



DE LA SALLE ANZPPNG

Becoming a Brother

CHAPTER 6

THE FORMATION OF THE BROTHERS

BECOMING A BROTHER, A LIFELONG PROCESS

Growth in faith and accompaniment

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| <p>CL 7, 169
CL 8, 28-29</p> | <p>78</p> | <p>Welcoming the will of God in his regard, John Baptist de la Salle transformed his entire life “from commitment to commitment” and through a succession of calls and failures, into a process of constant growth in faith. To enable his Brothers also to grow in their vocation and to make their mission to young people bear fruit, he provided for them accompaniment of quality.</p> |
| <p>LK 4,16-17
VC 82
CL 7,222;
325s</p> | <p>79</p> | <p>Following Jesus and the example of their Founder, the Brothers see their personal, community, intellectual and spiritual development as a progressive conversion to the God of the poor.</p> |
| <p>Mt. 4,18-22
Lk.19,1-10
Jn. 4,1-42
PC 18
VC 17
DFRI8-9</p> | <p>80</p> | <p>Every vocation originated in the mystery of a personal meeting with God whose calls elicit free responses. By faith, the Brother recognises that his life is a dialogue with God, which enables him to grow continuously in fidelity. He discovers in this way the daily presence of the living God in his mission, his consecration and his community.</p> |
| | <p>VC67</p> | <p>80.1 Personal and community accompaniment help each Brother to integrate the constitutive elements of his vocation. This accompaniment requires particular attention to be given to the various processes which lead to his affective, intellectual, moral and religious maturity.</p> |
| | <p>Can.661
VC 71
DFRI 29
DFRI 67</p> | <p>80.2 Responsibility for a Brother's formation lies first and foremost with the Brother himself. He is invited to draw up a personal formation programme to help him live out his vocation more fully. This continuing formation includes all dimensions of his life.</p> |
| <p>FLC 43
DFRI 26</p> | <p>81</p> | <p>Brought together by God for the educational service of young people, and especially of the poor, the community, a forum for dialogue and a home, is the context, the recipient and the agent of the formation of the Brothers. In the community, the Brothers help one another to grow humanly and spiritually. By this process of association, they fulfil their vocation and deepen their sense of belonging to the Institute.</p> |
| | <p>81.1</p> | <p>The community draws up an effective and continuing plan for its own formation. It evaluates it as part of its annual community programme.</p> |
| | <p>81.2</p> | <p>The District is responsible for the formation of all the Brothers at the various stages of their life.</p> |

The responsibility of the Institute for the formation of the Brother

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| Can.659
Can.661
Starting afresh
from Christ 15 | 82 | The Superiors and the communities provide each Brother with the necessary living conditions and means to pursue his spiritual, theological and catechetical formation, and to maintain his professional skills at the required level. |
| Can. 659
DRFI 70 | 82.1 | In order to respond to the needs of the Brothers, those responsible for Regions and Districts draw up appropriate personal renewal programmes intended especially for Brothers of a mature age. For those approaching retirement, they offer opportunities to renew themselves and to acquire new skills. |
| DRFI 29 | 83 | Throughout their life, and particularly during the decisive first years following their perpetual profession, Brothers grow in their vocation by being responsible for their own continuing formation. |
| | 83.1 | The Superiors take the necessary means to ensure that qualified and competent Brothers take charge of continuing formation programmes. |
| | 83.2 | Those responsible evaluate periodically the formation programmes and plans organized in communities in their jurisdiction, as well as the actual participation of each Brother in this renewal. |
| | 83.3 | Anxious to provide Brothers with the spiritual help they need, those in charge of the District give much thought to providing formation intended specifically for Brother Directors and for those who are more involved in personal accompaniment. |
| | 83.4 | Brother Superior General and his Council make sure they promote continuing formation programmes in the Institute, intended in particular for the training of formation personnel. They ensure that even Districts with fewer human and financial resources can participate also in renewal programmes organised in the Institute. |
| | 83.5 | As a service specific to the Centre of the Institute, the International Lasallian Centre {C.I.L.} aims to contribute to the living unity and the revitalisation of the Institute in the various cultures of the world. It promotes the spiritual renewal of the Brothers who take part in it and helps to prepare those who will be called to fill leadership positions in the Institute. |
| VC 71
ICF 7-8 | 83.6 | The Centre of the Institute promotes and organises research projects on the person of the Founder and his thought, the development over the years of the work he started, and the educational practice and spirituality of the contemporary Institute. It provides financial help for this research and for the translation and diffusion of the Lasallian message. |
| ICF 8 | 83.7 | The Brothers take advantage of the formation programmes organised by the local church or other institutions. |

