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TITLE

**Obligation and Right of Admission and Preparation of suitable Candidates to
Religious Institutes by Competent Superior in the Light of Can. 642.**

A Case Study of the Institute of the Order of Carmelites Discalced

Supervisor

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Master of Arts in Theology

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DEDICATION

To all my family members, and to all fraternity of the Order of Carmelites Discalced in the world, as they zealously work in the Lord's vineyard.

EPIGRAPH

“Let nothing trouble you, nothing frighten you. All things pass. God does not change. Patience achieves everything”

-Teresa of Avila-

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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method and critical reflection. It is submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Master of Arts in Theology. It has never been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit. All sources have been cited in full and acknowledged.

Signed:

Name of Student:

Date:

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as the college supervisor.

Signed:

Name of Supervisor:

Date:

ABBREVIATIONS

AAS	<i>Acta Apostolicae Sedis</i>
AA	Various Authors
Acts	Acts of the Apostles
AFER	African Ecclesiastical Reviews
AG	<i>Ad Gentes</i>
AOSK	Association of Sisterhoods in Kenya
Ap. Const.	Apostolic Constitution
Ap. Exhort.	Apostolic Exhortation
Art. /Artt.	Article/ Articles
Can. /Cann.	Canon/Canons
CCEO	<i>Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium</i>
CD	<i>Christus Dominus</i>
Cf.	Confer
CIC	<i>Codex Iuris Canonici</i>
CICLSAL Societies of	Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Apostolic Life
CLSA	Canon Law Society of America
Cor	Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians
Dr.	Doctor
DV	<i>Dei Verbum</i>
Ed(s)	Editors(s)
E.g.	<i>Exempli gratia</i>
Et al.	<i>Et Alii</i>

Etc.	<i>et cetera</i>
E.V	Enchiridion Vaticanum
Ex	Exodus
ff.	And the following
Fr.	Father
GE	<i>Gravissimum Educationis</i>
Gen.	General
GS	<i>Gaudium et Spes</i>
Ibid	Ibidem
IM	<i>Inter Mirifica</i>
Jn	The Gospel according to St. John
KCCB	Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops
LG	<i>Lumen Gentium</i>
LEF	<i>Lex Ecclesiae Fundamentalis</i>
Lk	The Gospel according to St. Luke
Mt.	Mountain
Mt	The Gospel according St. Mathew
MR	<i>Mutue Relationes</i>
n. /nn.	Number/Numbers
NT	New Testament
OT	Old Testament
OCD	Order of Carmelites Discalced
PC	<i>Perfectae Caritatis</i>
PI	<i>Potissimum Institutioni</i>
p. /pp.	Page/Pages

Pt.	Peter
Rev.	Reverend
RFIS	<i>Fundamentalis Institutionis</i>
RfR	Review for Religious
Rom	St. Paul's Letter to Romans
SC	<i>Sacrosanctum Concilium</i>
SCRSI Institutes	Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular
St (s)	Saints(s)
UR	<i>Unitatis Redintegratio</i>
Tim	Timothy
Thess	Thessalonians
Vat. II	The Second Vatican Council
Vol.	Volume

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The preparation and effective admission of candidates in religious institutes is one of the main areas of focus in the Catholic Church. The church through religious institutes facilitates proper admission through the major superiors to ensure that we have well equipped religious men and women who understand this way of life and are ready to live and bear witness to the people, through the evangelical vows which are professed publicly.

This admission should always cope with the needs of the contemporary world by not necessarily getting rid of old but giving room for flexibility and adjustment to enhance smooth integration between the new norms and old ones without distorting the identity and roots of the religious institutes. A charism needs to be lived according to the place, times and people. It needs to be lived with energy rereading it culturally, too¹.

In general vocations to religious life are generated through familiarity and friendship with the communities and a sustained relationship with a particular community, for a specific duration of time. The discernment process for entry into

¹ Cf. K. GEORGE, *Consecrated life .Challenges and Opportunities*, St. Pauls, Bandra-Mumbai 2015,p. 11.

religious life begins at the time of formal association with the institute through the vocation promoter. The initial discernment is not first about suitability for ordained ministry, but rather about the fit of the person with the charism and spirit of the institute. Usually, a candidate for religious life goes through a period of candidacy and postulancy before being admitted formally to the institute's novitiate to become a religious.

Religious life begins with the novitiate, a period of intense preparation for first profession of the evangelical counsels. Therefore, admission to the novitiate is a major step and it is appropriate that is reserved to major superiors Can.620 of 1983 code². Though there is room for proper law of each institute to determine more detail to the extent that may be considered necessary for the procedures for admission of candidates to religious life.

Proper law refers to statutes of juridic persons of institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life. They are special because they do not only include written laws of juridic person but also include their legal customs Canon.20 of the 1983 code³.

1. Aim and Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this thesis is to inspect the dedication of religious superiors in preparation and admission of their candidates to religious life. All this process is

² Cf. *Codex Iuris Canonici*, auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II Promulgatus, in *AAS LXXV* (1983), pp. 1-317. Latin –English ed., Canon Law Society of America, Washington D.C. 1999.

³ Cf. *Codex Iuris Canonici*, auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II Promulgatus, in *AAS LXXV* (1983), pp. 1-317. Latin –English ed., Canon Law Society of America, Washington D.C. 1999.

done under formation because it entails admission and preparation in entirety at different levels. Since religious life begins in novitiate, this paper will focus mainly on the initial preparation; and a bit of ongoing formation as awakening call to those in charge of formation communities.

To add more flesh to the importance of canonical provision regarding the admission of candidates in the Discalced Carmelite Order in Kenya, in the light of Can. 642 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

The effort is to assess the real life situation in religious institutes as far as admission of members is concerned and contextualize what the church teaches on the same. The attempt is also to emphasize on the seriousness in the preparation and admission of candidates to religious life and give suggestions that can better the admission and formation system.

2. The Rationale of the Thesis

The aim of selecting this topic bounces from the fact that when a person senses a call to become a religious of certain institute, there is still a great deal of unknowns for the person and for the congregation. The Religious consecration originates with a call from God “You did not choose me, no, I chose you” (John 15:16). It is in the choice that admission, preparation and religious life derives.

To respond to a vocation to religious life, is to be prepared well before admission, and this entails to accept one’s limitations and thus experience God’s

mercy to live in freedom and attain to the knowledge of the son of God (cf. Eph 4: 13).

The researcher has observed that Religious superiors are not keen enough in executing this canonical provision. There is a lot of laxity and improficiency when it comes to preparation and admission of candidates to religious life. Adequate time for preparation before admission is often overlooked which leads to many misunderstanding and crisis afterwards. It could be of great importance if one knows the members of the community, the spirit, the patrimony, the history, the particular apostolate and generally what it means to become avowed member. “Preparing new members for religious life is a craft, not a police operation. We must include the formation of hearts. Otherwise we are creating little monsters, and the little monsters mould the people of God!”⁴ If one is not ‘full- baked’ for admission, he or she becomes shallow involved in the institute, its life, and apostolate; at the same point it leads to difficulty in making a permanent commitment in religious life.

Besides the formator, and other community members, who offer guidance, explanations, and other necessary information to the candidates, Major superiors should also keep a close follow up on the progress of the candidates before coming up with any major decision on their admission. Can. 642 of the 1983 code⁵ .

Therefore, this study sensitizes the Religious Institute of the Discalced Carmelites Order in Kenya, as well as other institutes to commit themselves extra

⁴ K. GEORGE, *Consecrated life .Challenges and Opportunities*, St. Pauls, Bandra-Mumbai 2015,p. 12.

⁵ Cf. *Codex Iuris Canonici*, auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP.II Promulgatus ,in *AAS LXXV* (1983),pp. 1-317.Latin –English ed.,Canon Law Society of America , Washington D.C.1999.

serious in accomplishing the responsibility towards admitting well, balanced, integrated candidates to religious life.

3. The Central Question of Investigation

The fundamental question of investigation is: how are Religious superiors responding to the obligation of effective preparation and admission of candidates to Religious life as stipulated in Can.642 in relation to the regular changes of way of life and cultures in the current world?

4. Working Hypothesis

Perhaps by conscientizing the Religious superiors of their obligation of putting in order and admitting of Candidates to Religious institution. They will be able to select suitable candidates to religious life.

Maybe to have a renewed call to rereading of the Canon law and proper law in the admission of Candidates to Religious life they would be able to keep to the changing times in preparing candidates.

Possibly, by coming up with ways on how to improve the whole procedure of admission of candidates to Religious Life by having refreshing courses to equip the major superiors and those in charge of formation and vocation animation, they would help candidates to embrace the life in a more zealous way and love vividly the charism and spirituality of the institute.

5.1 Method of Approach

The Juridical methods that will be used in the research implies the deductive, historical, analytical, and perspective methods.

The analytical method is used to explore the text can.642, relating it with the church's magisterium with reference to the Proper law of the institute of the Discalced Carmelites Order on formation and admission of members to Religious life.

The historical approach is used to locate the experience of the provision of Can.642 showing the Canonical development.

The prospective method is applied to present some proposals on some realistic ways in which preparation and admission can be adjusted to fit in the situations of the religious institutes.

5.2 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis consists of the four chapters

Chapter one: The Juridical study of Can. 642 on the responsibility of the religious superior in admission of suitable candidates in religious life

This chapter deals with the background of Can.642, its development and its place in the religious life. It then studies the sources of the Canon and its *iter* of the formation, its juridical analysis and related Canons on the provisions for the admission of suitable candidates to religious life as the responsibility of the Religious superior.

Chapter Two: Obligation and Right to preparing and admitting Suitable Candidates to Religious life by major superior in the Church

This chapter explores the concept and purpose of preparation and admission of candidates to religious life in the Church by giving its historical development up to the present legislation. It does this by tracing its roots in the scriptures and the early church, explaining the position of the church as expressed through the conciliar documents, the codes of Canon Law as well as the relevant Curial and Pontifical documents.

Chapter Three: Conformity of the proper Law of the Institute of the Order of Carmelite Discalced to the canonical provision of can. 642

This chapter investigates how the obligation of the admission of suitable candidates to religious life by Religious superiors has been realized in the institute of Carmelite Discalced Order in Kenya. It examines the fidelity of the institute's proper law to Canonical legislation. The chapter then proposes some helpful ways in

which the mind of the legislator of the 1983 code can be actualized in the institute of the Carmelite discalced Order and other religious institutes.

Chapter Four: Recommendations on Areas to improve towards Fruitful Preparation and Admission in line with the Universal Law

It recommends some helpful ways to encourage the comprehension of the mind of the legislator on preparation and admission of candidates to religious life. How best those Responsible for Preparing and Admitting Candidates need to adapt to current changes in mentality to Religious life yet remaining faithful to the Provisions of can. 642. The study applied the findings in the OCD to represent other religious institutes.

CHAPTER I
THE JURIDICAL STUDY OF CAN. 642 ON THE
RESPONSIBILITY OF RELIGIOUS SUPERIOR IN
PREPARING AND ADMITTING SUITABLE CANDIDATES
TO RELIGIOUS LIFE

Introduction

The obligation of preparing candidates for religious life is a requisite in all institutes and all religious setups; therefore it is both personal and collective. It is the responsibility of the superiors in collaboration with the formator and the vocation animators in ensuring that suitable candidates are admitted.

The major aim of admitting suitable candidates to religious life is to ensure that there is continuity in terms of members who understand the commitment of being religious and up to task effectively for the benefit of the order and the whole church at large. One has to become open to the spirit through inventiveness to the signs of the times, to deepen fidelity to the charism and to integrate and develop this movement through dynamic growth.

The admission process aims to ensure a connection between the gifts of the candidate and the charism and mission of the institute. The crucial responsibility for admission to novitiate falls on the major superior, acting in accordance with the norms established by the proper law of the religious institute and in consultation with the vocation director and other competent authority.

This discernment presupposes an assessment of the emotional and physical health of the candidate, his spiritual and sacramental life, his tendency for community life, his capacities for future ministerial efficiency, and evidence of his call to priesthood if the candidate aspires for sacred orders.

The assessment at this stage usually includes psychological testing and other evaluations of Suitability that, along with the insights gained through community life, assures that the candidate meets all the requirements, is ready for theological and pastoral studies. At the conclusion of the novitiate, the newly vowed religious continues in the same process of human and spiritual formation that is an integral part of the life of his or her institute.

1.1 Sources of Can.642 (CIC/1983)

In order to understand the admission and preparation of suitable candidates to religious life, it is necessary to study the sources of the canon under study which include: *Optatam Totius* n.6; *Renovationis Causam* nn.11-12 & 14; *Vita Consecrata* n. 65; *Potissimum Institutioni* nn. 43- 44.

1.1.1 *Optatam Totius* (n.6)

In the entire process of selecting and testing students, however, a due firmness is to be taken, even if there is lack of priests. God will want his Church to have ministers that are suitable. With watchful concern for the age of each and for his stage of progress, an inquiry should be made into the candidate's proper intention

and freedom of choice, into his spiritual, moral and intellectual qualifications, into his appropriate physical and psychic health-taking into consideration also possible hereditary deficiencies. Also to be considered is the ability of the candidate to bear the priestly burdens and exercise the pastoral offices.

1.1.2 *Renovationis Causam* (nn. 11-12 & 14)

It emphasizes that religious life entails embracing faith, hope and charity that enables them by means of vows to practice and profess the three evangelical counsels. The counsels are the vital support of the religious life because in them the religious is free from obstacles that could hold him or her back from loving and serving God perfectly. Therefore each vow offers a specific rejoinder to the great enticement of our time. Through the vows, the Church continues to witness to the world the ways for its transformation into the Kingdom of God. Crucial care should be taken during preparation of candidates for the religious life to learn it both theoretically and practically.

1.2 Formation of Can.642 (CIC/1983)

This section traces the development and subsequent changes which can.642 underwent from its first draft to the final form as it appears in the promulgated text of the 1983 Code⁶ The first draft appeared as *Vita consecrata*⁷ then in the 1980 and

⁶Cf. E. N . PETERS, *incrementa in progressu 1983 Codicis Iuris Canonici*, Wilson and Lafleur Limitee, Montreal 2005, p . 609.

the 1982 *Schema Codicis*, and finally in the promulgated text of Can.642 of the 1983 code. The study looks at the changes as outlined in *Communicationes*.

1.2.1 *Vita Consecrata* (n.65)

Can.642 (CIC/1983 primitive form appeared as draft Canon in *Vita Consecrata* n.65. This draft is restatement of *Potissimum institutioni* nn.43-44, which laid down the points which permit superiors to decide the suitable time for the candidate's admission into the novitiate. It cautions against hastening the time for this admission because certain judgment should be reached on whether the person is a promising candidate or not.

