

Archdiocese of Seoul Seminarian Formation and Direction

Newly Demanded for the Present

-Reform of and Prospects for Priestly Formation-



17 June 2016

Archdiocese of Seoul Major Seminary

Table of Contents

- I. Reestablishment of the Mission of the Church and Priest
 1. Mission-oriented Pastoral Ministry
 2. The Priest as a Missionary Disciple

- II. Direction of Vocation Development and Seminarian Formation
 1. Vocation Development and Promotion
 2. Direction of Seminarian Formation
 - 2.1. Character and Spiritual Training within a Community of Disciples
 - 2.2. Integrated Intellectual Training
 - 2.3. Open Pastoral Ministry Training that Meets the Needs of Contemporary Society
 - 2.4. Formation of Missionary Pastoral Ministers

- III. Method of Seminarian Formation
 1. Aspiring toward a Community of Disciples of Jesus
 2. Reform of the moratorium(missionary practicum) Program
 3. Invigoration of the Vacation Program
 - 3.1. Spiritual and English Experience Program
 - 3.2. Deacon Class Living Together with the Cardinal Archbishop in the Holy Land of Israel
 4. Priestly Formation Working in Solidarity with the Universal Church

- IV. Prospects for the Future

I. Reestablishment of the Mission of the Church and Priest

1. Mission-oriented Pastoral Ministry

The problem more urgently presenting itself today is how the Church will proclaim the Gospel of God to modern men and women experiencing intense human alienation in the material civilization of the 21ST century dominated by economism and scientism, hedonism and individualism, and how it will lead them to the joy of the Gospel.

As mentioned by Pope St. John Paul II in *Redemptoris Missio* (par. 40), missionary activity is the Church's greatest challenge and task.

In his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (par. 120), Pope Francis defined the Christian identity as "missionary disciple."¹⁾

The "Aparecida Document" issued by the Bishops Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean stressed that there is a need to integrate pastoral ministry and mission, and move to a "missionary pastoral ministry", changing direction from a "pastoral ministry center to a mission center" (par. 370).

Further, Pope Francis said in *Evangelii Gaudium* (par. 27) that he dreams of a "missionary option" capable of transforming everything. Here, missionary means that the Church is not content only within its own boundaries, but goes beyond its boundaries to the world outside the Church, advancing to the "frontiers" and proclaiming the Gospel. The Apostolic Exhortation says that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures must be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today's world

1) The Christian is a missionary disciple with regard to being a disciple following Jesus, and a missionary sent by him to proclaim the Gospel. Pope Francis affectively expresses the missionary disciple's sense of identity as follows. "I am a mission on this earth; that is the reason why I am here in this world." (Cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, par. 273.)

rather than for her self-preservation (*Evangelii Gaudium*, par. 27). It means the parish must become a place of fellowship and participation, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, a center of constant missionary activity through its unceasing self-renewal and adaptability (*Evangelii Gaudium*, par. 28).

2. The Priest as a Missionary Disciple

The priest is a pastoral minister (JN 21:16) taking care of the faithful within the community (*ad intra*), and at the same time, he is a missionary facing the world (*ad extra*) and proclaiming the Gospel. Just as *apostolos* means a person who is sent, the word *missionary* points to a person sent. The priest is one who carries out the missionary command of Jesus to “go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (MT 28:19-20), as his whole life’s work. The priest is a disciple of Jesus resolved to offer his whole life, even to martyrdom, in bearing witness to Jesus Christ (*Evangelii Gaudium*, par. 24).

Since the nature of the Church is in its missionary vocation like this, even the direction of priestly formation, emphasis must be put on the formation of “missionary disciples” and not only on formation of pastoral ministers. In *Pastoris Dabo Vobis* (cf., par. 43-59), St. John Paul II presented the four directions of human formation, spiritual formation, intellectual formation and pastoral formation as the tasks of priestly formation for the “new evangelization.” And he pointed out that all training must be accomplished under the pastoral objective (*Pastoris Dabo Vobis*, par. 57). Now adding

missionary formation to this, the priest must be formed as a “missionary disciple” who carries out the mission command of Jesus. Today, this is the new direction of priestly formation being presented in Pope Francis’ exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*.