The Pastoral Ministry of Vocations

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| Mt 9,37-38
Rm 12 4-5
LG CH 5
Can. 233 S1 | 84 | The entire People of God is responsible for awakening vocations in the Church. The Brothers make their Lasallian charism known, and show the importance and specificity of their vocation. They show they are willing and ready as |
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- GC 44 CH 5 intermediaries of the Lord to invite and accompany young people and adults who feel called to the various Lasallian vocations.
- GC 44 CH.5 84.1 Each Brothers' community examines the quality of its witness to the Gospel and its ability to awaken, welcome and accompany new vocations. Likewise, the whole educational and Christian community undertakes to promote vocations.
- GC 44 CH.5 84.2 The pastoral ministry of vocations normally depends on the educational values of the establishments and movements that young people and adults belong to. The promotion of a culture which takes vocations into account makes individuals aware of their gifts and invites them to put them at the service of others.
- 84.3 First-hand experience of the poor through voluntary service, and living and working with them; offers young people the opportunity to understand the value of a vocation and the service of others.
- Mt 9,37
Med 207,3 85 The words of Christ "Ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest" lead the Brothers to consider prayer as a fundamental aspect of setting up and developing a pastoral ministry of vocations.
- The recommendation of the Founder "Pray to him that he will be pleased to make your Institute grow and bear fruit day by day" stimulates the Brothers to organise prayers for vocations in community and in their establishments, and among parents of pupils, teachers, and friends and among the young people themselves.
- Jn 1,39
Heb. 13, 1-2
Can.673 86 For a pastoral ministry of vocations to become an effective invitation to share the life of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, it is necessary:
- That by their own lives, the Brothers witness to the presence of God among people, to the liberating force of his Spirit, and to the tenderness of his love;
 - That communities which make a point of being open and welcoming, put into practice, in a fraternal and apostolic way, the words of the Gospel "Come and see";
 - That the Institute works effectively to renew itself by responding to the most urgent needs of the world of young people waiting to be evangelised.

INITIAL STAGES OF FORMATION

Admission and accompaniment of Vocations

- Can. 597
DFRI 2
D 15, 1 87 Those who come to the Institute to discern and to develop their vocation need to find points of reference and persons to accompany them. The formation of candidates therefore is one of the Institute's major concerns. In consultation with the centre of the Institute, each District or Region ensures that it draws up and implements a coherent formation programme for all the stages of introduction to the life of the Brother. This coherence ensures a correct balance between human development, spiritual initiation, studies and a first-hand experience of the life and ministry of the Brother.

- DFRI 30-34
D 14,2
- 88 All the Brothers, and in particular those responsible for formation, are careful, when dealing with candidates, to take into account their age, their culture, their social background, the level of their religious, intellectual and professional training, and their personal experience of the Church and of the Institute.
- 88.1 The Brother lives out his vocation in an international context. This makes it necessary for some stages of formation to take place at a regional level in programmes which cater for Brothers of different languages and cultures. Openness with regard to other cultures will also require the Brother to express the fundamental dimensions of his vocation in the context in which he will exercise his ministry.
- DFRI 6
- 89 When it accepts a candidate, the Institute commits itself to providing him with the means he needs to achieve his goal in life and to fulfil his vocation; and to assist him in his personal process of growth as a Christian and of his progressive incorporation into the Institute. The community life of the formation staff must be, by its quality, a sign of the authenticity of the religious life into which they are initiating the candidates, and an effective way to lead them to commit themselves to it. Candidates commit themselves to their formation with their gifts and their limits, and with a great openness to the Spirit.
- D 16-27
- 90 Initiation into the life of the Brother is a unified process which goes from the period of preparation before the novitiate to perpetual profession. Its aim is to help candidates acquire the spirit of faith and of zeal proper to the Institute, to meet Christ in their life and to follow him. It supports them as they mature and discern their personal vocation; and it prepares them to commit their entire life to a process of growth in the faith and of progressive integration into the Institute.
- Can 597
S2
DFRI 42
DFRI 51
- 90.1 The stages of formation take into account the different pace at which candidates progress. Each District ensures that the length of each of these stages is sufficient, and does not shorten it when urgent needs arise. Canon Law and the norms of the Institute, in particular those of the Guide for Formation guarantee the freedom and authenticity of the course of action followed by each candidate.
- Can
6601 S1
- 90.2 Study programmes for candidates should be drawn up with reference to programmes recognised by academic or ecclesiastical authorities. The purpose of these programmes is to provide the religious educator with the skills he needs. Theological, catechetical and pedagogical studies are an essential means to help the candidate or the young Brother consolidate the foundations of his faith and the skills required by his mission.
- 90.3 The personal interview plays an essential role in accompaniment and in evaluating the extent to which candidates have matured.

