

PRESENTATION BROTHERS, WEST AFRICA PROVINCE.

TEMPORARY PROFESSED BROTHERS WORKSHOP AND RETREAT

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SMA HOUSE ABUJA – FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY ABUJA NIGERIA.

11TH – 23 AUGUST 2019

A communique issued at the end of 14 days Workshop and Retreat on **“INTEGRAL FORMATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING”** organized by the Presentation Brothers, West Africa Province for all Temporary Professed Brothers in the Province from SUNDAY 11th – Friday 23rd August, 2019 at SMA HOUSE, Jabi – Abuja. It was facilitated and anchored by Fr. Paul Agabo OSJ.

Preamble:

We, the Temporary Professed Brothers of the Congregation of the Presentation Brothers, West Africa Province, having shared our experiences as individual and collectively with one another at a deeper level, prayed, reflected, brainstormed and challenged each other on the need to passionately work together with robust energy and enthusiasms for and with the laity as true disciples of Christ in the spirit of Edmund Rice in our various communities, apostolates and in our journey ongoing formation and beyond.

In the heights of various presentations, talks and discussion were made by the facilitator and, these are the resolutions:

INTEGRAL FORMATION: we acknowledged the liberal, authentic and holistic Formation of our Religious Congregation. The solidity of every building is the foundation.

Our vocation is a gift: therefore, needs for frequent accompaniment, mentoring, spiritual direction, monthly recollection, re-evaluation and fraternal correction by our lawful authorities.

We looked at the two types of Religious Formation – Auto and guided Formation. The need for both as the need arises. We also explore the characteristics of a good Formator/ Leaders such as being free from absenteeism in prayer and community, preferential love for some Formandee, stereotyping, competition etc. but be gospel oriented and always working with the compassionate Christ who knows the weakness and strength of all and still build people up to full potentiality.

THE EVANGELICAL COUNSELS

We realized that the essence of Evangelical Counsels are more to set us free than the other way round. The vow of poverty is the first motivation that makes Religious. Mark 10: 21, Matthew 8:20. We also noted the two types of poverty; personal and communal poverty both have similarity as the spirit of detachment. A Religious who vowed in that spirit shouldn't operate a private bank account.

THE FOLLOWING POLICIES WERE REACHED AS GUIDES TO LIVING OUR EVANGELICAL POVERTY:

- Allowance should be given when required

- Account and record keeping
- Declared gifts received

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE AND SUPPORT OUR CONGREGATION

- Declare wages/ salaries received
- Bring your benefactor to support the congregation
- Share your gifts and talents
- Taking proper care of our community.

Evangelical chastity (consecrated) Matthew 19:1-12. We accept and reaffirmed our consecrated chastity as the only gift in the vows 1 Corinthians 7:7 We strive to obtain the others as gifts too, the more reason for our preferential love for God who we see our brothers and sisters.

THE FOLLOWING WAYS ARE PROFFERED TO HELP US SAFEGUARD OUR VOW OF CHASTITY:

- Communal life in serenity
- Do not entertain self-pity or over empathize
- Avoid lonely solitude in community
- Choose carefully your friends and agreed on terms and conditions
- Control use of phone and social media
- The need for closures in the community even with our domestic staff
- Prayer life/spiritual direction

Evangelical obedience: Matthew 26:39

We reaffirmed that the vow of obedience is the bedrock (foundation) of every religious. Therefore, both blind and dialogical obedience are important to our call. We looked at ways to practicing obedience thus:

- We should practice our obedience happily
- Let us decide responsibly
- Humility and respect as one of our ardent traditions.
- Avoid pride and individualism

COMMUNITY

Reaffirmation was made that community is of Trinitarian origin. Like the expression “let us make..... Genesis 1:26. We acknowledge the two elements of community – fraternal and physical union. We explore possible ways community life can be enjoying together:

- Prayer life as a spiritual union
- A community of communication
- To see our diversity as a gifts
- Avoid clichés
- Community leaders and members sees themselves as agent of peace and conflict resolutions
- Limited and prudent use of social media
- Regular community meeting
- Cherishing ourselves more than any other person outside our fraternal union.

WE CAREFULLY LOOKED AT SOME REASONS FOR ONGOING FORMATION COURSES / PROGRAMMES:

- Update and renewal
- Recall our importance/ who we are
- Ways to tackling crisis in our vocation
- To avoid vocation pessimism

Leadership and service in religious life

Mark 10:45 – for the son of man came not to be served but to serve.... Our call to religious life is primarily to serve and, hence, service is the core of our call to being discipleship. John 13:20. The three model of ecclesiology of Vatican II knows as the 3 “S” servants, stewards and shepherds.

While we looked at some wrong motivation for leadership and effective motivation for leadership

WHILES DURING THE RETREAT WE INTERACTIVELY EXPLORES THE FOLLOWING:

- Vanity of life – Eccl 1:18
- Our life as a family – psalm 133:1-3

EIGHT (8) ENEMIES TO OUR RELIGIOUS LIFE:

- Insecurity
- Unforgiven spirit
- Lack of communication and dialogue
- Greed
- Ethnocentrism
- Unhealthy rivalry
- Inordinate ambitions
- Lack of care for the sick and elderly

Other areas include: our superiors and their crosses, correction between leaders and members, our relationship with the laity in our apostolates, the danger of god-fatherism and the dangers of double personality in our religious life.

In conclusion, we pray and hope with the help of your prayers and fraternal corrections that we will be able to put into practice the knowledge acquired during the workshop / retreat through the intercession of our Founder, Blessed Edmund Rice and Mary our Blessed Mother.

List of participants

- ✓ Br. Mcsimon T. Azenda
- ✓ Br. Shuka .Y. Zarmis – Chair person
- ✓ Br. Titus A. Liambe
- ✓ Br. Christopher O. Simon
- ✓ Br. John Inalegwu Mark – Secretary

N/B: We sincerely thank the Province Leader and his Team. We appreciate Br. Paul Atole, Director of Ongoing – Formation. A big thanks to Fr. Paul Agabo, the Facilitator.