II. Direction of Vocation Development and Seminarian Formation

1. Vocation Development and Promotion

More than anything else, the first task in which we must strive is vocation development and promotion while adopting as the direction of priestly formation “missionary disciples” for a new evangelization. The Archdiocese of Seoul still is enjoying the blessings of relatively many priestly vocations compared to many Churches of the world suffering from severe shortages of priests. This is because by the mercy and grace of God, the Archdiocese of Seoul has been systematically recruiting and promoting vocations centered on the Vocation Department.

At the level of vocation development and promotion, the Archdiocese of Seoul over time has been running a monthly preparatory seminarian gathering for those from first-year middle school students to men in general; in particular, since 2012 when the Dongsung High School was designated as an autonomous private high school, the Archdiocese has been recruiting and training a class of 35 preparatory seminarians every year. In March 2014, the Veritas dormitory of preparatory seminarians was built and is being operated; the Dongsung High School preparatory seminarian class is playing the role of kind of minor seminary.

For “missionary disciple” priestly formation, the efforts of parish priests are necessary to guide youth with paternal love and positively educate them about the preciousness and beauty of a vocation. Today, in the midst the crisis of secularization and population decrease, we must awaken to the fact “that all the members of the Church, without exception, have the grace and responsibility to look after vocations” (*Pastoris Dabo Vobis*, par. 41), and must strive for the development and promotion of priestly vocations at the level of the whole diocese.

2. Direction of Seminarian Formation

Besides the abovementioned four directions for priestly formation presented in *Pastoris Dabo Vobis* that meets the demands of modern society and the Church’s mission for a new evangelization, the Seoul major seminary has added the perspective of “missionary formation” and intends to guide the seminarians as follows.

2.1. Character and Spiritual Training within a Community of Disciples

Pastoris Dabo Vobis greatly emphasizes that human formation becomes the foundation for meeting Christ who embraced the human condition in full (par. 43). If human formation is not sufficiently realized in priestly formation, then the whole priestly formation process would become like a pot without a bottom (par. 43). The core of human formation is cultivating a merciful heart that empathizes with and participates in the suffering of another person, like Pope Francis said, “In front of human sorrow, you cannot be neutral.”²⁾ The goal of human formation is in cultivating autonomy

in planning and practicing one's life for oneself based on developing one's morality called conscience and sympathy, and on a healthy body and artistic sensitivity that seeks beauty.

More than anything, a priest is a person answering "yes" to Jesus who asked, "Do you love me?" (JN 20:15). He is a person who loves Jesus, abides in him and has his heart, and who is sent to testify to the encounter with the Lord that he has experienced. Thus, the priest meets Jesus in the word, and receives Jesus through the Eucharist. The Bible is the guidebook emulating the heart of Jesus that achieves union with the Father and the Spirit, and it is the book of life that experiences the Gospel of God. Also, this word reveals the power of salvation more than anything in the liturgy and community. The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed and it is the font from which all her power flows (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, par. 10). The community is the outstanding place to meet the Word of God made flesh, meaning that in God we meet our neighbor and in our neighbor we meet God.

The seminary's formation program has as its goal the formators and seminarians becoming one in God with prayer and liturgy as the center (cf. JN 17:21). All members of the community aim for human and spiritual growth through the life of the community of missionary disciples who listen to, keep and share the Word of God.

2.2. Integrated Intellectual Training

Pastoris Dabo Vobis accurately points out the universal tendency of humans even today who want to seek God and have a lively and meaningful relationship with him (par. 6). However, the world does

2) Pope Francis said this on August 18, 2014, during his in-flight press interview on his way home after he finished his visit to Korea.

not carry this out necessarily in the name of religion. Christian values and ideas are becoming anonymous and dissolving within the culture. In modern society, the tendency is becoming stronger for religious values to become separated from religion and be absorbed in the political, social and cultural matrix. Thus there is a need for modern day priests to acquire the wisdom to promote the Gospel values hidden in the culture, and to courageously fight against the anti-life elements leading to a culture of death. For this, the Seoul major seminary must help seminarians to develop the ability to synthesize the content of different theological disciplines with other studies by the interdisciplinary dialogue method as pointed out in *Pastoris Dabo Vobis* (par. 54). To this end, we are recommending running seminars or lectures that enable mutual dialogue and discussion, while theologically understanding and synthesizing various fields of study.

Therefore, contemporary seminary training must help to cultivate the ability, based on faith experience, to understand integratively within God and dialogue with theology and the humanities, natural science, other denominations and religions, and all human ethical, artistic and intellectual activity seeking truth, goodness and beauty (cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, par. 243).