The Postulancy

- Can 597
DFRI 42
- 91 The postulancy is that stage in initial formation which precedes and prepares for entry into the novitiate. It provides the candidate with the means to pursue his growth in maturity, to enrich his faith, and to discern the authenticity of his vocation to the Brothers' life. It provides an opportunity for his decision to enter the novitiate to mature by allowing him to experience for the first time the Institute's religious community and apostolic life.

- 91.1 The postulancy has its own programme distinct from that of the novitiate. It takes place as far as possible in the cultural setting of the candidate.
- 91.2 Initiation into Christian life and instruction in it are the focus of special attention during the postulancy to enable postulants to deepen their life of faith.
- 91.3 First-hand experience of living and working in association for the educational service of the poor is an essential factor in the discernment of the postulant's vocation.

The Novitiate

- Can 646 92 The novitiate is the unique experience of initiation into the religious life of the Brother. With great respect for each candidate's pace, formation staff lead the novices to adopt progressively the fundamental spiritual attitude of a disciple of Saint John Baptist de La Salle: abandonment to God in the footsteps of Christ, for a community service of evangelisation and education accessible to everyone, but giving preference to the poor and young people.
- Can 646 92.1 In the case of an inter-District novitiate, the manner in which Brother Visitors exercise their authority will be stipulated in the relevant statutes.
- Can 641-645 93 To be validly admitted to the novitiate, the candidate must be seventeen years of age and be free of any canonical impediment. To be admitted licitly, he must satisfy the other conditions required by Canon Law. Admission to the novitiate falls within the competence of the Brother Visitor of the District in which the candidate requests to be admitted.
- Can 641 93.1 The candidate expresses his reasons for joining the Institute in writing and in discussions with those in charge. This written request is submitted to the Brother Visitor who makes a decision after consulting the District Council.
- Ordo prof. relig.1970 N 1-13 93.2 The beginning of the novitiate is marked by a special ceremony during which the candidate receives some symbols of his entry into the Institute, such as the religious habit, the Rule or the Bible. Such a ceremony is intended to highlight the determination of the candidate to follow Jesus Christ in his life as a Brother, as well as the welcome of a new member by the fraternal community of the Institute.
- Can 652 93.3 The novitiate programme should enable the novices to know themselves better, to understand better the contemporary world and Institute, and to adjust better to their own culture. The novice, therefore, undertakes:
1. to know the nature, the finality and the history of religious life;
 2. to situate the distinctive vocation of the Brother in salvation history and in the service of the Church, and in the complementarity of Lasallian vocations;

3. to begin to experience a more personal encounter with Jesus Christ;
4. to learn about prayer, asceticism and the apostolate, taking into account the contribution of the Bible, liturgy, catechetics, theology and pastoral ministry;
5. to know the Brothers' way of life by learning about the Institute and its mission, by studying Institute texts and in particular by assimilating the fundamental inspiration of Saint John Baptist de La Salle;
6. to develop a positive attitude towards different cultures, and to learn from the various experiences of the inculturation of the Gospel.

Ho 2,16 Can 652 D 16-27	93.4	To implement the aims of the novitiate an atmosphere is required which is conducive to recollection, to long periods devoted to prayer, reflection, and the assimilation of what has been taught; as well as a practical introduction to community life, and a reasonable amount of apostolic work. The novitiate provides opportunities for synthesis which help the novice to continue the process of integrating the constitutive dimensions of the Brothers' life.
Can 648 Can 650 Form V	93.5	Bearing in mind that the first vow of the Brothers is that of association for the educational service of the poor, novices are progressively offered the opportunity to engage in apostolic work, suited to their ability, and which is constantly evaluated with those accompanying them.
Can 650	93.6	Individual spiritual accompaniment is a fundamental part of initiation into the consecrated life. The Brother Director of novices explains the importance of spiritual direction. He has the primary responsibility for it, but this does not prevent the novices from being able to approach some other qualified person.
Can 650	93.7	The general conditions governing novitiate formation stipulated by Canon Law allow for a certain degree of flexibility in their implementation. The overall novitiate programme is approved by the Brother Superior General. It is subsequently adapted, with the active and ongoing participation, of the novices who come.
Can 647 S2 Can 648 Can 649 S1	94	To be valid, the novitiate must be made in a house designated for this purpose and must last for a minimum of twelve months, spread over a period of no more than two years. An absence from the novitiate house lasting more than three months, continuous or otherwise, renders the novitiate invalid. An absence of more than fifteen days must be made good.
Can 647	94.1	The opening or transfer of a novitiate always requires the consent of the General Council and the written approval of Brother Superior General.
Can 647 S3	95	The Brother Visitor may authorise the group of novices to live for specific periods of time in another house designated by him.