The manner of preparing for the candidates should convey character of wholeness and it should entail the whole person, in every facet of the personality, in behavior and intention. Specifically, it is for total transformation in a person. This opportunity should be offered continuously for the persons to grow in their commitment to the charism and mission of their Institute. Ample time should be allocated to this preparation to offer human, cultural, spiritual and pastoral aspects for harmonious blending.

1.2.2 1980 Schema Codicis (568)

The plenary Session of 15th December 1979 of the Pontifical Commission of the Revision of the code suggested some changes after receiving the text of *Vita*

⁷ Cf. PONTIFICIA COMMISSIO CODICI IURIS CANONICI RECOGNOSCENDO *Schema Canonum de Institutis Vitae Consecratae per Professionem Conciliorum Evangelicorum*, "Reservatum" Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1977, pp.Xiii-37.

Consecrata. The 1980 *schema* reads: *Superiores vigilanti cura eos tantum admittant qui, praeter aetatem requisitam, habeant valetudinem, aptam indolem et sufficientes maturitatis qualitates ad vitam Instituti propriam ineundam; quae valetudo, indoles et maturitas comprobentur adhibitis etiam, si opus fuerit, peritis, salvo iure inviolabili personae ad propriam intimitatem tuendam*. The consultants added the last part of the sentence: *salvo iure inviolabili personae ad propriam intimitatem tuendam*; which will later be removed in the 1983 code and be replaced by ‘firmo praescripto can.220’ for some clarity and emphasis sake.

1.2.3 1982 Schema Codicis (Can.642)

When can. 568 transitioned to can. 642 of the 1982 *schema*, the last part of “*firmo praescripto can. 220*” made its first appearance and put emphasis on the role of superior in admitting suitable candidates for religious life. This canon reads:

Superiores vigilanti cura eos tantum admittant qui, praeter aetatem requisitam, habeant valetudinem, aptam indolem et sufficientes maturitatis qualitates ad vitam instituti propriam amplectendam; quae valetudo, indoles et maturitas comprobentur adhibitis etiam, si opus fuerit, peritis, firmo praescripto can. 220.

1.3 The work of those responsible for preparing and admitting candidates

But in this work just like formation, God makes use of human instruments, placing more mature brothers and sisters at the side of those whom he calls. This process of preparing and admitting of suitable candidates to religious life entails sharing in the work of the Father who, through the Spirit, fashions the inner attitudes of the Son in the hearts of young men and women. Those in charge of candidates

must therefore be very familiar with the path of seeking God, so as to be able to accompany others on this journey.

The canonical conditions for licit and valid admission on the part of both candidate and competent authority must be rigorously observed conformity with these regulations can avoid many future difficulties as indicated in cann.597; 641-645. If it is a clerical institute of pontifical right, special care should be taken at this time so that no irregularity later affects the reception of Holy orders being understood that major superiors can dispense from irregularities not reserved to the Holy See. It should be remembered that superiors must consult the proper ordinary and ask for testimony from him before admitting a secular cleric into the novitiate cann. 644 and 645, §2.

Sensitive to the action of grace, they will also be able to point out those obstacles which are less obvious. But above all they will disclose the beauty of following Christ and the value of the charism by which this is accomplished. They will combine the illumination of spiritual wisdom with the light shed by human means, which can be of help both in discerning the call and in forming the new man or woman, until they are genuinely free. The chief instrument of this noble task is personal dialogue.

1.4 Textual Analysis and meaning of Can.642

This part exegetically breaks down the Canon under study for the better understanding and lucidity of its substance. The canon states: “The right to admit

candidates to novitiate belongs to major superiors according to the norm and proper law.”⁸

Life in the institute begins with the novitiate which is a very vital period for intensive preparation for the candidate before taking vows. Decisions regarding admission appropriately pertain to the major superior or the proper law establishes which competent superior licitly admits to the novitiate where religious life begins. The proper law of the institute should elaborate whether a vote of the council, deliberative or consultative is necessary before the major superior admits the candidate.⁹

1.4.1 Can.642 on qualities of Suitable Candidate for Joining Religious life

The above canon states that; with vigilant care, superiors are only to admit those who, besides the required age, have the health, suitable character, and sufficient qualities of maturity to embrace the proper life of the institute. This health, character and maturity are to be verified even by using experts, if necessary, without prejudice to the prescript of can.220.

1.4.1.1 With Vigilant Care

Etymologically, the Latin word “vigilare”, means to keep an eye on, to keep watch, to look out; to supervise, to monitor, to guard.¹⁰ In the context of religious

⁸Cf. *Codex Iuris Canonici*, auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP.II Promulgatus ,in AAS LXXV (1983),pp. 1-317.Latin –English ed.,Canon Law Society of America , Washington D.C.1999.

⁹ Cf. R. SMITH, “The Admission of Candidates and the Formation of Members (cc.641-661),” in J.P. BEAL, *et al.*, (eds.), *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, Paulist Press, New York 2000, p. 806.

¹⁰ Cf. C.J. TRAUPMAN, *The Bantam New College Latin and English Dictionary* ,St.Joseph’s University Philadelphia 2007,p. 187,s.v. “vigilare.”

life, vigilant care means that the religious superior need to supervise with a lot of concern on preparation and admission of candidates to religious life, since this is not only a duty but also a Right as stated in can.641, “The right to admit candidates to the novitiate belongs to major superior according to the norm of proper law”. After admission to novitiate, the major superior is still to oversee who to direct the novices. “Governance of the novices is reserved to one director under the authority of the major superiors”, (can.650, §2).

1.4.1.2 To admit

In this context to admit means to allow, let in someone, to receive or welcome someone. Therefore it is the work of the religious superior to receive suitable candidates in novitiate to begin religious life. On admission, the candidate receives a religious habit. In can.669, §1 states that, ‘Religious are to wear the habit of the institute, made according to the norm of the proper law, as sign of their consecration and as a witness of poverty’ program and cultural milieu.¹¹

1.4.1.3 Have the health

As defined by World Health Organization (WHO), it is a "State of complete physical, mental, and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". Health is a dynamic condition resulting from a body's constant adjustment and adaptation in response to stresses and changes in the environment for maintaining an inner equilibrium called homeostasis. The applicant’s physical and

¹¹ R. SMITH, “The Admission of Candidates and the Formation of Members (cc.641-661),” in J.P. BEAL, *et al.*, (eds.), *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, Paulist Press, New York 2000, p. 808.

mental health is best attested to by professionals credentialed in the respective disciplines. Signed release forms allow the results of such tests to be shared with the responsible superior in the institute.¹²

1.4.1.4 Suitable character

It entails the mental and moral qualities distinctive to an individual. The term “Character” is derived from the Greek word “charakter” and signifies impression, style of life. It indicates a determined, stable, formal disposition of the will and of the action. Character must give a person the capacity to act, to think and to feel independently of his or her, impulsive tendencies.¹³

1.4.1.5 Sufficient Qualities of maturity

A considerable percentage of a maturity in this process of admission to religious life is necessary because it allows and favours the liberty of the heart which is an indispensable condition for internalization of the values of a consecrated life. It also entails the capacity to grow, accept the changes, ability to learn from experience, adapt to the different situations and different persons and openness to suggestion and directions; readiness to undertake new initiatives. This is the purpose of the stage preparatory to the novitiate, no matter what name may be given to it: postulancy, pre-novitiate, etc. It pertains exclusively to the proper law of institutes to determine the manner in which it is carried out, but whatever these may be, "no one can be admitted without suitable preparation.

¹²Cf. R. SMITH, “The Admission of Candidates and the Formation of Members (cc.641-661),” in J.P. BEAL, *et al.*, (eds.), *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, Paulist Press, New York 2000, p. 807.

¹³ Cf. S. CHARLES, *Discernment of Religious Vocation: Formation Towards Transformation*, 14.

“The maturity required at this stage has both human and Christian elements and a general cultural foundation which should correspond to what is generally expected of young persons who have achieved the normal education of their country.”¹⁴ In seeking the information needed to arrive at a determination, superiors are admonished to consider can.220, avoiding damage to the good reputation of both the applicant and the institute and respecting the candidate’s right to privacy.¹⁵ Can. 630 protects the freedom of members of the institute from any pressure to make a manifestation of conscience to superiors. This canon reflects on the emphasis on freedom of conscience found in the conciliar documents and elsewhere in this code.¹⁶

Therefore the preparation and admission must aim to preserve the essential object of consecrated life. It’s upon the relevant superior to ensure that there is necessary reviewing of the admission process and provide whatever is needed for the success of preparation and admission of candidates.

1.5 The Principle Consideration in the Preparation and Admission of Suitable Candidates to Religious Life

Perhaps it is not easy to give reasons with certainty to why people choose different vocations; but it can be of help for everyone, in finding out the valid motivation in the choice of proper vocation. The candidates must not be passive,

¹⁴ CONGREGATION OF INSTITUTE OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, *Potissimum Institutioni*, March 2, 1990, AAS 42-43 (1990) 472-532.

¹⁵ Cf. R. SMITH, “The Admission of Candidates and the Formation of Members (cc.641-661),” in J.P. BEAL, *et al.*, (eds.), *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, Paulist Press, New York 2000, p. 808.

¹⁶ Cf. VATICAN II, Decree *Dignitatis humanae*, nn.1-3,10-11, in AAS 58 (1966) 929-941.

receptive object, molded and shaped by outside forces, but one with particular and necessary role to play. It's therefore the duty of the superior or the competent person to help the candidate realize and accept his or her responsibility for growing in the human maturity that every one desires.¹⁷ The superiors and those helping in preparation should be free of all interest, emotion or worry. It is fitting that the superior should see the candidates privately on regular basis. This helps in developing a good relationship between the candidates and the superior.

“The major superior entrusted with the responsibility of admitting candidates should endeavor to have personal contact with candidate, if possible so that the superior’s judgment confirms the recommendations of those who have been working with the candidate.”¹⁸ Can. 641 empowers the major superiors to decide regarding admission to novitiate where religious life begins. However the code is silent regarding what suitable preparation entails, thus permitting each institute to determine and incorporate it in proper law the manner in which candidates are to be assessed and prepared for admission to religious life.¹⁹

Accordingly, can.642 is to be interpreted in connection with the two preceding cann.597 and 641, and the subsequent can. 643. The fundamental requirements of Can.597, §1 states that, any Catholic endowed with a right intention who has the qualities required by the universal and proper law who is not prevented by any impediment can be admitted into an institute of consecrated life, on condition that it does not contradict the requirements in both cann.642 and 643. The right

¹⁷ Cf. A. BOYER, *The Integral Human Formation of Candidates for the Priesthood*, 94.

¹⁸R. SMITH, “The Admission of Candidates and the Formation of Members (cc.641-661),” in J.P. BEAL, *et al.*, (eds.), *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, Paulist Press, New York 2000, p. 806.

¹⁹ Cf. *ibid*, 807.

intention entails the candidate having right disposition of the will to give their life knowingly to perform that which the church expects from the religious.

It is important for formation and preparation for religious life by gradually developing a critical judgment, based on the Gospel, regarding both the positive and negative attitude values of his or her culture and the new culture which he will eventually embrace.

Can.597, §2 states that, no one can be admitted without suitable preparation in Christian principles, a deeper knowledge of Christ, liturgical prayer and the spiritual tradition of the institute should be included in this important time of preparation.²⁰ Therefore, in addition to the fundamental requirements of candidates in cann.597 and 643, the legislator intends in can.642 to emphasize the significance in admitting candidates by the superior as his solemn responsibility; to guarantee candidate appropriateness before admission to the novitiate and begin religious life. The requirements given in can. 642 are as follows: - required age, have the health, suitable character, and sufficient quality of maturity to embrace the proper life of the institute.

To verify some of this requirements, thorough screening and preparation is required. The preparation should focus on mutual exploration on the charism of the institution and the readiness of the candidate to embrace religious life. This process of screening and preparation is a lifelong work and part of painful purification”.²¹

²⁰ Cf. CONGREGATION OF INSTITUTE OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, *Potissimum Institutioni* , March 2,1990, AAS 42-44 (1990) 472-532.

²¹ S. CHARLES, *Discernment of Religious Vocation: Formation Towards Transformation*, 27.

The formation and preparation can too be focused on, spiritual, apostolic, and doctrinal aspect of human life.

1.5.1 Spiritual aspect

It entails a deepening of faith and of the meaning of religious values. It is a feeling for one's consecration and conviction in the religious life that God has called him or her. Spiritual aspect is most powerful of all where God can be reached through prayer and meditation. The annual spiritual exercises and other forms of spiritual renewal are thus to be intensified and be given priority.²² Religious life along period of commitment and therefore the candidate requires certain amount of human and spiritual maturity²³ to make a free and responsible choice in a call.

1.5.2 Apostolic aspect

According to can.673, this apostolate consists primarily in the witness of their consecrated life. This requires them to be apostolically prepared for their participation in the life of the church in accord with their respective charisms. As members of apostolic family they are to consecrate themselves in and through their works; the apostolate should transform them and their works into prayer and into union with the creator. Every baptized Christian should have a passion to live their faith and give it to others, to share out what they have received from Christ.

²² Cf. CONGREGATIO PRO INSTITUTIS VITAE CONSECRATAE ET SOCIETATIBUS VITAE APOSTOLICAE, Normae Directivae de Institutione in religiosis Institutis *Potissimum Institutioni*, n.68.

²³ Cf. ²³ S. CHARLES, *Discernment of Religious Vocation: Formation Towards Transformation*, 68.

1.5.3 Doctrinal aspect

This involves profound theological and Biblical knowledge. It also includes the study of conciliar documents and current or latest magisterial declarations.²⁴ Interiorize the values of Christian faith by the practice of listening to the word of God, participating in the liturgy especially in the Holy Eucharist.

1.5.4 Other Guiding Principles that concern the preparation and admission of suitable candidates to religious life by competent religious superiors

In addition to the principle elements of formation covered in can.642, there are other principles that according to the 1983 Code, should guide the religious superiors in preparation and admission of suitable candidates to religious life. Like the document reflecting the theology of Vatican II, the choice for religious form of life must be truly free one. This choice once made should not be fixed and definitive, but rather a choice that will have to mature, could be refined, and perhaps redefined throughout the whole course of formation.

As stated in the document *Potissimum Institutioni*; the candidate holds the first responsibility for saying “yes” to the call which has been received and for accepting all the consequences of this response; this is not primarily in the order of the intellect but the whole life.

The personal responsibility could be seen as the candidate’s ability to make good decisions and accept consequences of the same. Personal responsibility is one of the goals of preparation process, it is the making of a life commitment which is valid only if it is made out of free will and volition; with adequate knowledge and

²⁴ Cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, n.18.

understanding, and if it proceeds from love. The changes in the structures of the religious life since Vatican II call for more personal responsibility than in the past.