2.3. Open Pastoral Ministry Training that Meets the Needs of Contemporary Society

Generally using their vacations, all seminarians participate in the Sunday school, young adults group activity and volunteer activity in their parishes. We are guiding the seminarians through vacation programs or moratoria, seminars and special lectures to have pastoral concern, even outside of parish pastoral ministry, in various areas such as pastoral ministry with youth, the elderly, in the

workplace, in hospitals, etc.

However, whatever the pastoral area in which one is engaged, the priestly function commonly demanded today is sincerely preparing and giving good homilies. In reality though it is a short time, the homily is the place of opportunity for meeting the faithful most intensely by Gospel proclamation synthesizing the priests' faith experience and prophetic outlook, pastoral love and evangelical morality, etc. Through the homily, the faithful receive the joy of faith and consolation, and learn the attitude of the right living. Thus, in *Evangelii Gaudium* (par. 111-175), Pope Francis explained in great detail about the importance of the homily and its preparation. Therefore, the seminary must impress on the seminarians the importance of the homily, and strengthen the training for good homilies.

During their vacations or moratoria, seminarians have diverse pastoral training and in this process, they must strive to acquire the attitude of dialogue and an open heart working as a joint pastoral minister together with religious and lay faithful.

2.4. Formation of Missionary Pastoral Ministers

The Church in Korea is taking responsibility for "northern-facing mission", with mission to North Korea and China as the targets. North Korea research and pastoral concern, and mission for North Korean refugees in South Korea are demanded for mission to North Korea. Also, the Archdiocese of Seoul has been striving consistently for priestly formation for North Korea mission through the "Onggi Scholarship Foundation" for vocation prospects with an interest in mission in North Korea.

In addition, the Cardinal Archbishop established the “Redemptoris Mater International Missionary Theologate” through a decree of September 21, 2014, and to the present, we are educating ten (10) foreign seminarians in the Seoul major seminary (College of Theology, The Catholic University of Korea) and forming them as “missionary disciples”, especially for mission to Asia and North Korea.

Presently, at the end of 2015, the Church in Korea is sending 952 missionaries (excluding pastoral ministry to Koreans overseas) to 74 countries on 6 continents. The 200 priests among the missionaries account for 21% of all the missionaries.³⁾ The reason the numbers of diocesan priests volunteering for overseas mission are not increasing much is because the priests’ consciousness about overseas mission is deficient, and they are satisfied with domestic pastoral work and mission. Priests who have experienced overseas mission point out that “from the seminary you must teach the importance and necessity of overseas mission with much greater weight if you want to invigorate overseas mission,” and, “the will of the Diocesan Ordinary is necessary regarding overseas mission.” The overseas mission experience of seminarians plays an important role in their choosing the path of “*fidei donum* missionary” when they become priests in the future. Those priests sent as *fidei donum* missionaries are mainly those who had overseas mission experience as seminarians. The moratorium(missionary practicum) and vacation periods may be utilized as precious opportunities for overseas and domestic mission experience.

3) Among the 99 diocesan priests sent for mission overseas, the Archdioceses of Seoul and Taegu have the most with 15 each, followed by the Dioceses of Taejeon (14), Suweon (14) and Eui-Jeong-Bu (13). Currently at the end of 2015, the percentage of overseas missionary priests stops at 2.4% since there are 4,190 diocesan priests nation-wide. The society called “mission group” was established in 2009 in the Seoul major seminary and is preparing members to volunteer as *fidei donum* missionaries when they become priests someday.

III. Method of Seminarian Formation

1. Aspiring toward a Community of Disciples of Jesus

Since 1991, the Seoul major seminary has been divided into 5 small communities (Yang-Eop Center, Dae-Geon East Center, Tae-Geon West Center, Gang-Hak Center, Su-Deok Center) and it has aspired toward an evangelical life overflowing with fraternal love in community. In each center an autonomous council is operating centered around the director of the community, formation advisors and spiritual directors, and it has the system of an independent small theologate.

1) **For liturgical formation**, daily Eucharist is celebrated by each center, and we guide the seminarians to express praise appropriate to the feelings of young people by singing CCM (Contemporary Christian Music) to the accompaniment of a band more than once a week. We are practicing liturgy that meets the pastoral needs of this generation and the tradition of the Church by each community offering Mass and Divine Office in English at least once a week, and once per month offering a Latin Mass in the large church.

