



CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS OF AUSTRALIA
 CONFERENCE OF LEADERS OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES IN AUSTRALIA

Formation and Training Programmes at Redemptoris Mater Seminary in relation to child protection, child sexual abuse, and matters relating to sexuality and celibacy

Some changes to the formation and training program at Redemptoris Mater Archdiocesan Missionary Seminary were initiated in response to the publication of two documents by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Congregations.

One of the publications was a code of conduct for clergy and religious engaged in Ministry on behalf of the Catholic Church in Australia. The code titled *Integrity in Ministry* was released in draft form in 1997. The latest edition was published in 2013 and amended in July 2015. The second was *Towards Healing: Principles and Procedures in Responding to Complaints of Sexual Abuse Against Personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia* and was released in December 1996. The latest edition was published in 2013 and amended in July 2015. The document outlines the principles and procedures in responding to complaints of abuse (sexual, physical and emotional) against personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia.

After consultation with the Archbishop of Perth an intensive course on both the documents is offered as part of the seminary training program. The course is offered generally once every two years. The initial course was offered in 1997. Seminarians are trained to become priests who will uphold the highest standards of ministry. They are required to have an understanding of how the Catholic Church expects its ministers to respond to complaints of abuse against personnel. The relevant contents of the documents are also integrated with Spiritual Formation, Pastoral Formation and the time of Itinerancy outside the seminary.

In 2005, *Becoming Formed in Integrity* (A Document of the National Committee for Professional Standards), was released. This is a companion document to *Integrity in Ministry* and is used in the course.

Included in the study course from 2012 is a third document *Integrity in the Service of the Church* (A Resource Document of Principles and Standards for Lay Workers in the Catholic Church in Australia produced by the National Committee for Professional Standards of the Australian Catholic Bishops & Leaders of Religious Institutes in Australia.) The document aims to help church workers reflect on and uphold Christian vision and values in all relationships and actions. This document was printed in 2011



and reprinted in 2013. The course introduces the seminarians to the document, its scope and purpose.

The seminary, in consultation with the Archbishop, introduced these documents into the formation program because the Catholic Church had produced them in responses to a variety of problems, sins and crimes. The course provides a thorough working knowledge of both *Integrity in Ministry* and *Towards Healing* and familiarity with *Integrity in the Service of the Church*. The course director is the Rector in cooperation with the Spiritual Director. Their study involves a reading of the documents and a working knowledge of all the policies and protocols which they contain. The Archdiocese of Perth's Professional Standards Officer visits the Seminary to inform the seminarians of the work of the office and to update them on changes and developments in civil legislation and Church protocols

To assist the seminarians in their formation a number of other courses were added to the Pastoral program. They are outlined as follows.

Canon Law & New Protocols

Over the last ten years the Roman Catholic Church has changed some of its laws and procedures concerning complaints of child abuse and other related crimes and matters. The Canon Law program studied by the seminarians reflects these changes introduced in 2010. Special attention is given to the letter of May 21, 2010, from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to the Bishops of the Catholic Church and to the Ordinaries and Hierarchs regarding the modifications introduced in the *Normae de gravioribus delictis*.

Addictions

In light of the vast body of evidence of people suffering today with addictions of all kinds the seminarians have an annual workshop with Dr S Truscott SM "*Addictions - What are they?, Their consequences and their spiritual effects.*" This course was first offered in 2014 and is offered every two years.

Student Protection

The seminarians are introduced to the training that Catholic school teachers receive regarding protocols about dealing with children entitled *Student Protection*. The workshop is run by Mr T Dowden, a retired deputy headmaster of a Catholic secondary school and it was first offered in 2015 and is offered biennially. Because seminarians are involved with schools, it was thought helpful that they be aware of the training of the teachers they will work with.

Human Development/Psychological Development

A course on Human Development/Developmental Psychology has been added to the Pastoral Formation program from 2015. The course was added after consultation with



Archbishop Costelloe SDB. The course provides a systematic approach to the areas of human sexuality and psycho-sexual development. This is provided at St Charles Seminary where Redemptoris Mater Seminarians participate. The lecturer is Dr Martin Philpott.

The Safeguarding Project

The Archdiocese of Perth has introduced *The Safeguarding Project*. This is child-focused and informed by the fundamental belief that children and vulnerable members of the Church have a right to physical and psychological safety at all times. The Catholic Archdiocese of Perth established the Perth Archdiocesan Safeguarding Office in November 2014 to develop and monitor the implementation of safeguarding policies and procedures in all parishes within the Archdiocese, in line with the 12 National Standards for creating child-safe organizations.

Beginning in 2016, the Safeguarding Officer provides the seminarians with workshops on Child Protection and Safeguarding Training twice a year as well as providing information on this new project which is in response to the desire of the Archbishop to make the Archdiocese a "Child Safe Organization"

Changes to the formation and training program have come about as a result of various initiatives of the Australian Bishops Conference, the initiatives of the Archbishop of Perth and in response to the crisis of people suffering addictions.