The understanding of the vows and community life also put greater emphasis on an individuals' ability to make good decisions and choices.²⁵ The choices are basically good if they are Gospel values based and they are motivated by love. The decision made should be open to the spirit and flexible to opportunities as life presents the candidates with more knowledge, more experience and more insights.

In this period, intense dialogue with God in prayer, the candidates will, weigh up their deepest desires and charism of the institute and the long process of discernment lead them like the Virgin Mary, to say a totally free and personal "yes" on the day of their definitive commitment.

1.6 Candidates should comprehend what Religious life entails

Religious life is a stable form of life assumed by those members of Christ's faithful. It is a particular form of following Christ in celibacy, embraced under the inspiration and gift of the Holy Spirit as an expression of the Christian vocation.²⁶ Religious life entails profound longing for God, whereby their lives are replica by a single heated hunt for and amalgamation with God. Religious life is a life lived by those absorbed by God and permit God to dominate their lives.²⁷ They freely assume this form of living in institutes of consecrated life which are canonically established by the competent ecclesiastical authority (can. 573, §2). Through their consecration, the religious further specify their participation in the mission derived from

²⁵ Cf. S. CHARLES, *Discernment of Religious Vocation: Formation Towards Transformation*, 62.

²⁶ Cf. *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, 818.

²⁷ Cf. SCHNEIDER, *New wine Skin*, 34.

baptism.²⁸ This specification determines their state in the Church; their state does not belong to the hierarchical structure of the church, it nevertheless belongs to its life and holiness (can.207, §2).

Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, the religious life is lived for the sake of the self and the community of believers. The religious ought to observe the common life and take their vows in public as they give their life to Christ to the entire church. In this context, to be religious means one who has the public vow of chastity, poverty and obedience. One gives up everything in order to testify Christ's own great love for the world.²⁹ The vows they make are either perpetual or temporary and if they are temporary, they are to be renewed when the time elapses (can.607, §2).

According to can.210, all Christ's faithful are called to a life of Holiness by which they exercise their participation in the sanctifying function of Christ. The means by which individual strives to fulfill this participation depend upon the particular vocation to which one is called (cann. 204 & 835).

Can.574 provides that all institutes of consecrated life pertain, "to the life and holiness of the Church." The state of religious life therefore belongs to the sanctity of the church. Consecrated persons foster their growth in holiness and accordingly promote the growth in the holiness of the Church and of society (cann.673-677).

²⁸ Cf. CONCILIUM OECUMENICUM VATICANUM II, Constitutio Dogmatica de ecclesia *Lumen Gentium*, 21 November 1964, in AAS,LVII (1965),pp.5-75n.43.

²⁹ Cf. J.DOWNEY, *Religious Life: What the Church Teaches*,27-30.

When candidates are prepared for admission in the religious life, their means for holiness are as prescribed by can.573 on the nature and effects of their religious consecration. Can.597 also elaborates more of the general qualifications for admission to an institute of consecrated life. In fact can.597, §2 states clearly that, no one may be admitted without suitable preparation. Such a pre-noviate foundation phase makes possible the institute to ascertain whether candidates have the essential catechesis in faith and possess sufficient understanding and maturity, the appropriate outlook and the ability to nurture in assuming the commitment of religious life.³⁰

1.6.1 The Responsibility of Superiors on the Preparation of candidates and religious

The two forms of governance (personal and collegial) are complementary and none of them can be implemented in isolation from the other. The two are equally subjects of power in the norm of law.

In proper governance, the three elements (physical persons, bodies and laws) should be incorporated with distinctions replicating its spirit and character. The Canon under study obliges the two forms of governance (personal and collegial) to sustain in their office the responsibility of equipping the proper personnel for preparing and admitting of candidates.

1.6.2 Personal authority on the preparation of candidates

In many institutes the highest superior is called superior general. Other superiors namely provincial or regional superiors and local superiors have authority within the limits of their office (can.622). Institutes with a more centralized

³⁰ SACRED CONGRAGATION FOR RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR INSTITUTES, *Renovationis Causam*, 6 January 1969,no.11-12 in AAS, 61 (1969),P.103-120.

government may give considerable authority to the superior general, whereas those institutes whose organizational structure gives for provinces, vicariates, or regions, more authority may reside at lower level with provincial superiors or occasionally with local superiors.

The proper law of each institute must set up unmistakably the confines of authority to be exercised by superiors at each echelon and cultivate for harmonious coordination of those responsibilities meant to be shared.³¹ Therefore it is the duty of superiors in ensuring that preparation and admission of candidates to religious life is accomplished proficiently.

1.6.3 The General Chapter on the preparation and admission of candidates

When in session, the General Chapter is the supreme internal authority of the institute without prejudice to the authority of the pope (can. 590, §2).³² The General chapter is the legislator of the institute and accordingly it binds all its subjects. Five major functions are identified in can. 631. The first two are to protect the patrimony of the institute which is done by assessing the institute's conformity to its charism and mission (can.578); and to cultivate formation and preparation of candidates for admission to the institute based on the charism.

³¹ Cf. R. SMITH, "The Admission of Candidates and the Formation of Members (cc.641-661)," in J.P. BEAL, *et al.*, (eds.), *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, Paulist Press, New York 2000, p. 784.

³² Cf. SACRED CONGREGATION FOR RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR INSTITUTES "General Chapter . Its Authority ," 27th June , in J.I O'CONNER, *The Canon Law Digest*, Vol.9, St. Mary OF the Lake Seminary, Mundelein 1983, p.342.

The other functions of the General chapter are; to elect the superior general and the council; to issue norms and endorse changes in the complementary codes for the institute.³³

1.6.4 Proper Law on The preparation and admission of Candidates to Religious life

The notion of proper law in the church, is built from the Latin words *lex* and *ius*, which is a norm established by a person who has the authority to do so. The word *ius* can also be interpreted as ‘rights’.³⁴ According to can.587, §1, proper law serves the institute in ways that are both pedagogic and exhortatory. It describes the nature character and purpose of the institute and provides lucid strategy for members to stick with and grow in harmony with the obligations they assume at the time of admission or incorporation into the institute.

The proper law guiding the institute consists of two parts: a fundamental code or constitution, and other supplementary texts or codes. Can.578 states that the constitutions contain the essential elements describing the patrimony of the institute and basic norms pertaining to governance, temporal goods, formation, admission, and incorporation of members .

Concerning preparation and formation, the constitutions ought to give description of various stages of formation, their requirements, the rationale and duration; specify the competent authority to admit or repudiate admission to

³³ Cf. R. SMITH, “The Admission of Candidates and the Formation of Members (cc.631-633),” in J.P. BEAL, *et al.*, (eds.), *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, Paulist Press, New York 2000, p. 794.

³⁴ Cf. J. M. HUELS, “Introduction,” in J. BEAL *et al.*, (eds.), *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, Commissioned by the CANON LAW SOCIETY OF AMERICA, Theological Publications, Bangalore 2010, p.47.

different levels of formation; the juridical effects of temporary and perpetual profession; the nature of the sacred bonds and the rights and obligations assumed at temporary and definitive profession.

There are supplementary texts that are constituted by the norms established by competent authority of the institute. These texts can also be referred to as, statutes, directories and regulations.³⁵ The understudy code allows each institute to examine the specialized directories on preparation and admission according to the need of the institute.

1.7 Religious Profession and its Effects

Profession places a person in the religious state of life creating particular attachment of justice to God, the church and the institute. Therefore, the canon entails mutual responsibilities involved in the act of incorporation. Religious life entails consecration to God, the obligation of public vow (can 1192, §1)³⁶ to observe the three evangelical counsels and absorption into the institute, with the consequent rights and obligations. Every religious institute elaborates in its own law the obligations and rights resulting from profession and among them the preparation, admission and formation of candidates to religious life cannot be lacking (can.587, §1). Such obligations include but are not limited to those articulated in cann. 641-661. Religious are therefore bound to observe the rules regulating the preparation, initial formation and process of admission as laid down in their constitutions.

³⁵ Cf. R.PEREZ, "Norms Common to Institute of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life [Cann.573-606]," in A. MARZOA *et al.*, (eds.), *Exegetical Commentary on The Code of Canon Law I* Vol. II/2. P. 1507.

³⁶ 'Public' means the vows are made before a legitimate authority and accepted in the name of the Church.

1.8 Obligation of the Institute to support the Candidates prepared to join Religious Life

Superiors should ensure the existence of approved constitutions, consultative and deliberative structures, community life, apostolic opportunities, and material goods. This provision must therefore cover the necessary preparation (cann.641-661), and whatever spiritual, intellectual and professional assistance an individual candidates might need.³⁷

The suitable provision of these necessities requires both proper planning. Allocation of resources both human and material is very necessary; and a comprehensive and understanding of the charism and spirit of the institute. Thus the institute should have careful planning and budgeting for this task, and application of the principles of freedom and responsibility by the individual regions.

1.9 The Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches on the Responsibility of Religious superiors in preparing and admitting of suitable candidates to Religious life.

The part on formation in the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* (CCEO) treats the aspect of religious life under three subdivisions: (1) general canons, (2) Monasteries (3) Orders and congregations. CCEO 453, §1 and 519 identify who admits to a monastery and to an order or to a congregation. CCEO 448,

³⁷ Cf. J. MICHAEL, *et al.*, (eds.), *Procedural Handbook for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life*, p.113.

453, §2; require that candidate's suitability, intention, and freedom be determined before entrance to monastery, to an order, or to a religious congregation.

Can.642(CIC/83) has no parallel in the CCEO/448. They both talk of thorough preparation and screening before admission to religious life. Can.597, §2 states that, no one may be admitted without proper preparation. This could be contrary to the 1917 code (*CIC* 539-541), which required a period of postulancy for all religious except those preparing for orders.³⁸

Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed the canonical provision on the preparation and admission of suitable candidates to religious life by competent superiors. It has outlined the stages of the progress of Can.642 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law from its primitive form as *vita Consecrata* n. 65 and the subsequent schemata to the present legislation.

It has looked at its conciliar and other juridical sources, exegetically analyzed the text of can.642 and its other related canons of the same Code, as well as those of the code of the Eastern Churches. Through the analysis, there is elucidation on the content of the canon in question as well as its insinuation. This has verified the importance responsibility of preparing and admitting the suitable candidates to religious life by competent superior. The scrutiny and preparation is

³⁸ Cf. R. SMITH, "The Admission of Candidates and the Formation of Members (cc.641-661)," in J.P. BEAL, *et al.*, (eds.), *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, Paulist Press, New York 2000, p.807.

based on different aspect of humanity like; intellectual, spiritual, and doctrinal and apostolic, physical and psychological.

CHAPTER II

OBLIGATION AND RIGHT TO PREPARATION AND ADMISSION OF SUITABLE CANDIDATES TO RELIGIOUS LIFE BY COMPETENT SUPERIORS IN THE CHURCH

Introduction

Religious life is a particular way of conveying the love of God as a follower of Christ. This following of Christ is charismatically originated expressed by common life, professional of evangelical counsels through public vows, separation from the world, and the same time practiced for the sake and service of the world. It would be naïve to think that religious life as it is known currently in the church was the same in the early centuries. It has gone through tremendous dynamism and forces that has made it to be what it is today.

All these dynamisms and forces ought to draw from God its definitive source and end. Therefore, this chapter traces the preparation and admission to religious life from the angle of the scriptures and early church, down through the monastic era, the *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, the Lateran councils, the Council of Trent, the 1917 Code, the Vatican Council II, as well as the Curial and Papal documents to the 1983 Code of Canon law.

2.1 Biblical foundations of vocation and preparation for the mission

The two Testaments of the Bible are characterized by the aspect of setting apart or consecration, chastisements and promises. The whole scriptural teaching emphasizes first on individual salvation and transformation before stretching to the large community. When God calls, he first prepares and equips the person for the mission.

2.1.1 Old Testament Roots

It begins with creation of man in God's image and likeness (Cf. Gen 1: 26-27). Through creation we attain that special identity of being his Children as we share in that common origin, common humanity and common destiny. In the Old Testament there is a group of people who consecrated themselves to God.

2.1.1.1 The Call of Moses

Moses is send by God to Egypt to deliver the Israelites from slavery (Cf. Ex. 3:16-18a) Moses, Aaron and the elders were all necessary to each other in order to carry out the call to "let the people go". Moses was the visionary leader, the one chosen by God to lead Israelites out of bondage and to win the struggle against Egypt and Egypt's king. But Aaron was both priest and the voice of the revolution. Moses refers to himself as "slow of speech and slow of tongue" collaboration is needed in discovering and carrying out respective calls to serve God and the people. God prepares his people for the mission by breaking their hearts over a human need. Each person called is adequately prepared, gifted and graced by God for that task.

The story of Moses demonstrates to us that God has a purpose for every single human being's life, that God prepares the called for that purpose both by everyday life experiences and by growing, until the called allow their hearts to be broken and opened to the call of God's Spirit. Human hearts will always remain restless until they rest in the faithful following of God's call.

2.1.1.2 The Call of Samuel

Consider the story of the call of Samuel (1 Samuel 3:1-10). Samuel was a young boy serving in the temple when he heard a voice calling his name. He assumed this voice was that of the priest, Eli. Eventually, Eli realized that Samuel was hearing God's voice calling to him and instructed him to respond, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." Samuel needed Eli to tell him that the voice he heard was God's. He didn't recognize God's voice on his own.

2.1.1.3 Prophets

These were men with special vocation to service of Yahweh by reminding the Israelites on Torah and fidelity to the covenant.

2.1.1.4 Elijah

He stressed much on the purification of the doctrine of morals and was considered as the precursor of all religious life by reason of constancy and consistency awareness of God, his purity of Heart and his prayerful life. Jeremiah was the first biblical character to embrace celibacy as a state of life (Cf. Jer 16: 1-4).

2.1.1.5 The Call of Jeremiah

To Jeremiah's objection that he is "only a child" the Lord responds that he will give him the courage to go to everyone he is sent to, and to Jeremiah's objection that he does not "know how to speak" the Lord responds that he will give him the ability to say whatever he is commanded to (1:7). The Lord responds to Jeremiah's professed lack of speaking ability by symbolically touching his mouth (Jer1:9). As God had "given" Jeremiah to be a prophet to the nations (1:5), so now he has "given" Jeremiah his own words in order to help him fulfil more adequately his divinely ordained mission. It is only God who can "give," who can "make," who can "appoint" a minister. The initiative in making a prophet rests with God. The ministry is a vocation, a calling; it is not a man chosen profession but God's. Jeremiah has been called by God to be his spokesman in the land of Israel. He has been obedient to the heavenly vision and has answered the call from God such was the legacy that had come down to him. He had been created, chosen, consecrated, and commissioned by the Lord himself.