- Can 647 S2 96 With the consent of his Council, the Brother Superior General may authorise a candidate to make his novitiate validly in another community of the Institute, under the authority of a specifically named professed Brother.
- Can 650 S2
Can 651 97 The position of Director of novices is normally entrusted to a Brother with at least five years of perpetual vows and completely free to do this work full-time. As far as possible, he will be given one or more persons to help him.
- Can 653 97.1 In his work of discernment, it can happen that the Brother Director has to send a novice away. However, if he has to make such a decision, he would do so only after discussing the matter with the novice, asking the advice of his staff, and contacting the Brother Visitor.

Making Vows

- Can 653 S2
Can 649 S2
Can 656 98 On the completion of his novitiate, and with all the conditions required by Canon Law duly fulfilled, the novice, if he is considered suitable, is admitted to temporary profession; otherwise, he is dismissed. If any doubt remains regarding his suitability, the Brother Visitor may prolong the time of probation for a further period fixed by him, but which may not exceed six months.
- Can 653
Can 656 98.1 Not later than two months before the end of the novitiate, the novices freely make a written request to make their first vows. The Brother Director sends the Brother Visitor non-confidential information which could be useful.
- Can 656-
658
Can 689 98.2 Vows are made according to the norms of Canon Law and the following prescriptions:
1. Admission to vows is decided by the Brother Visitor.
 2. The request of the candidate for each admission to vows is examined by a Chapter of Admission made up solely of finally professed Brothers, and whose composition is determined by the District Chapter. When first vows are involved, at least one member of the novitiate staff is invited to take part. In the case of final profession, the Chapter of Admission must include the fully-professed members of the District Council. The vote of the Chapter is consultative, except in the case of perpetual profession, when it is deliberative.
 3. The Brother Visitor invites the candidate to come in person to speak to the members of the Chapter of Admission to explain to them the reasons for his decision. If he prefers, the candidate is free to do so in a letter addressed to the Brother Visitor or the members of the Chapter of Admission.
 4. When special difficulties occur during a Chapter of admission to vows, or regarding the non-admission of a candidate, the candidate himself or the Brother Visitor can always refer the case to the Brother Superior General.
 5. When perpetual profession is involved:

- If the majority vote of the Chapter of Vows is negative, the Brother Visitor cannot admit the candidate to vows, but the candidate or the Brother Visitor can refer the case to the Brother Superior General.
 - The minutes of the Chapter of Admission must be sent to the Brother Superior General, together with the Brother Visitor's decision for or against the admission. The Brother Superior General confirms or invalidates the decision made by the Brother Visitor. The ratification of the Brother Superior General is indispensable for the validity of perpetual vows.
6. Vows are received in any part of the Institute by the Brother Superior General or his delegate, Brother Vicar General or one of the General Councillors; and in a District, by the Brother Visitor or his delegate.

The period of temporary vows

Can 659 S1 DRFI 56 DFRI 59	99	The period of temporary vows has as its aim to enable the young Brother to grow in his vocation and to continue the formation begun in the novitiate. It serves also to consolidate his fidelity in everyday life, and prepare him for perpetual profession. The Brother must therefore acquire the skills he needs on a professional and apostolic level, learn how to live in community and how to live out his consecration.
Can 659 Can 600 DFRI 60	99.1	Suitable and high-quality structures, in particular, scholasticates or host-communities, are put in place in each District or Region to provide formation processes which respond to the particular needs of student Brothers.
FLC 54	99.2	The community is for the Brother a place where his formation continues. The example of a life of prayer and service, and the example of fraternal dialogue help him to make adjustments in his first years of community life.
	99.3	In his choice of studies, the Brother takes into account the aims set by his District and by the Institute regarding pastoral service. This choice is made on the basis of discussions between the Brother and District authorities. The international dimension of the Institute makes the learning of at least one foreign language necessary.
	99.4	To make it possible for Brothers with temporary vows to participate more in the life of the Institute, District authorities ensure that they can take part in various District study and decision-making bodies, such as Chapters, Councils and Commissions.
Can 659 Can 660	99.5	The period of temporary vows must be closely supervised by the Brother Visitor and the Formation Commission. Three periods deserve special attention: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The period immediately after the novitiate which serves to prepare the Brother to exercise his mission as a catechist and as an educator, if this preparation was not done previously;

