

**USCCB Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations
Presentation to CMSM regarding PPF, 6th edition
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***Congregation for the Clergy (Oct. 29, 2021)
regarding Propaedeutic and Vocational Synthesis Stages***

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Some Guiding Principles

- Religious formation values (e.g., community)
- Stages drive formation (benchmarks), rather than academics
- Stages follow sequential order, and may not overlap
- All four dimensions are present in every stage
- Take into account Constitutions and Rule of Life



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Some Guiding Principles (cont.)

Length of stages (minimum, may be longer):

- Propaedeutic Postulancy/Novitiate (12 months)
- Discipleship (2 years)
- Configuration (4 years)
- Vocational Synthesis (6 months)



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Propaedeutic Stage

- Always the first stage of seminary formation
- Introductory in nature
- Focus on human and spiritual dimensions
- Communal element is essential



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Propaedeutic Stage (cont.)

- General Education (not Philosophy) college credits permitted but not full-time
- Introduction to scripture, catechesis, spirituality, etc. may be taken for credit



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Vocational Synthesis Stage

- Follows completion of Configuration Stage and usually diaconate ordination (mirrors flexibility present in communities)
- Occurs outside of seminary in pastoral setting
- Adapting to the life of ministry before priestly ordination
- Not a question of suitability for Orders
- Six months of Vocational Synthesis begins with the man's exit from the seminary and entry into a pastoral setting



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Vocational Synthesis Stage (cont.)

- Primary formator is priest supervisor
- May be assisted by others (e.g., vocation director)
- Deacon may return occasionally to the seminary
- Diaconate ordination at conclusion of Configuration Stage or during Vocational Synthesis Stage



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Implementation Schedule

- Begin conversation and planning
- *Recognitio* process reflective of mind of Holy See
- *Recognitio* process is not yet complete but should be in the very near future
- Be reasonable during implementation
- Do this well, not fast
- Strengthen a formation program, but don't rupture



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