2.1.1.6 Nazirites

These are individuals who took vows and set themselves apart for God by performing a certain ritual readiness for the participation in the sacred service. They used to express external signs like uncut hair, refraining from heavy drinks and evasion of contact with corpse or death even those of family members, and any structure which contains such Just as in (cf. Acts 18: 18, 21-26).

2.1.1.7 Rechabites

They advocated for allegiance to Yahweh and vow faithfulness to God. They protested against assimilation to the pagan ways of Canaanite culture (Cf. Jer 35). The Rechabites were a nomadic people group known for their strict rules to abstain from wine, from building houses, from sowing seed, and from planting vineyards (Jeremiah 35:6–7). God contrasted the obedience of the Rechabites to the disobedience of His own people. As a result of the Israelites' historic disobedience, God promised to bring disaster upon the nation (Jeremiah 35:17). But God commended the family of the Rechabites and gave them a promise: The Rechabites stood firm against assimilating into the culture of the time. They were commended by God for their faithfulness and obedience to their father.

2.1.2 New Testament

The life of Christ and his ministry was a clear manifestation of religious life. Through teaching both in words and action Jesus revealed what religious life was all about. It was more realized in a new form at the outpouring of the spirit on Pentecost when the first Christian community was formed. This form was carried through the life of apostles who lived community life of one heart and one soul. They prayed together, free surrendered of property and exposed to suffering and persecution, and death (Cf. Acts 2:42-7; 4: 32; 5:17-40).

In the fourth gospel, the disciples recognized Jesus and accorded him titles to bring that awareness of who Christ was, in their lives. He invited them to come and see where he stayed as the first step and essential element in disciples' vocation (Cf. John 1:35-50). Religious as state of life is about personal choice. They renounce

marriage for the sake of the kingdom of heaven (cf. Mathew 19: 10-12). This life is a fore taste of the life to come whereby believers will live like angels, no marrying or being given in marriage (cf. Mathew 22:30). The aspect of charity, sharing with others, and avoidance of accumulation of wealth in religious life is a treasure, is disclosed when Christ asked that rich man to go sell what he had and give to the poor (Mark 10:17-22; Luke 18:18-23) before following him. St. Paul encourages and reminds the faithful on their duty of helping one another especially those who are really needy, not to forget Christian teaching and avoid temptation that can lead to ruin, both material and spiritual. (cf. 1 Timothy 5: 3-16).

2.2 Formation in the early Church and in the Monastic Era

The writings of the Apostolic and the Church Fathers bear witness to the humble beginnings of canon Law and undoubtedly to provision on admission and preparation of candidates to religious life.

2.2.1 Widows and virgins

The Pauline literature and Acts of apostles recognize women as the most prominent missionaries and leaders in the early Christian movement. They were apostles and missionaries like Paul, and some were his co-workers. They were teachers, preachers and competitors in the race of the Gospel.³⁹ The widows and those committed to virginity were granted a special place in the church. Widows were engaged in active life and constituted the first group of consecrated persons recognized and institutionalized by the early church (Cf. I Tim 5:3-12), while the virgins lived secluded life devoted to prayer and contemplative life. They were

³⁹ Cf. S. ELIZABETH-FIORENZA., *In Memory of Her A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origin*, 183.

consecrated and took the vow of chastity following Jesus' call to virginity for the sake of the kingdom (Cf. Mt 19:12). As a sign of consecration, the virgins wore a veil and breaking of the vow was punished with excommunication.

Spiritual interpretation of virginity and sexual purity came as to be evident, taking clause from the words of Jesus and Paul. In the beginning, the practice of virginity did not involve the kind of asceticism that came to be associated with it later.⁴⁰ They lived a perfectly normal social life, it scandalized churchmen, and hence the many warnings to them from the church Fathers and as a result, they became more institutionalized. Their movement was restricted, and the clerical hierarchy began to reintegrate the communities of devout women with the larger church.

2.2.2 Monasticism

Was an alternative form of Christian life, inwardness, nearness to God, true freedom through self examination and self mortification, which was achieved through self isolation and involved considerable ascetic practices.⁴¹ Their life based on the following text from the scripture, "If you wish to be perfect, go and sell your possessions and give the money to the poor, and will have treasure in heaven; then come and follow me", (Mt 19:21).

⁴⁰ Cf. P. ISAAC., *Consecrated Life through Two Millennia*, 43.

⁴¹ Cf. P. ISAAC., *Consecrated Life through Two Millennia*, 46.

2.2.3 Monasticism in the East

Anthony of Egypt (c.250-356), is regarded as the founder of Christian monasticism the precursor of all forms of consecrated life in Christianity. He began with the withdrawal of the ascetic men and women into the desert, that is, complete separation from family, the Christian community and the society at large, giving birth, first to anchoritism or eremitism, and the coenobitism or monastic proper. Some of the characteristics of ascetism are as follows; Renunciation of most human comfort for the sake of Christ, they gave up marriage. Ate minimum amount of food, kept silence for most part of the day, and did some manual work to earn enough money to support themselves.

There was need to live in constant vigilance as Paul says, “The appointed time has grown very short; from now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, and those who buy as though they have no goods and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it; for the form of this world is passing away” (1Cor 7:31).

2.2.4 Wandering Ascetics

They did not belong to any community and they were itinerant preachers and missionaries for example in (Cf. Luke 10:1-12), proclaiming the Reign of God, healing the sick, and instructing the people. Due to their frequent travels, they lived in Christian homes as guests. But as the church became organized the bishop fixed them with ministries.

2.2.5 Community Ascetics

Most of them lived in Christian communities and constituted its spiritual core; and embraced celibacy and lived simple life. Women especially the widows and virgins were integral part of this group. These Ascetics received ample support from the church Fathers from earliest times.

2.2.6 Pachomius and Coenobitism (286-346)

Pachomius founded not only the first monastery and composed religious rule, but also the first centralized religious order in the church history “Coenobitism emphasized the age old maxim that only those who can live with other human beings can live alone and the fundamental Christian principle of loving service of one’s neighbour.”⁴² Life in the Pachomian community was regulated by a Rule which emphasized on manual work and through the sale of their produce. As their leader, Pachomius diligently safeguarded the life of the community by visiting all the houses repeatedly and at every level there were regular reunions for spiritual conferences and advice.⁴³

Before joining someone had to come to the entrance and made his wish to the receptionist who was also the novice Master. He was asked to live there for some days. After some days of the novitiate the candidate was introduced to the community and given the habit.

⁴² P. ISAAC., *Consecrated Life through Two Millennia*, 24.

⁴³ Cf. D. KNOWLES., *From Pachomius to Ignatius*, 4

That aspect of community life was very much present, common prayer, work, spiritual reading. Strict community life and common dress. The three vows of poverty, celibacy and obedience were carefully observed.

2.2.7 St. Augustine (354-430)

He is among the most supreme church fathers. He gave preeminence to faith over reason in his famous maxim “I believe in order to understand”.⁴⁴ The origin of the Augustinians is traced to from the groups of hermits and subsequently adopted the life and organization of the mendicants. Their life is a combination the active life of the friars and the contemplative life of the hermits. Pope Alexander IV instructed that these hermits be organized, and the bull of 1256 uniting these hermits constituted the order of Friars Hermits of St. Augustine. They took the rule of St. Augustine as their spiritual identity card. This rule calls for committed life according to the evangelical counsels.

2.2.8 St. Benedict (480-550)

He led the life of a hermit and the abbot was seen as the uniting factor who was to be spiritual father of the entire monastery and an administrator of all the temporal goods of the monastery or community. Abbot was to be elected for life, manifesting an aspect of stability and monks professed to remain attached to the monastery of their profession.

Formation in the monastery entailed; the rhythm of daily prayer, Manual labour, reading spiritual books and the scriptures. The rule of St. Benedict served as

⁴⁴ Cf. M. BUNSON, *Our Sunday Visitor's Encyclopaedia of Catholic History*, pp.107-110.

an inspirational for living a balanced religious life of moderation while sticking to the evangelical counsels in the imitation of Christ. The rule was adopted throughout in the western monasteries and in time of many of the ratification of the rule became declarations of Canon Law.⁴⁵

They can be summarized as follows: One should strike a balance between prayer and work; the principle of stability (*stabilitas loci*) to be embraced; the abbot should be friendly, impartial, to him absolute obedience is necessary and should encourage consultation before making decisions; abbot is the representative of Christ, Christ should be evident among the monks, sick, the guest, the old and children; flexibility, moderation and prudence in everything; Humility is the chief virtue of the monk; Obedience is the first degree of humility; silence is the mastery of words and thoughts so that God can make himself heard; hospitality is the monastic virtue and special care must be taken of the poor and the pilgrims; there is no place for private property in the monastery.

2.2.9 St. Dominic (1174-1221)

He is generally a practical man and his work stands above his person, “he is the man of form and balance, concreteness and objectivity who could combine apostolate and spirituality, contemplation and action, study and prayer, centralism and federalism, then monarchy and democracy as well.”⁴⁶ St. Dominic produced a constitution that was very unique which gave effect to the principle of representation

⁴⁵ Cf. . D. KNOWLES., *From Pachomius to Ignatius*, 6.

⁴⁶ P. ISAAC., *Consecrated Life through Two Millennia*, 95.

and responsibility to an extent unknown to the ecclesiastical and secular world of authority.

2.2.9.1 St. Francis (1181/2-1226)

He was a layman and was embodiment of the pure and primitive force of spirituality. He was very much at home with the ideas of the desert fathers of which he was interested in their spirituality, poverty and obedience. At one moment Francis became a sign of contradiction to his followers because of his personality, goals and what he advocated for.

According to St. Francis, radical following of Christ, according to Mt 10: 7-19 was impossible without absolute poverty. He forbade his followers even to touch money and the habit was very simple. His idea was to be identified with the most deprived of the society. The friars went about as nomadic preachers on penance and repentance, in market places, attending services in the churches and doing manual work or begging for their upkeep.

2.3 The Carmelites

The Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel emerges from the legend into history towards the end of the twelfth century when groups of hermits in Palestine on the slopes of Mount Carmel began to form an organization that began to attract the attention of the authorities. Legend says that prophet Elijah was the founder of the Order. The Carmelites had a rule given by Albert of Vercelli, the Patriarch of Jerusalem and it was an eremitical rule.

The Carmelite reforms were begun by Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), who founded many convents following the primitive Rule of Carmel, and constitution for the Discalced Carmelite Nuns. Her disciple John of the Cross (1542-1591) was among the friars to follow her reform in Spain. The Final break of the Discalced Carmelites Came in 1593. The reason was that there was always a group among the Carmelites which was reluctant towards the transformation of the order into a mendicant order.

The eremitic and apostolic sides often clashed with each other. The reformed Carmelites had rather strict life style, with a desire to keep up the original charism, such as abstinence from meat, fasting from the feast of the Holy Cross 14th September till Easter, two hours of meditation a day. The female branch was strictly contemplative and remained one of the strictest female orders.

2.4 Preparation in the Corpus Iuris Canonici

Corpus Iuris Canonici refers to the set of six compilations of law in the Roman Catholic Church that provided the chief source of ecclesiastical legislation from the middle Age until it was surpassed in 1917 by the *Codex Iuris Canonici*.⁴⁷ *The Corpus Iuris Canonici* dealt with religious life in the fifth section of the constitutions of Pope clement V (*Clementine*) in 1317. This book did not concentrate so much on the preparation and admission of members but rather on the

⁴⁷ Cf. W.HARTMANN,-K. PENNINGTON, (eds.) *The History of Medieval Canon Law in the Classical Period 1140-1234, From Gratian to the Decretals of Pope Gregory IX*, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington D.C.,2008, PP 22-23 ; P. J. STRAVINSKAS, *Our Sunday Visitor's Catholic Encyclopedia*, Our Sunday Visitor . Inc., Huntington, Indiana 1991, pp.290-291.

discipline and privileges of the religious. Like observing the vowed life and remaining focused on the charism and identity of the religious order.⁴⁸

2.4.1 Preparation of candidates according to Lateran Council IV (1215)

The Lateran Council IV (1215) observed that the obligation to prepare priests for proclaiming the word of God as decreed by the Lateran Council II was resulting to so many heresies and thus causing threats on matters of faith. The council was called purposely to discuss and clarify on this matter.⁴⁹ The Lateran Council V (1512-1517) continued to underline the obligation of designating suitable preachers in session XI, and emphasized that its the responsibility of superiors in ensuring that there are suitable priests in terms of behaviour, age, doctrine, honesty prudence and commendable life.⁵⁰

2.4.2 Formation and Admission to Religious Life According to the Council of Trent (1545-1563)

The last session of the Council is most concerned with the life of regulars and nuns. bishops were to appoint those suitable not only in age ,conduct and ability but more so those suitable on orthodoxy ,wisdom and in other values proper to the government of ecclesiastical offices;⁵¹ Chapter 17 of session 25 specifically deals with the proper interrogation and scrutiny by the Local Ordinary before a girl takes the habit or professes. The process of admission should be out of free will. If the

⁴⁸ Cf. H.J. SHROEDER, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils. Text, Translation & Commentary*, London, W.C.B. Herder Book Co.1937, p. 485.

⁴⁹ Cf. P. TANNAR, (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils Vol. I*, P.239.

⁵⁰ Cf. *Ibid*, p.636.

⁵¹ Cf. P. TANNAR, (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils Vol. I*, p. 771.

candidate is found to be free and pious and has the qualifications required by the order, then she can be admitted. Admission of the candidate out of Ignorance by the bishop and other competence superiors is totally forbidden.

Chapter 18 & 19 of the same Holy Synod, places under anathema all the competent authority that shall in way whatsoever force any virgin or widow to enter against her wish, or to take habit of any religious order, or to make profession. No regular pretend that he was admitted into a religious order through coercion and fear; or shall even claim that he made his profession under age; or he will drop his habit, whatever the cause it may be; or would even withdraw with his habit unless it is done within five years only from the day of his profession. Before dropping the habit one needs to give valid reasons before his own superior, and the Ordinary. If the reasons are less grave, then he shall either be compelled to return to his monastery, or be punished as an apostate; and he shall not shall have the benefit of any privilege of his order.⁵²

⁵² Cf. H.J. SHROEDER, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils. Text, Translation & Commentary*, London, W.C.B. Herder Book Co.1937, p. 225.

2.4.3 Admission and preparation of candidates in the 1917 code (Cann.587-589)

Book II of the 1917 Code on “De Personis,” under the Title “De Religiosis” dedicated five canons (587-591) which deals with training in clerical religious institutions.⁵³ These canons elaborate more on the program for those religious intended for sacred orders. They expound more on areas of focus in preparation as far as religious life is concerned.