2) **To cultivate a spirit of service**, we are emphasizing a life of service, sharing one's time and talents for the community through each center or top autonomous council acting voluntarily and various service activities within the campus. On the whole, roughly 40% of the seminarians are practicing love by using their weekends to serve voluntarily in study rooms or social welfare facilities.

3) **For training in the seminary's 3S virtues (Sanctitas, Scientia, Sanitas)**, we are encouraging seminarians to familiarize themselves with physical training and diverse ball games. In particular, we are carrying out a program of "1 person, 1 game" every Wednesday afternoon in which first- and second-year students living their spiritual year in Yang-Eop Center are obliged learn one event from physical education professionals.

4) **For cultural formation**, we are promoting participation in a variety of cultural activities (music, art, drama and exercise clubs), scholarly activities (academic clubs) and cultural events (plays, concerts) that develop cultural sensitivity necessary for young people of this generation.

5) **To inspire gratitude and a sense of responsibility for nature**, we are implementing taking care of flower beds, growing vegetables and regularly cleaning the outer edges of the campus by community. In this way, we are taking care so that the seminarians feel the precious value of manual labor, give praise to God in nature and foster a sense of cosmic fellowship (*Laudato Si'*, par. 89) that preserves the environment.

6) **For an evangelical small community more than anything**, we are aiming to form evangelical communities of disciples sharing fellowship every week through "living group" gatherings, and implementing "word and life sharing" once every 2 weeks in which the director priest participates. We are guiding the seminarians to examine their lives as disciples every day through writing a Gospel diary, examination of conscience and prayer looking back at their seminarian lives.

7) **To have a heart open to the world**, we carry out diverse pastoral programs for each grade level during vacation, and we are recommending programs like language study in Europe, visiting overseas cultural sites, international volunteer groups, learning communities, visiting Mt. Baekdu for the class of undergraduate seniors, etc.

8) **For the spiritual training of the seminarians**, we are guiding them to examine their own dispositions and experience God in prayer by implementing a 8-day retreat for 5TH year students during their summer vacation, and the 30-day Spiritual Exercises retreat during their winter vacation.

9) **For the spiritual growth of the seminarians**, priest spiritual directors meet with them regularly, and on Saturday mornings, they attend a spiritual lecture. And for those seminarians who have psychological problems, we invite a professional psychological counsellor as necessary, and offer opportunities for individual counselling with the seminarians.

2. Reform of the Moratorium(missionary practicum)⁴⁾ Program

The “**moratorium (missionary practicum)**” is a formation program implemented in most seminaries following the “Korean Priestly Formation Guidelines” (Chapter 10, art. 39, par. 4) published by the Catholic Bishops Conference of Korea. For a set period of time

4) Moratorium is a word originally meaning delay, postpone, or a grace period. It is preferable to write “moratorium (missionary practicum)” in order to correctly express the goal of training missionary disciples through the moratorium. The phrase “on-site experience” used in the Korean Priestly Formation Guidebook refers to the broad course of time that includes even military service. However, in the Seoul Archdiocese Seminarian Formation Guidebook, “moratorium (missionary practicum)” points only to the one-year period from the end of one’s military service until returning to the seminary for third-year studies.

including their military service, seminarians receive human maturity and pastoral minister formation while doing the “moratorium (on-site experience).”

In accord with the will of the Cardinal Archbishop, the Bishops Council of the Archdiocese of Seoul (July 1, 2015) decided to operate a mission-centered moratorium program not only for students of the “original class” who finished second theology and their military service, but to expand it to apply to even students of the “particular class” who already finished their military service, then entered the seminary and finished second theology. The previous moratorium program consisted mainly of on-site practical training at domestic Church institutions and social welfare facilities; opportunities for overseas mission experience were given to a limited few students only.

Since 2016, however, all seminarians of the Archdiocese of Seoul who have finished second theology are sent to overseas mission areas for at least 6 months (in certain cases, 9 months) where they study language for 3 months, then live for the remaining time with missionary priests (diocesan missionary priests from the Seoul and Uijeongbu Dioceses, and missionary priests from the Korean Mission Society, Maryknoll Foreign Mission Society, Columban Mission Society, Guadalupe Mission Society and Paris Foreign Mission Society) and come to have a mission experience. And for the rest of the time, they have on-site experience at domestic Church institutions and social welfare facilities.

