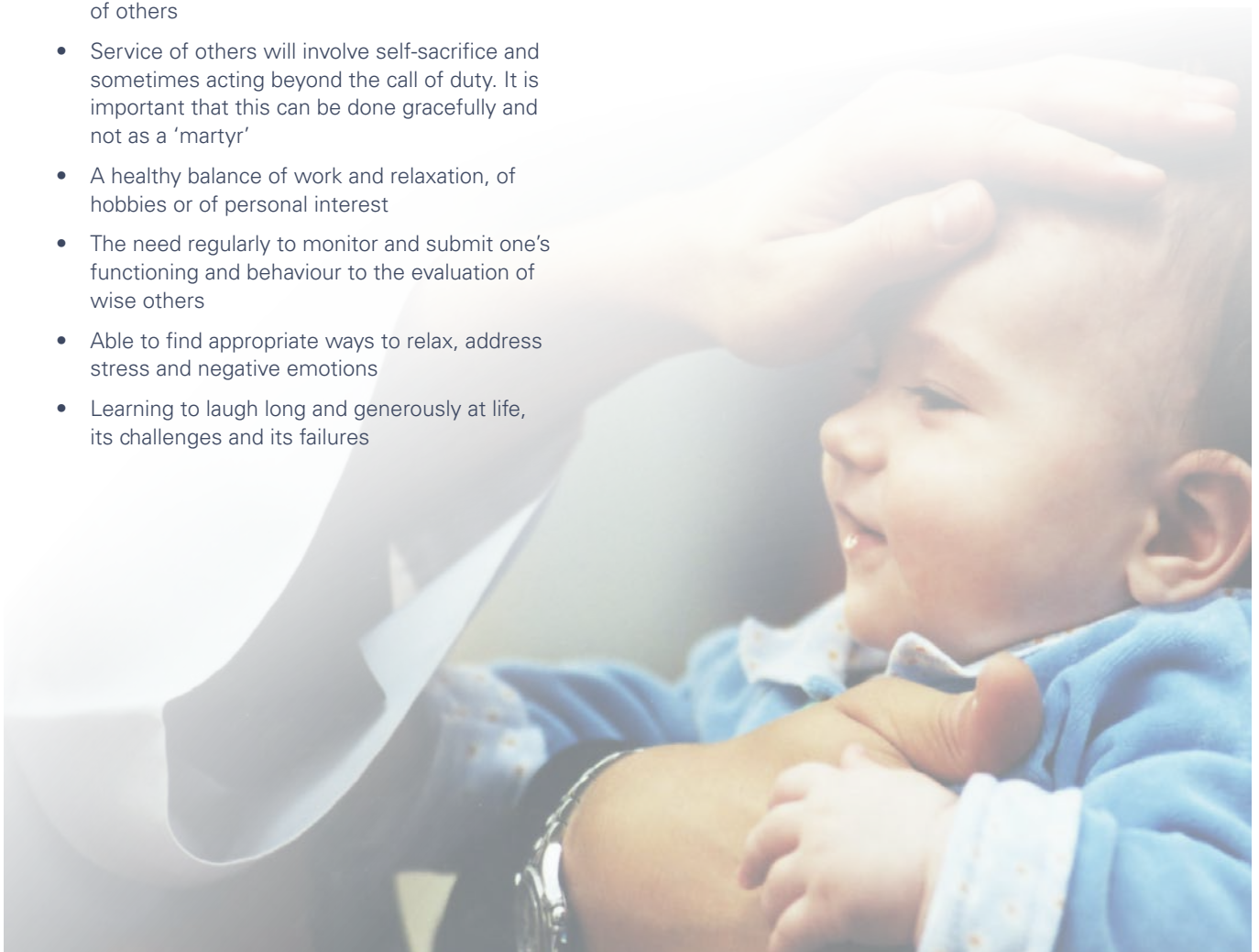


- This means that they must first be approachable if they are to be of real service to others
- Availability is an important quality in one who is called to service as a religious
- Arrogance or superiority do not fit well with the call to be available, supportive and loving servants of others
- Service of others will involve self-sacrifice and sometimes acting beyond the call of duty. It is important that this can be done gracefully and not as a 'martyr'
- A healthy balance of work and relaxation, of hobbies or of personal interest
- The need regularly to monitor and submit one's functioning and behaviour to the evaluation of wise others
- Able to find appropriate ways to relax, address stress and negative emotions
- Learning to laugh long and generously at life, its challenges and its failures

### Problematic



- Treating people with understanding one's human reality by 'over-spiritualising' behaviour or interpersonal interactions and also by judging or criticising another person's experience through lack of understanding or empathy





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A Resource to Guide the  
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