2.4.4 Can. 587: House of Study

Every religious institute is required to have equipped houses of training approved by the competent superiors. The proper vocation and identity of each institute must be guarded. In areas of formation and admission, the fundamental code should contain an explanation of the different levels of formation, their requirements, purpose, and length; the competent authority to admit or refuse admission to various stages; the juridical effects of temporary and perpetual profession.⁵⁴

After the approval by competent superiors, the houses for study should be well equipped to cope with the needs of the students. Only those religious that live commendable life are to reside in such houses.

⁵³ Cf., S. WOYWOD, *A Practical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, Vol. 1, B. Herder London 1948, pp. 278-280.

⁵⁴ Cf. M.M. ROSE, “Norms To All Institutes of Consecrated Life” (cc.573-606),” in J.P. BEAL, *et al.*, (eds.), *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, Paulist Press, New York 2000, p.754.

2.4.5 Can. 588: Care for Religious Students

The religious were put under the care of a prefect whose function was to instruct and direct them in religious life. Can.559 required the prefect to have same qualifications as were required in the master of novices .The competent superior was to ensure that the regulations of can.595 were perfectly observed during the training.⁵⁵

2.4.6 Can. 589: The Programme of study

The religious were to engage in the studies like philosophy for atleast two years, focusing most on the teaching of St. Thomas in accordance with the can. 1366, and order from the Holy See. During this period studies should be given priority over other duties. Superiors should be keen, and exempt both the professors and students from other duties that would hinder their focus on studies.

2.5 The Second Vatican Council on Admission and Preparation of Candidates to Religious Life

The council in several documents expounded on the importance of the training of clergy and same importance is extended to all religious.

⁵⁵ The Canon requires superiors to be responsible in taking care that their subjects observe faithfully the spiritual exercises throughout their life.

2.5.1 on Admission and Training

Priesthood is a public figure, and therefore needs proper preparation all the way from preparation and admission to ongoing formation. The decree on priestly training, *Optatam Tutius* especially n.6 extends the importance of watchful concern for the age, the stage of progress, the inquiry to be made into candidate's proper intention and freedom of choice, the spiritual and intellectual qualification, physical and psychic health and not taking for granted other hereditary deficits.

The process should be done proficiently even if a terrible shortage of priests should exist. It is about promoting the suitable ones and giving more time for preparation those already in the training. .

2.5.2 The Promotion of Liturgical Instruction and Active Participation

The programmes on preparation should ensure that, liturgical instructions conform with liturgical season, promote inculturation and active participation in the sacraments and Eucharistic celebrations. This aspect is stressed in Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* especially n.18. Active participation in this liturgical functions, contributes to the unrelenting spiritual replenishment of both the religious and candidates to religious life.

2.5.3 Use of Social media in religious life

Inter mirifica n.15 requires all Christ's faithful to make effort in ensuring that the means of social communication are put and used in various apostolate. Given the nature of their life apostolic religious are to be at front position to acquire the competency needed to use the social media for the apostolate. This has to be part of the preparation and training of candidates for religious life. Candidates should learn how to use modern social communication effectively without abuses. Therefore a solid preparation and basic training ought to enlighten the candidates and refine their critical sense and form their conscience, so as to save them from falling prey to the facile suggestions and manipulations perpetrated by the mass media, particularly where these may offend against truth or morality.⁵⁶

2.5.4 A Call to Holiness

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium* especially no.43 stresses on the state of religious life and its own place in relation to the divine and hierarchical structure of the church. The church is seen as people of God. She recognizes religious life as a state of life, which manifests its holiness in the profession of the evangelical counsels.

⁵⁶ Cf. S. CHARLES, *Discernment of Religious Vocation: Formation Towards Transformation*, 69.

2.5.5 Constant Study of Sacred Scripture.

All the Christian faithful especially the religious are to seek the truth in matters that concern God and His Church, embrace and keep it. The Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei verbum* n. 25 insists on learning the surpassing knowledge of God by frequent reading of the scriptures lest they remain ignorant of Christ. By virtue of their religious consecration, they bear particular witness to the Gospel, and therefore they should prepare themselves adequately in order to render genuine service.

2.5.6 Task of Ecumenical Education

Religious must possess sufficient knowledge on ecumenism right away in their different level of formation. The Decree on Ecumenism *Unitatis Redintegratio* n.77 explains that the church has to fulfill her ecumenical responsibility; she must have at her disposal sufficient number of clergy, religious and laity in ecumenical matters. Friendly dialogue should be cultivated between the church and the non-believers, so that openness to their culture is embraced. This way, they may also be opened up to embrace the Gospel and accept conversion. The Decree requires the religious like other experts, to constantly update their theological training by receiving appropriate education in matters of ecumenism that should be integrated too in the preparation of candidates for religious life.

2.5.7 Preparation for missionary work

The work of evangelization is an essential responsibility of all Christ's faithful. The whole church is missionary by nature. The Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity *Ad gentes* n.26 affirms that mainly the scripture and sound doctrines nourishes the missionary since it leads to proper understanding of the mystery of Christ. The religious who are missionaries are to study missiology, catechesis, and the cultures of the in the countries in which they are to be sent, they may be conversant with the people's way of life and religion.

2.5.8 Religious and Inculturation

Inculturation means the honest and serious attempt to make Christ and his message of salvation evermore understood by peoples of every culture, locality and time. It is the conviction that Christ and his Good News are ever dynamic and challenging to all time and cultures as they become better understood and lived by each people.⁵⁷

The Pastoral Constitution recognizes the duty of religious men and women to preserve culture and cooperate in collective activity of their times. The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et spes* n.62 states the need for education for complete human and social culture and the relationship that exists between such culture and Christian formation. Apart from the use of theological principles, there is also need to engage sociology and secular sciences

⁵⁷ Cf. J.M. WALIGGO, *Inculturation: I Its Meaning and Urgency*, 12.

for full growth and awareness of their right to culture and their duty to develop themselves, and as a result lead to maturity in faith.

2.6 Curial Documents on the Admission and preparation of candidates to religious life.

The Holy See put emphasis on the concern in the preparation candidates for religious life by determinedly issuing valuable documents giving directives to be faithfully followed by all institutes of consecrated life.

Acknowledged that genuine preparation and formation in initially depends on whether the institute is apostolic or contemplative. Spiritual and human formation should be achieved at the right time in preparation and the formators and other competent personnel to provide an environment of greater freedom and flexibility to give room to the youthful religious, to learn the value of symbiotic fraternal aid.

2.6.1 Religious and Human Advancement

The document aims at creating harmony between evangelization and human advancement that have repercussions on the formation of religious. Therefore, there is need to revise the programme concerning initial preparation of candidates to religious life. It stresses on fidelity to the charism and patrimony of the institute and an inventive engagement in the renewal of activities and work as important aspect of initial and ongoing formation; The focus is to discern the options which best respond today, to the original purposes of the institute or going back to the roots. Aspiring at

encouraging a more attractive and clear discovery of the values of consecration and mission.

2.6.2 The Contemplative Dimension of the Religious life

The plenary fathers duly emphasized integration of activity with contemplation as the primary objective of the active institutes.⁵⁸ There is a greater danger for apostolic institutes to become so much absorbed in their work for the Lord, as to forget the Lord of all work, yet their first duty is that of being with Christ. The basic solid intellectual prepared which is basic for a balanced life of prayer and contemplation; a well developed of God and of prayer; wisdom resulting from listening to the word of keenly and love of liturgy and understating of its role in divine worship, spiritual and ecclesial formation.

2.6.3 Essential Elements in the Church's Teaching on Preparation in Religious life

The purpose of the preparation for religious life is to enable persons to realize, to incorporate and intensify their identity as religious. Initial preparation is directed toward assisting the person to discern the vocation and to acquire sufficient understanding and autonomy for living the religious commitment.⁵⁹ Generally the process of preparation and admission to religious life should inspire, stimulate and direct person's growth in his or her vocation and aids the candidates to develop the

⁵⁸ Cf. SACRA CONGREGATION PRO RELIGIOUS, *Instructio La Dimension Contemplative della Vita Religiosa*, in *Leges Ecclesiae* VI, (1980), n.4790, pp.8006-8015.

⁵⁹ Cf. B. JOHN, *A dictionary of Canon Law*, 128.

capacity to assume and comprehend his or her own identity with free and responsible options. It keeps oneself permanently open to the initial grace, to God's creativity and to the ever new demands of the Church in her salvific history.⁶⁰

The document affirms that the whole initial preparation journey is a lifelong venture which discloses broadly in five phases and each phase has its own goal, content, and particular provisions.⁶¹ In all these levels of discernment, the responsibility is on the individual or candidate him/herself because there is that aspect of collaboration, openness and response to the call. Formator and spiritual guides are to escort and direct them throughout the discernment journey and the community is to accord a favorable environment.

2.6.4 Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes (Potissimum Institutioni)

This document gives valuable directions for the religious life in totality. Each particular institute should make use of the directives within its own proper character of the institute. As required by can. 659, §2. The instruction gives guidance to religious institutes to help them elaborate their programmes of formation.⁶² The document treats questions on religious consecration and formation; the stages of religious formation; formation in institutes ordered to contemplation and as well questions concerning candidates to sacred orders.

⁶⁰ Cf. An incarnated Grace on the way: *The Carmelite Missionary on Formation*, 13.

⁶¹ The five phases include: the pre-noviate or postulancy; the novitiate itself; temporal vows; solemn vows and the ongoing formation of the mature years.

⁶² Cf. CONGREGATION PRO INSTITUTIS VITAE CONSECARTAE ET SOCIETATIBUS VITAE APOSTOLICAE, Normae Directivae de Institutione in Religiosis Institutis *Potissimum Institutioni*, 2 Februarii, 1990, in AAS, LXXXII (1990), PP. 470-532.

2.6.5 Fraternal life in Community

Before being religious, it entails being first human and Christian. Religious community is a gift of the spirit; it is the love of God; poured onto our hearts by the Holy Spirit, from which religious community takes its origin and is built as a true family gathered together in the Lord's name as stipulated in can.602 and also in the document *Perfectae caritatis* n.15. The religious community is rooted in the very heart of the blessed and sanctifying Trinity.⁶³

The community is the proper place where religious mutually help one another to respond as consecrated persons. In a community, the members should appreciate each other's talent because each person has a special talent that is unique and important and therefore no one should be discriminated, remain isolated or be dormant; with a common charism and response to new challenges in the society. In the formation community all relevant studies, the charism and the spirituality of the founder should be emphasized.

2.6.6 The Inter-Institute Collaboration for formation

The document, *Perfectae caritatis* n.8; and can.675 affirm the shortage of qualified in formation personnel and thus encourage collaboration among institutes that are in this noble task of formation. The instruction guarantees formation which is inclusive, concrete and reliable and convenient with the journey of the Church in

⁶³ Cf. CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTE OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, Instr. Fraternal Life in Community, *Congregavit Nos In Unum Christi Amor*, 18.

the modern world. It re-affirms that formation is an inalienable right and duty of every institute and recommends religious families to continue to develop efforts towards the adequate preparation of those responsible for both initial and ongoing formation.

2.7 Letters to Consecrated Men and Women

In the year 2015, the Holy See issued letters to consecrated men and women encouraging them to keep vigil and to rejoice all time in the service of God's kingdom and humanity. The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and for societies of Apostolic Life stresses that there is need for renewed and loving commitment to the intellectual life and for keenness on studies. The Holy See expresses regrets that this imperative has not always been accepted as a demand of radical reform by consecrated persons and more on consecrated women.⁶⁴

2.7.1 Benedict XVI (2005-2013): The necessity of initial preparation of candidates

The Pope says that if religious are to remain pertinent in the steadily changing world, much effort has to be put at level of initial preparation for their candidates. The Roman pontiff insists that comprehensive evaluation of the candidates' maturity and their competence to live renunciation. For the Pope, the centre of gravity no longer lies in the system, theories and resources in those formation houses; Rather more concentration must be put on the formation of

⁶⁴ Cf. CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTE OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, Letter *Keep Watch!*, n.9

formators and student directors because the contemporary epoch needs formators to be steadily and stably updated and enlightened in order to stay put on the equal lane to their difficult task.⁶⁵

2.7.2 Francis (2013 to date): proclaiming the year of consecrated life

The Holy Father challenges all consecrated persons to look into their past with gratitude, celebrate their present with passion and look to the future with hope. Religious should meet the expectation of being ambassadors of joy, to wake up the world; uphold the spirituality of communion; come out of the comfort zones and go forth to the external peripheries; and to be informed of the questions that God and people are asking of them today.⁶⁶ The pope reminds the religious of their prophetic call, to read critically the signs of the times and interpret to the people correctly. The religious should wake up so as to wake up the world.

Conclusion

This second chapter has displayed the Church's steady concern and effort for the formation preparation of candidates at different level. Religious life is a gift that comes from God as revealed from the sacred texts. Christ is the Chief Formator and role model of religious life as revealed in his life and ministry. The same is carried on by his apostles as they carry out mission to other parts of the world. This chapter also recognizes the role played by monasticism in admission and formation of the

⁶⁵Cf. BENEDICT XVI, Orientaciones para la Formacion del Formador m Conclusiones de la XVII A samblea General de la Oslam, Medellin, 1-6 Diciembre 2003.

⁶⁶ Cf. FRANCIS, Apostolic Letter *Witnesses of Joy* to all Consecrated Persons On the Occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life, 21st November 2014, Rome.

religious following the strict monastic rules. Characters like Sts. Anthony, Pachomius, Dominic, Augustine, Benedict and Francis form the backbone of religious life and most current rules and constitutions were first brought into existence by them.

From the chapter, we have discovered that more directives on qualification for suitable candidate for religious life were clearly developed in the Vatican II Council. The Roman Curia as well as the Roman Pontiffs continuously emphasized the importance of formation in religious life. The 1983 Code makes this task within religious life both an obligation and a right all religious men and women.

CHAPTER III

CONFORMITY OF THE PROPER LAW OF THE ORDER OF CARMELITE DISCALCED TO THE CANONICAL PROVISIONS ON THE PREPARATION AND ADMISSION OF CANDIDATES TO RELIGIOUS LIFE

Introduction

This chapter looks into the obligation and right of the admission of suitable candidates to religious life according to the proper law of the Order of Carmelites Discalced (OCD) ⁶⁷ in the light of can. 642 and other related authoritative positions. The chapter investigates the documents used by the OCD to administer the preparation and admission of the suitable candidates to religious life and then inspects the order's fidelity in the implementation of its proper law to the canonical provision on the preparation and admission of suitable candidates to religious life by competent superior.