2. The first years in an active community, during which there should be a plan designed by the District and community to provide accompaniment for the Brother as he tries to pursue his own formation. In particular, he learns how to exercise his ministry as a Brother in the context of the shared mission;
3. The period of preparation immediately before perpetual profession.

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| Can 655
B 8 | 99.6 | To prepare for their perpetual profession, and beginning at the end of the novitiate, the Brothers commit themselves by temporary vows for periods which may vary from one to three years. The duration of the period of vows is decided by the District authorities in agreement with the Brother requesting to make the vows. |
| Can 607
Can 657 | 99.7 | At the end of each period of temporary vows, the Brothers request to renew them, unless they are eligible and wish to ask for admission to perpetual vows, or they prefer to leave the Institute of their own accord. |

Perpetual Profession

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| Can 654
Form V
D 18.1 | 100 | By his perpetual profession, the Brother expresses his commitment to unite himself and to remain in society for his whole life with the Brothers of the Christian Schools. His feelings are similar to those of the Founder and of the first Brothers when they formed an association at the beginning of the Institute. |
| D 18-7 | 101 | The nature and importance of the definitive commitment call for certain preconditions: human and spiritual maturity, growth in faith, assumption of personal responsibility for his life as a Brother, and an understanding of the values which underpin his commitment. |
| | 101.1 | The Brother Visitor and the Formation Commission, in collaboration with other Districts and the Region if necessary, make suitable arrangements for accompaniment during the period immediately preceding the taking of perpetual vows, and during the years that follow. |
| Can 655
Can 657
Can 658 | 102 | The Brothers may be admitted to pronounce their perpetual vows when they have fulfilled the following conditions: they are at least twenty-five years of age, with at least five years of temporary vows in the Institute, and they have lived three years in a community doing apostolic work. |
| Can 655
Can 657 | 102.1 | The period of temporary vows may not exceed eight years. However, if it seems appropriate, the Brother Superior General may permit the Brother to prolong this period but not beyond a ninth year with temporary vows. |

Fidelity to the Institute

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| Form V
D 53,2 | 103 | Throughout his formation and its follow-up, the fidelity of each Brother to the Institute is reinforced by his continual conversion to Jesus Christ, and by his vow of stability. The Brother witnesses to his fidelity in the mission. |
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| Can 688
Can 691 | 104 | A Brother may believe that he has just reasons for leaving the Institute. He should, however, through personal prayer and reflection, weigh carefully the reasons for such a decision. If after serious reflection and counselling, the Brother discerns he has good reasons for leaving the Institute he can make his request at peace with himself and in a spirit of abandonment to the Lord. |
| Can 688-692
B1 | 105 | A Brother with temporary or perpetual vows may not leave the Institute of his own accord without having been dispensed from his vows by the competent authority: the Brother Superior General with the consent of his Council, in the case of temporary vows; the Holy See, to which the Brother Superior General will transmit the request together with his own opinion and that of his Council, in the case of perpetual vows. |
| Can 684-687
Can 697-704 | 106 | All that concerns the transfer to another institute, exclaustation or the dismissal of a Brother, must conform to the prescriptions of Canon Law and to the norms proper to the Institute. |
| Can 702 | 107 | A Brother who leaves the Institute lawfully, or who is lawfully dismissed from it, cannot claim recompense for any work done in the Institute. Charity and equity demand that the Brothers do not lose sight of their duties regarding those who leave them. |

Readmission to the Institute

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| Can 690 | 108 | The readmission to the Institute of a Brother who left it lawfully is a matter for the Brother Superior General. He makes a decision only with the consent of his Council. The candidate for readmission need not repeat the novitiate, but it is for the Brother Superior General to determine the conditions of an appropriate period of probation to prepare for temporary profession, as well as the length of time in vows before making perpetual profession. |
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