From the beginning of March of this year, 24 seminarians of the Seoul Archdiocese were sent to mission areas they selected themselves (Japan 4, China 2, Hong Kong 4, Philippines 2, India 2, Papua New Guinea 2, Argentina 5, Peru 1, Guatemala 2) and are

having mission practice for between 6 and 9 months.

This way, all seminarians (original class and particular class) who have finished their second theology courses and military service are sent to a country of their choice in Asia, Central- and South America or Africa, basically spend 6 months (March to August) experiencing mission, and for the remaining 4 months (September to December) volunteering in domestic Church institutions and social welfare facilities. Seminarians who have finished this process, end the moratorium(missionary practicum) program with a retreat in January of the following year through which they share their experience of the last year, then organize themselves and prepare to return to the seminary to begin third theology.

3. Invigoration of the Vacation Program

Before their ordination to priesthood, the seminarians generally are given 14 vacations. Most seminarians take opportunities for pastoral practice related to youth ministry in their parishes, but in missionary disciple formation, there is a need to educate them using part of the vacation positively for a more diverse experience and language acquisition. The Seoul major seminary plans to institute the following two programs in accord with the Cardinal Archbishop's guidelines to enable the seminarians to receive needed education in formation using part of their vacations.

3.1. Spiritual and English Experience Program : SEE

The intent of the SEE program is to provide a living environment in English and supplement the "spiritual year" that in the reality of Korea cannot be done before one enters the seminary.

The applicable subjects of the SEE program are first theology students who use 4 weeks in each of their first-year summer (July) and winter (January) vacations to live at the seminary while strengthening their spirituality and developing their English communication capabilities. Students in second theology are sent to an English-speaking Church in Asia (Philippines, Malaysia, India, etc.) for on-site experience during their summer vacation, and during their winter vacation, they enter the military (original class) or prepare for the moratorium(missionary practicum) (particular class).

The purpose of the SEE program applicable to first theology students from 2016 is to adapt 4 weeks each of their July and January vacations to the theologate schedule enabling them to increase their English communicative skills and cultivate their human, intellectual and spiritual abilities through prayer and keeping grand silence, praying the Divine Office and Eucharist in English, English classes, reading English books and discussing them, English conversation during meals, exercise and community living.

- **The spiritual training** of the first-year SEE program is achieved through the spiritual direction of the spiritual director priest, spiritual reading, grand silence and prayer, and liturgy.
- **The human training** of the first-year SEE program is carried out through community living with the rector, the director of Yang-Eop Center, the director of the spiritual year and the general manager taking turns being with the seminarians in liturgy and meals, and living, group sharing and exercising as companions, etc.
- **The English training** of the first-year SEE program is implemented at the seminary as we invite native-speaker professors from the Sacred Heart campus.

- A foreign missionary priest is in charge of **the English Mass and homily** of the first-year SEE program, and according to need, a priest of the seminary participates.
- **The mission education** of the first-year SEE program will have the students study mission spirituality and mission experience through the special lectures of a foreign missionary.
- **On the weekends** of the first-year SEE program, students go either to their parish or their home for pastoral practice and rest from Friday afternoon until Sunday evening.

The purpose of the SEE program applicable to second theology students from 2017 is to help the seminarians experience evangelical poverty and mission spirituality by being sent for one month during July to an English-speaking Church site in Asia (Church institution or social welfare facility, etc.) and doing volunteer work.

3.2. Deacon Class Living Together with the Cardinal Archbishop in the Holy Land of Israel

Every year since 2010, the deacon class of the Seoul major seminary (including the Uijeongbu Diocese and religious institutes) has gone on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land of Israel for about 10 days at the end of November. On June 3, 2016, World Priest Day, the Cardinal Archbishop declared that beginning next year, he would live with the deacons of the Archdiocese of Seoul in Domus Galilaeae International Center located in Galilee, for 4 weeks in July (July 3-29).⁵⁾ The purpose of the “Deacon Class Living together with the Cardinal Archbishop in the Holy Land of Israel” program is to share the vision of diocesan missionary pastoral ministers and fellowship through pilgrimage, communal prayer and scripture study, and much

⁵⁾ In 2017, the pilgrimage to Israel's holy land of the deacon class will not be carried out due to security problems caused by the civil war in Syria.

dialogue between the Cardinal Archbishop and the deacons. The deacons of the Seoul Archdiocese have received an invitation to have a foundational experience that will enable them to live their whole lives as “missionary disciple” priests of Christ, belonging completely to Christ, as they walk along the shores of the Sea of Galilee with Jesus who asked Peter three times, “Do you love me?” (JN 21:15), and who entrusted to him the responsibility to care for his sheep.