3.1 The Order of Carmelites Discalced

The origin of the Carmelites is traced to Mt. Carmel which is a range of high hills along the Eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. From ancient times, Mt. Carmel has been regarded as sacred not only to Christians, Muslims, and Jews but also among the ancient pagans. Mt. Carmel is linked with the memory of the prophet

⁶⁷ Hence, the Order of Carmelites will be styled OCD. This shall be used to mean the institute and /or the members. OCD are also referred to as Teresian Carmelites.

Elijah the Tishbite, whose assignment was to summon the people away from their religious syncretism.⁶⁸

The identity of Mt. Carmel is always associated with the impressive conflict with the prophets of Baal (1 Kgs 18:19-40) and the subsequent end to the long drought after Elijah's servant returned from the top of Mt. Carmel and reported seeing a small white cloud rising over the sea (1Kgs 18:42-46). Several patristic authors imaginatively portray Elijah as a kind of model for the Christian monk and even as the founder of the monasticism and eremitical life. Elijah stands out as Carmel's source of inspiration, as he contemplates the living God and burns with zeal for his glory. The Carmelite look upon the prophetic charism as the prototype of their own vocation to ponder God's word and proclaim it to the world.⁶⁹

"The origin of Carmelites still remains somewhat mysterious".⁷⁰ In any case, most contemporary historians trace their beginnings to sometime after the third crusades (1189-1192). Approached by Albert of Vercelli, the papal legate and patriarch of Jerusalem for the written norms in keeping with the vowed purpose. Following one of the directives in Albert's formula of live, the hermits in the Wadi built an oratory in the midst of the cells which they dedicate to Our Lady.

Within a few decades, as the political temperatures rose in Palestine, the Carmelites began migrating westward, making foundations in Cyprus, Sicily, Southern France, England and other parts of Europe. In 1247, at the Carmelites

⁶⁸ Cf. S. PAYNE, *Carmelite Tradition*, xxi.

⁶⁹ Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DICALCED, *Constitutions and Norms*, 34.

⁷⁰ S. PAYNE, *Carmelite Tradition*, xxii.

request, Pope Innocent IV who promulgated the innocentian version of the Carmelite Rule, which consisted of minor alteration to Albert's text.⁷¹ The situation allowed the Carmelites to found houses in solitary places and in wherever they were. In 1251, St. Simon Stock prior general of the Carmelites received from Mary the brown scapular together with weighty promises of special assistance at the time of death to those who would wear it devoutly.

The new found success was when the Carmelites had begun assimilating themselves to the mendicants who were attracting numerous vocations at the time. With the Franciscans and Dominicans, the Carmelites and Augustinians came to be recognized as among the four principal mendicant orders of the middle ages. With the collapse of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem in 1291, the Carmelites lost all the physical contact with their original home.⁷²

3.1.1 Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross

In 1535 Teresa de Ahumada joined the nearby Carmelite monastery of the Incarnation in Avila, a community that reflected the economic and class divisions of Spanish Society. As Teresa's spiritual life deepened, she began writing both to clarify her own path and to teach others the ways of contemplative prayer.⁷³ In 1562 Teresa established the new monastery of San Jose in Avila. The members lived together as friends and supporting one another in vocation of the intense contemplative prayer for the sake of the Church.

⁷¹ Cf. P. ISAAC, *Consecrated Life Through Two Millennia*, 109.

⁷² Cf. S. PAYNE, *Carmelite Tradition*, xxv.

⁷³ Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Constitutions*, n. 5.

A young Carmelite priest taking the name of “John of the Cross (1542-1591)”⁷⁴ helped Teresa to spread this reform to the Carmelite friars. Teresa’s followers soon became popularly known as “discalced”.⁷⁵ After death of Teresa in 1582 and John of the Cross in 1591, the movement had begun separated from the original Carmelite Order.⁷⁶

In 18th C, catholic spirituality tended to focus on the more active expression of piety, such as personal devotions and structured methods of meditation. Carmelite spirituality became closely associated with Marian devotions, especially the brown scapular. Carmelite spiritual theologians of this period spent considerable effort trying to fit the doctrine of Teresa and John into Scholastic Categories.

3.1.2 The Roots of Our Vocation

“The Discalced Brothers of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mt. Carmel belong to a religious family endowed with its own special charism of God’s people and called to fulfill a specific role in the mystical Body of Christ.”⁷⁷ Carmelites are called to be docile to the voice of God and cherish the spirit and way of life of their forerunners as they profess to be their descendants and heirs. The deeds of the forefathers are regarded to be part of the providential shaping of their vocation in the living church. The order thus has been approved, and granted clerical

⁷⁴ .S. PAYNE, *Carmelite Tradition*, 42.

⁷⁵ Cf. Because members typically wore Sandals or went barefoot as a sign of greater austerity.

⁷⁶ Cf. sometimes called the Ancient observant and identified by the religious initials O.CARM, to become the Order of Discalced Carmelites (OCD), primitive observance.

⁷⁷ ORDER OF CAREMELITES DISCALCED, *Constitutions*, n. 1.

and pontifical status. It also enjoys the exemption by which it is directly and immediately subject to the Pope.

Mary is the mother and patroness of the Order; Carmelites look upon her life as the role model of religious consecration, while Prophet Elijah stands out as Carmel's source of inspiration for the contemplative life.

3.1.3 The Teresian Charism

St. Teresa with the mystical graces led her members to undertake the renewal of Carmel and make prayer and contemplation its total commitment aiming at primitive Rule in solitude and strict poverty.⁷⁸ St. Teresa of Avila stresses more and more on the apostolic spirit of the renewal Carmel, its prayer, its withdrawal from the world, indeed the whole life to be dedicated to the service of the Church. Her purpose to reform Carmel was that the candidates may follow the evangelical counsels as perfectly as possible. Their living of the evangelical counsels is certainly a full-time job, a full-time occupation; the implication and demands are far reaching and penetrate every area of their life, both as individual and as community.⁷⁹

Besides the nuns, she also funded a family of friars to foster fidelity and spiritual growth of the nuns through the assistance of brothers of the same spirit, and to provide the church with a manifold service of prayer and apostolic activity. The order comprises both clerical and lay members of who work together for a common

⁷⁸Cf. ORDER OF CAREMELITES DISCALCED, *Constitutions*, n. 5.

⁷⁹ Cf. S. CHARLES, *Discernment of Religious Vocation: Formation Towards Transformation*, 69.

purpose, sharing in different ways the charism and the same religious consecration by solemn vows; all have equal rights and obligation, which arise from Holy orders or from the office entrusted to them.

3.1.4 Study of the Proper Law of the Institute on Recruitment

The OCD Constitution came as a result of series of General Chapters with the cooperation of all the provinces of the order. The aim was to return the sources of Christian living and the original inspiration of the institute, to faithfully define and preserve the spirit of the Rule of St. Albert of Jerusalem and of saints. Teresa of Jesus and John of the cross while fully adapting to the changed conditions of the time.

The basic legislation of the order would clearly define and truly present Carmel's nature, its purpose and the means to achieve it, as well as providing the juridical norms required to give it adequate stability. The proper law is very crucial in understanding the patrimony, spirituality and charism of religious life. It brings to attention the mission, apostolate and structure of a particular institute.⁸⁰ It defines the nature and duration of preparation, the process of admission and those responsible for it. The particular law has to be in line with needs of the Church and relevant to the sign of times and to the conditions of the people, without losing the identity of the institute (can. 659, §2). Therefore this sub-section looks into the proper law of the OCD: their fundamental code, the deliberation of General Chapters

⁸⁰ Cf. E.SHARON, "Religious Institutes and the Juridical Relationships of the members to the Institute," in *The Jurist*, 51 (19910, p.107.

and the General and Formation Directories as necessary juridical tools which the OCD employ in the preparation and admission of suitable candidates to religious life.

3.1.5 The Fundamental Code of the OCD on Recruitment

The basic code of the constitutions is fundamental legislation in the OCD, and it elaborates all that is relevant to the charism, the particular way of life, and the patrimony of the institute (587, §1). The fundamental codes are the fruit of years of hard work, of careful and loving research concerning Carmelite charism carried out by General Chapters with collaboration from the whole Order. They have been approved by the competent authority of the Church, the Holy see, since the institute of OCD is of Pontifical right (can 589; 595).

Proposed *ad experimentum* in 1976, the Constitutions and Norms were finalized by the General Chapter of 1979, and in virtue of special of a special mandate from the Chapter, approved by the Extraordinary Definitory of 1980. They were subsequently submitted for approval to the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes which made a few changes in the text, confirmed and definitively approved the Constitutions by decree of June, on the Solemnity of Pentecost 1981.⁸¹

Accordingly, the Definitory General in its 93rd session on October 4, 1981, promulgates these new Constitutions of the Order, as amended by the said S.

⁸¹ Cf. ORDER OF CAREMELITS DISCALCED, *Constitutions*, 1992, p.5.

Congregation together with the accompanying Norms, and declares them binding on the whole order.⁸²

St. Teresa advocated for social virtues and human values to be duly fostered. She inculcated a joyous family Spirit, affability in coming life, nobility of soul and mutual respect. Good training for the young religious, study and respect of culture were to be encouraged. Deeper theological life that is geared towards the demands of the apostolic ministry. She emphasizes on integration between the community and of evangelical friendship among the friars. The authentic formation of Teresian Carmelite is achieved in three phases: a past to built on; a present to be lived; a future to be created⁸³

In Part two, of chapter one in the current constitutions, concerns the recruitment and preparation of the candidates and it is introduced by cann.233; 597, §1; 646; 647, §2; 648, §1; 642-644 which are quoted in verbatim.⁸⁴ Stressing that preparation must embrace the candidate's whole being so that with an awareness of God's gift he gradually grows to full human and Christian maturity (Cf. Eph 4:12).

3.1.6 The Supplementary Codes on preparation

The major aim of these additional codes is to explain, specify, apply, determine, complement and develop the fundamental code on recruitment and preparation particularly by *Ratio Institutionis*. Unlike the Constitutions,

⁸² Cf. *ibid*, p.6.

⁸³ Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Ratio Institutionis*, 1992, n.4.

⁸⁴ Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Constitutions*, 1992, nn.104-114.

supplementary codes like *Ratio Institutionis* or norms regarding formation do not need the approval of the competent authority of the Church, provided they don't contradict the constitutions approved and renewed with the assent of that authority.⁸⁵

3.1.6.1 *Ratio Institutionis*

This is a directory of the OCD that enshrines the whole programme of studies of the institute at different levels. It is a guiding principle which concretely applies to the institute; the guiding principles are stemmed from the universal law. The OCD considers the *ratio institutionis* as a guide in the admission, preparation and both in initial and ongoing formation personnel. It is the basic hand-book for formation in the order. It stresses the need to develop a sense of responsibility in the candidates for their own growth, together with communal co-responsibilities of the educators.

3.1.7 The Chief Elements of the Carmelite Vocation

The major commitment: is allegiance to Jesus Christ; the hidden union with God in both form of life and fraternal sharing in which contemplation and action are blended to become a signal of apostolic service of the Church; call to prayer, sustained by the word of God and sacred Liturgy; the vocation stems from twofold service, Contemplative and active, that is shared in life as brothers in the community. Apart from being United by the bound of fraternal life, the Carmelites

⁸⁵ Cf. J.D. ANDRES, "Formation of Members," p.1507.

also bear witness to the unity of the Church, faithful in this to the Holy mother, who wanted her communities to resemble the college of Christ.⁸⁶

OCD are committed to a consecrated life of allegiance to Jesus Christ. In this, they are sustained by the companionship, the example and protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Carmelites are called to hidden union with God, in form of life and fraternal sharing in which contemplation and action are blended to become a sign of apostolic service of the Church.

Prayer embraces the whole Carmelite life sustained by the word of God and the sacred Liturgy which leads to live in intimate friendship with God. With purified heart, the Carmelite life is shared more closely with the life of Christ himself, and prepare the way for a more abundant out pouring of the Holy Spirit.

3.1.7.1 The Evangelical Counsels

“The Carmelite vocation, which enters on the contemplative experience, constitutes for the one called by God to the special way of living his Christian life through religious profession”⁸⁷ In answer to divine call to live the evangelical counsels, and led by the grace of the Holy Spirit. The Carmelites pledge by public vows to follow Christ more closely in the way of Chastity, poverty and obedience. The profession of the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience fashion a new bond with Christ and the church, giving fuller expression to baptismal consecration. In

⁸⁶ Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Constitutions*, 1988, n.15.

⁸⁷ ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Ratio Institutionis*, 1992, n.14.

this way, the Carmelites surrender themselves heart and soul to God whom they love above all else, and are completely dedicated to his service.

Holy Spirit given to catechumens at baptism vivifies and sustains the practice of the evangelical counsels⁸⁸ and transforms them into the image of Christ. It prepares the baptized to the highest union with God; it joins them to the mystery of the Church in a special way and empowers Christians to love as Christ loved, even to the point of laying his life (Eph 5:2).

The candidates to Religious life must practice Community life which must be marked with that Spirit of penance inherited from the Holy parents. Determined candidates should observe penitential practices as recommended by the Church and laid down by the Carmelite rule, and seek new forms of penance better suited to the mentality and needs of contemporary time; Like keep the generally law of church on fast and abstinence without mitigation and this kind of fast should be more frequent during Advent and Lent; and this practice should be observed also in certain other days traditionally considered penitential by the Church; while allowing for any special norms in force in a particular Church; one day each week should have penitential character in the form of fast and what is then saved on food should go the poor or mission.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, n. 6.

⁸⁹ Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Constitutions*, 1988, n.45.

3.1.8 The Admission and preparation of the Candidates in OCD

In can. 233, it is stated that each region shall study the best way and means of recruitment of candidates, as its own particular situation and circumstances may require. Recruitment is done to those who have the vocation or called to religious life. A vocation is understood as a gratuitous call from God (Deut 7:7-10, Eph 1:4, 1Cor 1:26), it demands a free response and total dedication from those who receive it (Gen 12:1-4; Is 6: 8-9; Jer 1:7). The religious should have the fostering of vocations to the Order very much at heart, to make every effort to help the aspirant become aware of their calling, and to follow it with enthusiasm. Vocation is not something that one “has”; it is a possibility for him or her to “become”. Therefore, this implies the reality that following a particular vocation in life.

This can. 597 §1, should be considered when doing selection and approval of candidates for religious life. Steadfastness should be shown and there should be more concern with quality than with numbers and attention should be paid to the candidate’s family background and early education.

