



26 - 10 - B - 119

GUIDE FOR FORMATION – 9

What Does It Mean to "Accompany" a Candidate in the Initial Formation Process?

Brother William Mann, FSC

The aim of formation is ultimately the progressive growth of the candidate into an ever more effective identification with Jesus. However, Lasallian formation, more specifically, provides the candidate with a period of guided initiation or accompaniment into the life, identity, and mission of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

In one sense, the whole of the **third chapter** of the **Guide for Formation** (99-162) is concerned with this matter of "accompaniment"; however, 108-129 is most particularly concerned with this topic. Its significance can be found in the principles: 1) that formation presently needs to be more concerned with the person than with the program; and 2) that good formation demands a respect for the differences between individuals and for the pace of human growth.

Since "accompaniment" terminology is not familiar to many readers of the **Guide**, what follows is a brief outline of what is implied in the use of this concept.

- A. A quality accompaniment helps a candidate to:**
1. recognize the presence of God in his life;
 2. understand what it is that God asks of him; and
 3. discover, appreciate, assimilate, and act upon both human and Gospel values.

B. Quality accompaniment is accomplished on three levels:
the personal, the community, and the District.

1. Personal Accompaniment:

On a personal level, accompaniment is accomplished especially by means of:

- a. *the personal interview*; scheduled at least every other week; and which helps the candidate both to know himself better and make a commitment to evangelical values (112, 113, & 122); and
- b. the candidate's own *personal annual program* (113 & 118).

2. Community Accompaniment:

On a community level, accompaniment is accomplished principally through:

- a. the quality and favorable atmosphere in the community;
- b. its organization – the *community annual program* as a coordinating factor of community life (119), the community self-evaluation as a school of discernment (120), and a kind of fraternal correction which promotes interest in and communication with the other (121);
- c. daily Eucharist, the examination of conscience (125), and community prayer, especially of faith (116 & 123);
- d. sharing leisure activities (124); and
- e. spiritual reading, especially the Scriptures (126).

3. District Accompaniment:

On a District level, accompaniment is accomplished through:

- a. the District's cohesion,
practice of community life,
apostolic dynamism,
pastoral structures, and
concern for the poor;
- b. the relationship, continuity, and coherence between what is done in initial formation and what is done in the life of the whole District (127-128); and
- c. the specific involvement (127-129) of the Visitor and his team, the District Council, the Formation Commission, and the community of the young Brother.

* * *