4. Priestly Formation Working in Solidarity with the Universal Church

Today’s global village is closely connected and moving within a global network. For 2000 years, the Catholic Church has walked a global or international road by positive missionary activity going out from Jerusalem to Rome. There is a need for the Seoul major seminary, also, to form priests working in the universal Church in solidarity with the universal Church.

1) The Seoul major seminary is striving through the Pastoral Research Center and the Society of Theology and Thought⁶⁾ to publish academic journals, host regular academic symposia, and help in theological development and the seminarians’ pursuit of theological studies. And the Seoul major seminary has published the academic journals *Catholic Theology and Thought* and *Pastoral Research* since 1989 and 1994 respectively.

2) The Seoul major seminary is hosting international symposia regularly and arranging a place for theologians from Asia and the

6) The Seoul major seminary professors becoming the key people and the Society of Theology and Thought was founded in April 2007; it is doing scholarly activity receiving the personnel and material support of the seminary, and general sponsorship.

other continents to discuss theology, and it is promoting the development of Asian theology, and Catholic theology and thought. Also, the *Catholic Theology and Thought* journal sponsored by the Seoul major seminary and overseen by the Society of Theology and Thought has been published in English since 2015, and we are striving to contribute to the development of Catholic theology through this international scholarly journal.

3) By establishing an English theological lecture each semester since 2014 and inviting English-speaking theology professors, the Seoul major seminary has been taking care so that the seminarians can receive international theological education.

4) The Seoul major seminary established language courses in English, the first foreign language, but also in French, German, Italian, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese (scheduled to begin next year) as a second foreign language, and is granting opportunities for many seminarians to achieve an intermediate level or higher in a second foreign language. We are expecting them to achieve substantial skill in a second foreign language by the time they are ordained priests if from third theology until their deacon year, they constantly study the second foreign language they learned during the moratorium(missionary practicum) implemented after they finished second theology.

5) Since 1999, the Seoul major seminary has invited 4 seminarians from China, 2 from Bangladesh and 1 from Vietnam and formed them as priests; even at present, we are forming 10 seminarians from the Church in Asia (Vietnam 4; China 4; Myanmar 2).

6) From 2017, the Seoul major seminary (College of Theology, The

Catholic University of Korea) will implement a Bachelor of Sacred Theology (STB) degree course recognized by the Vatican Congregation of Catholic Education. The Seoul major seminary must become a college not only for domestic seminarians but even for the increasing foreign students from which to receive degrees granted by the Vatican. The Catholic University College of Theology wants to develop into a more responsible theological education institution receiving official approval from the Church by carrying out the curriculum demanded by the Congregation of Catholic Education even as it maintains its current status of receiving approval from the state.

Also, we plan to establish a Master's degree curriculum in Canon Law in the Catholic University School of Law. Aggregated to the Graduate School of Canon Law of the University of Santo Tomas in the Philippines and receiving accreditation from the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, we are preparing to receive new students from the first semester of the 2017 academic year to confer the Master's degree in Canon Law (JCL).

In this way, the Seoul major seminary will continue to provide open education opportunities for seminarians from the Archdiocese of Seoul and the Diocese of Uijeongbu to be formed as priests who know how to work in solidarity with the universal Church, and who have an international sense having lived and studied together with seminarians of diverse nationalities belonging to the Redemptoris Mater International Missionary Theologate.

IV. Prospects for the Future

Centered around the Cardinal Archbishop, the Archdiocese of

Seoul is training seminarians so that they will properly carry out the duties of missionary disciples in these chaotic times; this is the aim of the SEE program newly introduced this year, the aim of implementing an expanded moratorium(missionary practicum) that is the center of the mission experience program, and effective from next year, the aim of the program of the deacon class living together with the Cardinal Archbishop in the Holy Land of Israel.

1. These programs have as their fundamental purpose missionary activity as diocesan priests with the parish as the center. “The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God’s word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration.” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, par. 28)

2. However, future pastoral ministry must aim at “going out mission” (MK 1:38) that, like Jesus who sought the Samaritan woman (JN 4), goes and seeks out those who thirst for truth and life, and that does not remain just as a “waiting pastoral ministry” that sits in the parish. For that, today’s seminarian formation must guide so that they become enterprising missionary pastoral ministers doing pastoral ministry centered around the local community and on-site locations in the diverse fields (the socially weak like youth, elderly, laborers, the sick, the retired, North Korean refugees, foreigners, etc.) within the diocese.