3.1.8.1 Recruiting and Screening

In the Norms of OCD, vocations can be recruited in various ways: by prayer, good example and also by suitable publicity which helps the faithful to value the vocation;⁹⁰ by effectual presence among groups of young people especially as they carry out the apostolate; by preparatory schools which in some regions are the usual

⁹⁰ Cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, 24.

means of recruiting vocations; by ensuring that a particular house is designated where they can prepare more immediately for religious life; by taking part in diocesan and regional projects.⁹¹

3.1.8.2 Response to Vocation

Avocation to consecrated life requires a free response. It is a seed destined to grow and bear fruit through a lively faith and active love and persevering hope (Cf. 1Thes 1:3; Eph 4:3). The one called must first assure himself that this vocation is genuine made out of free will and choice and ascertain that the radical demands of the gospel and exclusive love for Christ. A true vocation from God has a corresponding appeal from humanity since one who does not love the brother that he can see, cannot love God he never seen. Thus response to vocation entails to experience God's mercy, to live in freedom and to attain to the knowledge of the son of God⁹².

3.1.8.3 Transmission of Pedagogy and Teaching of OCDs Spirituality

The charism and spirituality of both St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila constitute the patrimony to Carmelite vocation and therefore it should influence every level of preparation and new vocations in the order. In preparation process, the postulant director should help the candidate to become acquainted with the charism and to make it his own through practice, to the point where he feels fully part of the religious family into which he is being received; as they adapt to new

⁹¹ Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Norms*, 1988, n.70.

⁹² Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Ratio Institutionis*, 1992, nn.15-19.

demands and different cultural situations, in order to give form to and put into practice, within the Teresian charism, what the spirit is saying to the Church in the light of the signs of time. ⁹³

3.1.8.4 To be in Union with the Church

The candidate will practice and manifest his love for the church especially in the community⁹⁴. The missionary zeal is put into practice in the local church; it is open to immense horizon of the missions and is shown in willingness to respond to the needs of the order. Evangelization and apostolic training should hand in hand with the growth of vocation, and this will help to clarify and develop it.

3.1.8.5 Towards Human maturity

Maturity is never a goal definitively reached, but rather the starting point for new conquests. Healthy physiological development is based on a real awareness of the value and meaning of the body. It involves education in elementary hygiene: cleanliness, sport, rest, and nutrition as the indispensable substratum for the exercise of the higher faculties and for the service and kingdom.

Sexual education is necessary in imparting knowledge of the basic facts of male and female sexuality, with their physical, psychological and spiritual implications, and integrating them in a positive way into the personality as a

⁹³ Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Ratio Institutionis*, 1992, n. 26.

⁹⁴ Cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 38.

whole.⁹⁵ Psychic maturity is shown, firstly, in calm self-acceptance, certain that God loves us just as we are. This maturity will be evident, then, in the ability to make correct decisions, in rectitude of judgment which truly weighs up events and persons, and in firmness of convictions and opinions.

Affective maturity leads the person away from self-centeredness and infantile love towards a self –searching and altruistic love. It is an indispensable premise for future self- offering in chastity. Celibacy, far from being an obstacle, is designed to develop even greater maturity, and to fashion people who are adult in their love for God. Carmelite maturity then, is a form of Christian and religious growth through which the evangelical values are assumed with the originality and authenticity found in Holy mother Teresa and Holy Father St. John of the Cross.⁹⁶ The maturity of Carmelite religious can be gauged from the depth of his love for the mystery of the incarnation or the humanity of Christ, just like that of Holy Mother of Jesus Teresa of Jesus. This is expressed, first and foremost, in the quest for friendship with Christ and in devotion to Mary; following closely the fundamental elements of the Christian personality of the Teresian Carmelite.⁹⁷

3.1.9 The Postulancy stage

Although religious life, properly speaking begins with novitiate, a fitting preparation for it requires an earlier stage of formation called postulancy which is compulsory to all candidates unless the provincial decides otherwise. The purpose

⁹⁵ Cf. *Gaudium et Spes*, 14.

⁹⁶ Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Ratio Institutionis*, 1992, n.56.

⁹⁷ Cf. *Ibid*, 58.

for postulancy formation is to give Candidate the opportunity of gaining firsthand knowledge of the religious way of life and to give those responsible in the order, a chance of assessing their suitability.⁹⁸ It is to be a time of gradual transition from secular life to religious life in the novitiate. It is the duty of the provincial to accept the postulant when he is satisfied and has sufficient information about them. Postulancy can last for more than two years and it is upon the provincial to decide the duration.

The community which receives the postulant to share in its life has to discern the suitability for consecrated life in Carmel. It determines whether he has the human and Christian maturity expected of one of his age and sufficient to begin religious life. Postulancy is also designed to facilitate a gradual and non-pressurized transition to religious life. The lifestyle of the aspirants should not give impression that they are already members of the order; instead it should focus more on personal relationship at this point than the form of life they follow.⁹⁹

3.1.9.2 Novitiate

This stage is intended to help the novice discover his call from God and specifically to the order, to give him the opportunity of experiencing the way of life of the order and of testing his intention and suitability. The requirements are as follows; Admission should take place only after the candidate has reached a degree

⁹⁸ Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Constitutions*, 1988, n.106.

⁹⁹ Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Ratio Institutionis*, 1992, n. 156.

of mental development, culture and spiritual maturity sufficient to enable him to appreciate the demands of our way of life, and freely embrace it.

Cann.642-644, it pertains to the provincial to accept novices in accordance with the universal law, with the consent of the community to which they were entrusted. A candidate must sign a declaration that he will not be entitled to payment to any other remuneration from the Order for his work or any other grounds whatsoever.

Before admission to novitiate, the candidates must present the following: proof of Baptism and Confirmation, and their free status; The testimony of the local the ordinary the major superior of the institute or society, or the Rector of the seminary respectively when there is a question of receiving clerics or those who had been previously admitted to another institute of consecrated life, to a society of apostolic life or to a seminary. Superiors can seek other information if they think it is necessary (cf. can. 645).¹⁰⁰

3.2 Other Elements to be noted in the Candidates and they are to be rightly Formed

That desire of contemplative life, the instinctive passivity and solitude should not be reduced to incapacity to adapt to oneself to the community life and to others. Basic maturity in the candidates and apostolic zeal are required, although this

¹⁰⁰Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Norms*, 1988, n.78.

should be excluded from the unconscious desire to dominate the people and control the material.

3.2.1 Characteristics of Mature Candidates in Relation to Oneself and other persons¹⁰¹

Mature candidates turn towards others to love and to serve without any fear and suspicion. In most cases, they are in control of their sentiments, to dominate the emotions and make a continuous effort towards the ideal. The mature candidates make decisions after reflection and consultation and constantly work for the end.

The candidates with this quality of Maturity are capable of balancing events by arranging the time and energy in fulfilment of a task and are not slaves to rules. Besides, they have broad view achieved through contact with others and are able to dominate proper sentiments as well as being conscious of their own limits.¹⁰² Their judgments of other persons and situations are objective and they have the muscle to sustain in difficulties and hardly give up; in these candidates, the evidence of self knowledge and self- esteem is clear.

In relation to other persons, the mature candidates maintain equilibrium between introversion and extroversion and accept them as they are. They take criticism positively and accommodate the suggestions of others besides giving evidence of a healthy interdependence on others.

¹⁰¹ Cf. S. CHARLES, *Discernment of Religious Vocation: Formation Towards Transformation*, 81-82.

¹⁰²Cf. *Ibid.*, 81.

3.2.2 Verification of the Signs of Vocation in the Candidates¹⁰³

Commitment to Christian Life which is manifested through the love for the life of prayer, perseverance in it promptly; love for the word of God and openness to being converted by this word and trying to live it; being in love with silence and solitude, in order to listen to Christ and to be with Him; readiness to be involved in the mission of the church and active participation in its sacramental life and willingness and hunger for religious activities.

The second aspect is the understanding and living religious life by showing the desire to deepen their fidelity of religious life within the community which is manifested through the understanding and working knowledge of the institute's constitution, norms, of the responsibility and obligations inherent in them and of their spirit; the willingness to live fidelity to the constitutions and ability to live the vows; ability to work in a community regardless of age and personalities and readiness to resolve personal and communal conflicts productively and charitably.¹⁰⁴

Lastly is the aspect of support for growth which is manifested in the desire to nurture and enhance their personal strengths and to confront and transform their weaknesses; should be able to express their opinions in community gatherings clearly and without fear in the face of opposition and challenge; Increasing self-acceptance that acknowledging personal imperfections and weaknesses and accepting others as imperfect, weak and struggling; making decisions free from

¹⁰³ Cf. S. CHARLES, *Discernment of Religious Vocation: Formation Towards Transformation*, 95.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. ORDER OF CAREMELITES DISCALCED, *Ratio Institutionis*, and n. 122.

coercion, and from the constrictions of having no alternatives in life. Before any decision is made, all possible information necessary must be collected and gauging weaknesses and strength in the decision made.¹⁰⁵ The candidates should have adequate time to discern the decision as one is reminded of the words of St. John, “Beloved do not believe every spirit , but test the spirits to see whether they are of God” (1 John 4:1).

3.2.3 The Postulant Master and Vocation Director

Formation in religious communities is carried out by the side of the following “Christ chaste, poor and obedient –the one who prays, the consecrated one, and Missionary of the Father” therefore it is centered on paschal mystery.¹⁰⁶ Accordingly, the proper law of the OCD provides the qualities which are mandatory for the formation personnel. “The religious who is directly in charge of candidates during any level of the stages of formation is given the title of Master. He should be a man of faith and well versed in the Carmelite life”.¹⁰⁷

The master in addition to catholic faith and morals, should be chosen from among the best religious in the province and he should have the qualities: a good shepherd; sensitive to human weakness; a man of apostolic zeal which has been tested by pastoral experience; approachable and charitable; offer concrete help to the candidates in their efforts to live union with Christ; model of humility without detracting from the force and authority of his instruction; ought to be prayerful,

¹⁰⁵Cf. Ibid., 95.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. IOANNES PAULIS, PP.II, *Vita Consecrata*, n.77.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Ratio Institutionis*, 1992, n.85.

studious and willing to serve; love of liturgy and understanding of its role in spiritual and ecclesial formation; necessary cultural competence and sufficient time and good will to attend to the candidates individually, and not just as a group.¹⁰⁸ The principle task of master is to give brotherly and attentive companionship to the candidates on their journey. They should also offer religious solid nourishment, both doctrinal and practical, in keeping with each one's stage of formation; and progressively examine and evaluate the progress that is being made by those in their Charge, in light with the fruits of the spirit.¹⁰⁹

3.3 The Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB)

The bishops acknowledge the presence of many institutes of consecrated life in Kenya and recognize the role they play in the country. They emphasize on the integration in the both preparation and formation of candidates for religious life. Political education and dialogue should be fostered to adopt new attitudes because of the new challenges that emerge every day.¹¹⁰

The KCCB has recently observed that in the Kenyan society today, there is misconduct of preparing and forming candidates online. Recruitment is done without much scrutiny and screening as indicated in cann. 641-645. vocation promoters neglect the reference to the proper pastors and the small Christian communities of the candidate. As a result, the KCCB decreed that no formation on –

¹⁰⁸ Cf. The Contemplative Dimension of Religious Life, Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated life and Societies Of Apostolic Life, n. 20.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, n. 30.

¹¹⁰ Cf. KENYA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS, *Guidelines to Safeguard Some Aspects of Consecrated Life in Kenya*, Paulines Publications Africa, Nairobi 2014, p.5.

line shall be admissible in Kenya; and the institutes must draft the formation programmes to the particular diocesan Bishop of the place where the principle house is situated for supervision.¹¹¹

3.3.1 The Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya (AOSK)

The AOSK is the association of congregation of catholic religious women serving in Kenya. Their major aim is to come together as a united group to improve and promote spiritual and apostolic effectiveness through programmes, workshops and seminars. Their programmes target candidates and young religious through training of persons to live and work with others and create hope and future. The programmes provided at Chemichemi are about special preparation and training for holistic personal development, understanding of the discernment process of religious life and acquiring of skills of accompaniment and assessment of candidates.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Cf. KENYA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS, *Guidelines to Safeguard Some Aspects of Consecrated Life in Kenya*, Paulines Publications Africa, Nairobi 2014, p.14.

¹¹² Cf. T. GACHAMBI, (Compiler), *Story of Association of Sisterhoods of Kenya (AOSK). Fifty Years of Dedicated Service to Church and Society, 1962-2012*, Paulines Publications Africa, Nairobi 2012, p.13.

Conclusion

In this chapter, reference was made mainly to the institute of the OCD to stand for other religious institutes, to understand that; it is the duty of the religious superior to vigilantly prepare and admit suitable candidates to religious life. Both preparation and admission processes are very crucial in religious life though the researcher has discovered that it is also faced with some challenges that need close monitoring and consideration by both superiors and subjects alike.

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS ON AREAS TO IMPROVE TOWARDS FRUITFUL PREPARATION AND ADMISSION IN LINE WITH THE UNIVERSAL LAW

Introduction

The chapter recommends some helpful ways to encourage the comprehension of the mind of the legislator on preparation and admission of candidates to religious life. The study applied the findings in the OCD to represent other religious institutes. Some recommendations has come up which puts forward some supportive suggestions in response to common challenges of formation and admission of suitable candidates to religious life as exposed by the study.

4.1 How best those Responsible for Preparing and Admitting Candidates need to adapt to current changes in mentality to Religious life yet Remaining faithful to the Provisions of can. 642

The programmes should clarify motivations and remove the confusions and misunderstandings of Religious life right from admission and preparation level to ongoing formation. Candidates need to know the whole formation programme so that they can make informed decision and purify their intentions. Some candidates do not feel 'at home' in the religious community because much information about the institute is concealed from them. Candidates seem to have mixed up motives; some deserve to serve the poor, others desire to better themselves, while others come to search for work, security and personal comfort. Through the preparation

process, the motivation could change to faith in Jesus and the call or the desire to serve God's people.

Freedom of expression and setting of conducive environment for dialogue is very important. The current youths need not only to be seen but also to be listened to. It is good to know their opinions on some formation issues before coming up with decisions. The candidates need to have that personal conviction to why they should embrace religious life and not other status of life.

The directors should never be blind to technology. Instead of denying the candidates phones and laptops and other modern electronics, the candidates should be trained or formed on how to use them constructively. Most youths are active on social networks like whatsapp, facebook, twitter, instagram and many others. The social network can be the most convenient way of communicating to youths from different parts of the world and create awareness of the Carmelite spirituality if used constructively. Social networks can be used as a platform for sharing daily experiences and draw consolation and courage from diverse experience of other people. In most cases what is dominance on the social networks are secular things that may not benefit candidates spiritually. Spiritual inputs are needed in those social networks so that youths can also find nourishment from the word of God and influence the society positively.

