



The Fourth Week of Training of Formators in Nairobi, Kenya

NAIROBI, Kenya - The fourth and final week of training of formators was animated by Fr. Marco PASINATO, SMM, the new Vicar General of the Company of Mary. The theme was focused on the Montfortian Ratio Formationis, volume II. With our facilitator, we tried to dissect in an explicit way what the Ratio says about each level of formation in Montfortian life. Before addressing it, it is good to note that this last week was marked by the arrival of the three Superiors of the entities for a meeting between Anglo-Francophone Africa and Madagascar.

The first level is vocational animation (Ratio II (56-75). Father Marco mentioned the main challenge of this stage, which is to “KNOW” the person. He set out the three roles of those in charge: raising awareness-animating-challenging. Based on the Ratio II, no. 57, he underlined that this animation is not intended for recruitment or publication but to help the young person to find his true vocation and to identify the call of God in his life.

The second level is the Pre-novitiate (Ratio 76-95). The facilitator underlined the key word in this step: “DISCERN”. He said that the purpose of the Pre-novitiate is to have mature freedom for the candidate to be able to give himself totally and voluntarily. He also mentioned the role of the formator: testing-encouraging-reinforcing this maturity.

The third level is the Novitiate (Ratio II 96-113; 277-292). It consists of “INITIATION”. Father Marco mentioned that the Novitiate is the typical experience of following Christ in the spiritual growth of a missionary disciple without forgetting the continuity of this growth after the Novitiate.

The fourth level is the temporary vows (Ratio II 114;...; 321). The specific word in this stage is “CONSOLIDATION”. That is to say, to help the young religious to personally build a plan for a personal and community program. The formator's role is to identify their needs in each dimension and to take joint responsibility in the use of common goods and in the management of money. Father Marco ended with the procedure for admission to perpetual profession.

The fifth level is ongoing formation (Ratio II 143;...; 332). “RENEWING” is the key word in this stage as emphasized by Father Marco. What must accompany the person is the life of virtues. He underlined the importance of having a guide for the young priest in order to avoid falling into activism or dispersion. The administration of the ongoing formation according to the different age groups has completed this level.

The sixth level is the formation of superiors and formators (Ratio II, 178). “UPDATING” is the key word in this last level. For the superior, there is the update of the exercises of ministry, leadership, formation at the level of the person and the economy. For formators, this formation manifests itself in three aspects: at the general level, at the local level and at the personal level. In short, the goal of all this continuity of formation is maturity at the age of Christ, which seems never to be achieved.

This four-day session was followed by a two-day spiritual retreat which was presided over by Father Marco and ended with the Holy Mass on Saturday morning of July 29, 2023.

A big thank you to Almighty God, a big thank you for the availability of the speaker, Father Marco PASINATO, SMM and to all the participants. Good job!

To Jesus through Mary!

Fr. Henri Samuel NILAINA, SMM