There are diverse subjects in the “going out mission” and Pope Francis especially emphasized the social dimension of mission.⁷⁾ Mission pastoral ministry, the center of diverse on-site forms of pastoral ministry being carried out in the Archdiocese of Seoul (e.g., in social pastoral, mission parishes, schools, hospitals, with migrants, North Korean refugees, in the workplace, in cyberspace, in suicide

7) *Evangelii Gaudium*, par. 176-258.

prevention and various addiction treatment programs, etc.), must be researched and developed more by each field.

3. Among various “missionary options”, one of the necessary things for the Archdiocese of Seoul today is overseas mission. Missionary activity of *fidei donum* priests is an appropriate vocation for those priests wanting to be in solidarity and work with the universal Church, and at the same time, it is also a task being demanded in the reality of the Archdiocese of Seoul.⁸⁾ The new series of programs the Seoul major seminary is introducing from this year will help the seminarians acquire the necessary languages for mission, and instill a vocation consciousness of serving for the universal Church when they become a priest in the future.

4. Pope Pius XII published the encyclical *Fidei Donum* in April 1957 and actively encouraged the *fidei donum* missionary system of sending priests to other dioceses where there was a shortage of priests, having them do missionary work for a certain period of time, and then having them return to their home dioceses. Thus, many *fidei donum* missionaries have been sent and are working worldwide. There are 15 priests even from the Archdiocese of Seoul who have been sent to various countries (France, Spain, Japan, China, Taiwan, Australia, Tanzania, Guatemala, Peru) and who are living rewarding missionary lives.

8) Including the seminarians of the P’yeong-Yang Diocese and the Redemptoris Mater International Theologate, the number of seminarians reaches 36, and about 25 of these, or 70% in the most recent statistics, are anticipated to receive priestly ordination in 10 years from now. The number of vocation prospects participating in the vocation gathering run by the Vocations Department is about 800, from first-year middle school to college graduates. If the current number of entrants continues for the next 10 years, the Archdiocese of Seoul will increase by about 500 priests in 20 years from now. Even if we assume that the number of retired priests reaches 300 priests during this time, we expect the number of active priests to reach more than 1,000. On the contrary, it appears that the possibility of the present number of 229 parishes of the Archdiocese of Seoul increasing significantly in the future is not large.

5. In February 2014, the Cardinal Archbishop created the Overseas Mission Service Department that is promoting the sending of *fidei donum* missionaries, but as yet, there are few applicants.⁹⁾ It is understood that they are unable to readily apply perhaps because of fear about and unfamiliarity with language and living in a foreign country.

6. In the future, however, it will be more necessary for more priests of the Archdiocese of Seoul to voluntarily apply as *fidei donum* missionaries, finish doing mission work overseas for a certain period of time, and return to the archdiocese. The sending of *fidei donum* missionaries will have the following positive effects on the Church and the priests themselves.

First, God has given the Church in Korea many vocations, and especially the Archdiocese of Seoul sending priests to areas with priest shortages is a method of being in solidarity with the universal Church and the most certain method of evangelical sharing.

Second, sending *fidei donum* missionaries will help the local Church, and for the individual, will be an opportunity of precious experience strengthening consciousness of his priestly identity through his individual hard work and dedication; after he returns to his diocese, it will cause a “cycle of good” giving much help to the diocese.

Third, the *fidei donum* priest’s evangelical life will contribute to an increase in vocations while arousing great stimulation and challenge to young people thirsting for authentic happiness who are intimidated and stricken by the life of fierce struggle for existence.

9) Presently, there are 14 priests registered on the list for the meeting of applicants priests.

7. Like this, the Seoul major seminary intends to introduce from this year the abovementioned new programs based on the traditional program and train seminarians. In conclusion, the Archdiocese of Seoul major seminary intends to train seminarians so that following the diverse demands of the Archdiocese of Seoul and the universal Church, they can be sent to necessary places and proclaim the Gospel, and become “missionary disciple” priests of Jesus able to lead faith communities.

2016. 6. 17.

Rev. Baik woonchul

Rector

Archdiocese of Seoul Major Seminary