Nepotism and Ethnicity should not kill the community spirit in religious houses. The recruitment process of candidates should reflect the face of cultural diversity. Regional balance should be maintained to enjoy the rich cultural diversity. Admission and preparation process should be based totally on merit and proficiency of the candidates for quality outcome. Various conflicts arise by the presence of people from many different cultures who come to stay in one community, trying to live together and work together. The candidates should be trained to authentically accept the difference and appreciate cultural diversity. However the efficacy of inculturation depends on the conversion of hearts, the supernatural motivation, and

the capacity to assimilate religious values. Generally the presence of religious should give witness to holiness that is expected so that candidates can emulate.

4.1.1 Competence of Superior

Governing authority in the church comes from the Holy Spirit (cf. *Cor* 12:28). It must be guided by his supreme gift of charity, for the sole purpose of promoting the growth and unity of Christ's Mystical Body according to the dictates of the Gospel. It is also paramount for the good of the order that superiors of every rank cultivate unity and harmony among themselves, in order to work together effectively for the common good.¹¹³ All must be kept adequately informed in matters concerning the life and activity of the Order, the province and the communities. It is the task of the superior to see that the educators draw up a suitable formation program. He is to urge them to implement it, and arrange that they meet to review the program and consider changes. All of this should be done with prudence in regard for the competence and independence of the master and his collaborators.¹¹⁴

It is essential that there should be a relationship of mutual trust and respect between superior and other formation personnel. The superior helps in this task of admission and preparation by giving them every affirmation and suggestion. They should not underestimate the role played by formation to the individual candidates, the institute and the church. They should therefore fulfill their duty faithfully and diligently by ensuring that the personnel in formation is selected to the best advantage and are carefully trained so that the institute has available members qualified for such noble task.¹¹⁵ They should prepare a better future of the institute

¹¹³ Cf. *Four Counsels* for Discalced Friars, from the holy Mother: The first thing is that the heads be united among themselves.

¹¹⁴ Cf. ORDER OF CARMELITES DISCALCED, *Ratio Institutionis*, 1992, n.84.

¹¹⁵ Cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, n.18.

by putting in place long lasting strategy that will perfect the preparation of candidates throughout.

4.1.2 Cautious Selection and Concrete Preparation of Vocation Directors and Formators

For the work of formation and admission of candidates to be effective, there is need to assign skilled directors who are both competent and proficient. Much investment should be in training these directors at all level of formation to enlighten and empower them as they perform their duties. Good planning and preparation motivates the directors to readily accept the responsibilities in the formation and to perform effectively. Since major superiors also exercise authority in the formation of members, certainly it is required even for them to be well placed in understanding the problems and challenges of formation.

Training should focus on all aspect of humanity like intellectual, spiritual, doctrinal and professional based on the mystery of Christ. The training should be in line with the demands of today's culture and as response to the signs of the times and peoples' needs with solicitude and courage, in full ecclesial communion.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Message to the XIV General Assembly of the Conference of Religious of Brazil, 11 July 1986, par. 4, in *L'osservatore Romano*, 1986, pp.2; 10, n.35.

4.1.3 Allocation of adequate Number of Formation Staff

The allocation of reasonable number of the staff helps to ease the work load and also facilitates objective and comprehensive assessment process since it doesn't become one person's affair but done as a team to avoid partiality and one sided evaluation reports. Directors of formation should not be overloaded with other responsibilities so that they may perform their duties successfully and in a fitting manner (cann 651, §3; 152).

4.1.4 Creation of Opportunities for Renewal Courses on Formation

Frequent refreshing of ideas and openness to new skills is very crucial, since it richly equips the directors to cope with daily challenges. The experience varies from time to time, and it is through sharing and creating avenues for refreshing courses that we can be updated and remain relevant to the current issues in modern society. Institutes must be dedicated to the formation personnel, provided with sufficient competent of personnel from within and outside the institute, including clergy and the laity who possess expertise in specific fields.¹¹⁷

4.1.5 Drawing a balanced, Integrated and Updated *Ratio Formationis*

This plan should stipulate a specific route and guideline to follow, based on the cultural context of the candidates. Surprisingly, some institutes continue to use the same formation programs that were used in pre-Vatican period without revising

¹¹⁷ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Message to the XIV General Assembly of the Conference of Religious of Brazil, nn. 12-13.

it. It should be gradual, coherent and accommodative with clear specific objectives to be realized without altering the spirituality and charism of the institute since the formation program must be inspired by the charism of the institute. It is in the formation where the charism is handed over effectively from one generation to the next.¹¹⁸ And again this *Ratio*, should never contradict the universal law and should always meet the purpose of bringing order and effectiveness in the admission and formation process. The program must be incessantly updated in order to ensure that, all process of formation are authentic and proportionate to the charism and daily experiences. It must be open, integrated and flexible to the human needs within specific cultural background in which an effective process of formation can only be realized.

4.1.6 Personalizing Formation

The call of Christ, which is the expression of the redemptive love, embraces the whole person, soul and body whether man or woman, is that person's unique and unrepeatable personal 'I'.¹¹⁹ Only this love which is nuptial character and engages all the affectivity of one's person, can motivate and support the privations and trials which one wishes "to lose his life" necessarily encounters for Christ and for the Gospel(cf. *Mk* 8: 35). This personal response is an integration part of the religious consecration.¹²⁰ The necessity of personal freedom and responsibility to sufficiently understand the obligation involved in the formation and be convinced of its need

¹¹⁸ Cf. IOANNES PAULUS PP. II, *Vita Consecrata*, n. 68.

¹¹⁹Cf. IOANNES PP. II, *Redemptionis Donum*, and n.3.

¹²⁰Cf. CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, n. 9.

and utilizing the formation opportunities and gain the disposure to action of the spirit.¹²¹ Every religious should constantly make every effort to re-examine on his/her life so that interiorize the values of religious life, and the role of life which is proposed to them by the director of formation, may find within themselves the justification for their practical choices, and find in the creator the spirit of their fundamentally dynamism.¹²² Right balance of integration must be struck between the individual and the community, between the respect for the time envisioned for each phase of formation and its adaptation to the rhythm of each individual.¹²³

4.1.7 Fidelity to Universal and Proper Law

The current Universal stipulates that, it is the duty of the Major superior to admit suitable candidates to religious life. This canonical provision (cann.641-643) firmly stipulates that the major superior should be vigilant to admit the candidates that have met all the requirements, those that are fit and ready to take up the responsibilities that come up with religious life.

The study has discovered that many aspects of the proper law of the OCD are faithful to the universal law. Both the *Ratio Institutionis* and the constitution are drawn in line the universal law, the challenge is on the part of implementation and application to our lives today. A sense of responsibility and obligation should motivate the institution and even members to remain loyal in application of universal, particular and proper law, for the well being of the whole mother church.

¹²¹ Cf. E. GAMBARI, *Renewal in Religious Life*, P. 259.

¹²² Cf. CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, n. 29.

¹²³ Cf. *Ibid.*, n.29.

Clear policies should be established to check the challenges that arise during formation, preparation, and admission of candidates to religious life. For instance, some of the challenges are as follows: un streamlined formation timetable; conflict in leadership roles and responsibilities; shortage of personnel and lack of trained or competent personnel; Lack of clear formation program (*Ratio Formationis*) Financial constraints and shortage of formation facilities; globalization and modernization. Both superiors and subjects are bound to respect and obey the supreme pontiff (can. 590) by being faithful to the church doctrines and observing the guidelines issued by the church's magisterium.

4.1.8 External Collaboration

Given the pressing need for competent personnel, universal law (can.680) exhorts institutes to adopt inter-institute collaboration and establish an organized cooperation between different institutes and the secular clergy. Major superior should make sure that this mutual enrichment for the benefit of the respective institutes and the church at large is materialized. As they collaborate to attain more fully the major aim of their particular institutes, the autonomy, nature and spirit of each institute should remain intact (can. 708). This collaboration is effected through permanent centres or periodic services with a purpose of ensuring the doctrinal and practical formation required by the specific mission of the respective institutes in accordance with their nature.¹²⁴

¹²⁴ Cf. CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, n. 99.

To avoid conflicts, these collaborative programmes should be suitably coordinated with the Episcopal conferences and individual bishops.¹²⁵ The ministry of the Bishop and that of a religious superior are not in competition. Certainly there exists an internal order of institutes which has its own sphere of competence for the upholding and growth of religious life and enjoy a true autonomy, but it is necessarily exercised within the framework of organic ecclesial communion.¹²⁶

4.1.9 Inculturation in Admission for Consecrated Life

The word “culture” in its general sense can indicate “all those factors by which man refines and unfolds the various spiritual and physical qualities that enable him to master his condition and his destiny”¹²⁷ If we want our religious to have an inculturated formation, first and foremost we must consider the candidate’s backgrounds because it by culture that a person becomes more human. Within the religious communities, there are diverse cultures that need a harmonious effort by all members to bridge the gap. The formation program should adopt essential cultural values like in African context we have: respect for life; the spirit of responsibility; solidarity and team work; sharing; faithfulness; reverence to authority; respect of other people’s property and the deep sense of belonging. It will therefore be good, in every region: to be attentive to the level of general culture of the candidates; to see how religious succeed in inculturating their own faith within the culture of their origins and to assist them to do so; to initiate religious who are living and working in

¹²⁵ Cf. *Christus Dominus*, 35; *Ad Gentes*, 33).

¹²⁶ Cf. CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, n. 94.

¹²⁷ Cf. *Gaudium Et Spes*, nn.53-62.

culture that is foreign to their own native culture into acknowledge and esteem for this culture, in keeping with the recommendations of the conciliar decree¹²⁸; to promote within the young Churches, in communion with all the members of the local Church, and under the guidance of its pastor, an inculturated religious life in keeping with the decree.¹²⁹

4.2 Prioritize Spiritual Formation and Renewal

A profound spiritual life makes strong foundation for the religious life as well as integration of religious values and therefore the entire religious life of the members should be permeated with an apostolic spirit and all their apostolic activity with a religious spirit (can.675). Authentic life of prayer in a person to be translated into apostolic action and extends charity to those in need. The motivation for sharing the Good News comes from contemplating it with love, lingering over its pages and reading it with the heart.¹³⁰ The religious ought to always find their meaning and place as religious, and the Lord as the center of their life (can. 663) because apostolic works by themselves are expressions of spiritual life.

In conformity with cann.662-664, the competent superiors should ensure that the proper law of institutes does not violate or confuse the role of spiritual directors and confessors. The spiritual formation is very crucial in discernment and making of mature decisions in religious life.

¹²⁸ Cf. *Ad Gentes*. 22.

¹²⁹ Cf. *Ad Gentes*, n. 18.

¹³⁰ Cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, n.264.

4.2.1 The Integrated Passage from postulancy to other level of formation

It is desirable that all religious during their lives, have access to spiritual guides or counselors in accord with their course on vocation promotion and recruitment and in ways adapted to their greater maturity and their actual circumstances.¹³¹ The institute must employ all means to ensure that the preparation correctly done and passed on to initial formation. The selection of Candidates to religious life should be wisely done and the intensive preparation embraced.¹³² Lack of adequate and intensive preparation and proper screening of candidates has negatively affected other level of formation. This is one of the reasons why cases of religious leaving shortly after the final profession are on the rise.¹³³

Conclusion

This chapter has suggested some of the recommendations to ensure that the process of admitting and preparing of candidates to religious life is diligently carried out. There is lack of balanced and integrated formation program with inadequate and less competence formation personnel. The disintegration between different phases of preparation and Lack of formation or renewal courses has also led to both spiritual and doctrinal stagnation.

¹³¹Cf . CONGREGATION FOR INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE AND SOCIETIES OF APOSTOLIC LIFE, *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, n. 71.

¹³² Cf. *Vita Consecrata*, nn.37, 64.

¹³³ Cf. A. PORTHUR, *Issues and Challenges in Religious Life*, p. 30.

To boost solid admission and formation of candidates to religious life, cautious screening should be done and proper balance should be embraced at all levels of admission and preparation. Training of personnel and assigning adequate personnel in formation communities is something that should be vigilantly looked at. Finally, fidelity to universal, particular and proper law of the institute should always be fostered by the superiors.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Before Second Vatican Council, the formation communities and system were functioning in a pyramidal system. The superiors always stayed at the top of things. Everything should be known to them from the Kitchen to the altar. The superiors took everything among themselves and hardly engaged their subjects on daily running of the community in general and formation in particular. There was little or no dialogue, no sharing of administrative and formation responsibilities. There was low opportunities to explore talents and initiatives. As a result, many religious grew up with little or no responsibilities and immaturity on handling challenges was on arise. After Vatican II, the circular system was recommended and the superiors animated the communities through dialogue and consultation. Personal responsibility was also emphasized and the community spirit was always encouraged. The four chapters of this thesis have treated the obligation and right of admission of suitable candidates to religious life in the light of can.642, with reference to the institute of the Order of Carmelites Discalced.

Chapter one has handled the principle sources of can.642, the development and the textual analysis. The text of the canon elaborated the principle considerations in all aspect of human formation as far as preparation for religious life is concerned. The text of the canon, has also defined the role of different level of authorities for effective preparation, admission and formation of candidates to religious life. The major observation is the development and understanding of the process of admission and formation of suitable candidates to religious life, which

was brought out clearly in the Vatican II documents and other post-conciliar sources of the canon.

In chapter two, we learn that, the admission and formation work was started by Christ himself which was later on, handed over to the apostles. Therefore the early church through the Monastic Rules, apologies by church fathers, the outcome of different General councils, directives from the Roman Curia and magisterium writings mainly from the Roman Pontiff contributed immensely especially on this crucial of admission and initial formation. Several documents were issued to cope with sign of time and address the challenges that erupted on daily basis.

In chapter three, the researcher has focused more on the study of the proper law of the OCD in the light of can. 642 and other supplementary documents of particular law have verified the essence and juridical importance in this process of recruiting and forming candidates for religious life. The major challenge is the unawareness of both universal and proper law by many religious, and misinterpretation and selectively quoting of codes in defence of an act or to justify some of the injustices that happens in religious houses. For better implementation and understanding, one should never focus on one canon and ignore other related canons or supplementary documents so long as they are in line with the universal law.

In the last chapter, the researcher focuses on the challenges and rapid developments in the current world, the topic on admission and preparation of candidates for religious life cannot be exhausted. As a matter of fact, the

recommendations given indicate that this thesis should be used as an opportunity for further research. It would be appropriate to carry out further research for instance, on the formation on vocation promoters and postulant directors.

The superiors have to provide the means and resources for effective formation. They should also remain loyal to the universal and proper laws and ensure that there is good collaborative working relationship with their local ordinaries. Given the swift development and vast technology in human arena, the discussion on admission, preparation, and formation of candidates to religious life, cannot be exhausted and therefore, it leaves room for more exploration and discovery.

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