

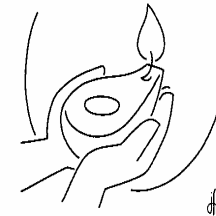
RNDM FORMATION 2006 and BEYOND

Bangladesh Formators
February-March 2006 ...
... EGC Kenya
September-October 2006

Introduction

The RNDM Formators Gathering in Bangladesh, February 5th – March 25th 2006 was a time of input and training. The intention was not to produce another document on formation as the Manila document, *Unfolding Journey*, which is still relevant, presents the Vision, Process and Programme of RNDM Initial Formation at all stages.

Acknowledging our reality and appreciating the diversity of Formation situations across the Congregation the following **Formation Priorities** were named by the Formators at Bangladesh and confirmed at the EGC at Kenya, September 15th – October 9th 2006.



Present reality of Initial Formation across the Congregation

The CLT is committed to unifying the Congregation by various international gatherings such as the Formators Course, the Educational Symposium, Training for Finance and Leadership, Charism and Spirituality courses, the Davao initiative, Evaluation of Ministries, properties and land, and the deepening and affirming of internationality throughout the Congregation.

The continued reflection and in-depth study of the Constitutions and Spirituality help keep alive our passion and zeal for Christ and humanity. At the same time there is the realization that follow up in formation regarding a heart and zeal for international mission is lacking. It seems we struggle to live the balance of Contemplation, Communion and Mission.

At present there is growth in new membership with 27% of our members under the age of 40. The majority of our Sisters in Initial formation are in Asia with a few in Latin America and Africa.

During the stages of Aspirancy and Postulancy we focus on clarifying the motivations, values, and the building up of human and faith development. Proper screening and personal accompaniment begin at this stage and are continued all through the Initial Formation process.

Our International Missionary identity is now being emphasized and it is stated in our documents that formees and formators have international missionary experience but this has not become a reality for us.

Our experience tells that formative communities are essential to continue to facilitate the on-going process of initial formation particularly at the stage of Temporary Vows. As Sisters living our RNDM charism in community, we are challenged to take responsibility in the formation of one another.

While there is growing interest in formation and the training of formators as stated in the Manila document, we still feel the need for proper planning in the formation of formators. We acknowledge and affirm the priority given to the training of the Novice Directress and recognize that training must be available to those Sisters asked to accompany women at the other stages of Initial formation.

A workable knowledge of the language(s) of the place where our sisters are missioned to is important for effective missionary activity. As an International Congregation, a good command of English is necessary and a challenge for the formees and formators.

Understanding and affirming that we are forming women for the whole Congregation and not for any particular Province/Region the following Formation Priorities are confirmed:

FORMATION PRIORITIES

International Missionary Identity

- From the point of contact our identity as an RNDM International Missionary Congregation will be made clear to the interested women.
- Mobility of Sisters will continue to be explored and facilitated across the Congregation by the CLT in dialogue with PLT/RLT and the Sister concerned.
- PLT/RLT prepare our Sisters from Postulancy for international missionary life by
 - (a) Providing experiences and opportunities for English language learning.
 - (b) Providing formees with the theological/professional studies for the various missionary needs of the Congregation.

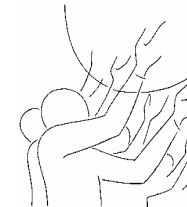
Training of Formation Personnel

- The CLT, in dialogue with the PLT/RLTs, identifies and prepares Formation personnel well in advance, taking into consideration that expertise in different areas is required in a formation team. A five-year plan will ensure continuity in the availability of formators.

- International missionary experience is expected to be part of the lived reality of our Formators.
- In addition to the professional, theological, and psycho-spiritual study, input on the Constitutions followed by a retreat, as well as study of the life and letters of Euphrasie and the Spirituality of the Congregation are essential.
- Formators will have opportunities for regular updating to include short courses/workshops to sustain and nurture their professional skills.

Formative Communities

- A member of the PLT/RLT formation team will visit the communities and share the vision for formation before the end of 2007 in order to enable the Sisters to participate in living this vision.
- The PLT/RLT in dialogue with the community will invite resource persons from within or beyond the Congregation who will help Sisters in using skills for building community. Every RNDM is challenged to take responsibility for their own formation and to live our charism in community.



Leadership Responsibilities

- The Congregational Leader has ultimate responsibility for formation in the Congregation.
- The CLT liaison person for Initial Formation will meet with Formees and Formators and will visit formation houses at least once every six years, She will maintain regular contact with PLT/RLTs and formation personnel to ensure that **Formation Priorities** are actualized.
- One member of the PLT/RLT is named as a coordinator for Initial Formation.
- The Formation Team will meet at least twice per year with their PLT/RLT.
- The named coordinator is to visit formation houses at least annually, to offer support and to build relationships with the Formators and formees.
- The Initial formation coordinator is required to organize the meetings between formators and PLT/RLT.
- Formation personnel participate in PLT/RLT discussions and decision-making processes regarding Sisters in Initial Formation, Admittance to the Novitiate, First Profession. The recommendation for Final Vows rests with the PLT/RLT.

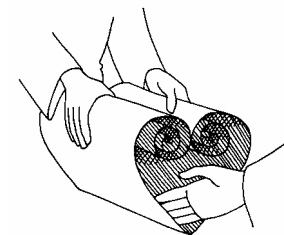
Accompaniment

Individual accompaniment must occur during all stages of formation. In areas where there are large numbers of formees some formators are over-worked. Therefore PLT/RLTs will ensure that:

- Trained formators will be available, without other major responsibilities, for personal accompaniment and formation at all stages.
- Suitable finally professed Sisters will journey with and accompany these Sisters. They will work in collaboration with the Directress of Temporary Professed Sisters.

Aspirancy

- The Aspirancy programme will normally be for one year, after twelve years of basic education, with the emphasis on human development, faith formation and learning English. This can be flexible according to the situation in each Province/Region.
- Vocational discernment and the use of screening tests will be carried out at this stage to help Aspirants in their personal growth and development.



Missioning

- In the missioning of a Sister at the end of the Novitiate a process of respectful dialogue will be entered into between the Novice, the Novice Directress and the PLT/RLT.
- In the missioning of a Sister during Temporary Profession, a process of respectful dialogue will be entered into between the Sister concerned, the Temporary Professed Directress and the PLT/RLT.
- Updated Profiles of the Provinces/Regions will be circulated to all formators and communities across the Congregation. The CLT will challenge the PLT/RLTs to be courageous in responding to the needs expressed there, and in missioning the Sisters internationally.

English language

- English language learning will begin at the Aspirancy level, and continue throughout all phases of initial and on-going formation. An understanding and ability to communicate in English is an absolute necessity for our Temporary Professed Sisters in order to participate actively in the Davao programme and in the life of the Congregation.



Stewardship

Education and practical experience in dealing with finance are essential at all levels of formation. Financial education will ensure transparency and accountability regarding both income and expenditure. Theory and practice will be integrated. **Therefore**

- Beginning with Postulancy, each Sister will prepare and live within both personal and community budgets; income and expenditure information will be shared at local level.
- Opportunities for handling money, using it responsibly, and accounting for its use, must be provided during Postulancy, Novitiate, Temporary Profession and throughout life. Responsible stewardship of our resources will be encouraged.
- As part of Initial Formation the Directresses will provide those in formation with education about the Common Purse and the norms for Administration of Temporal Goods.
- Income generation is essential. Creative ways of generating income are to be encouraged and followed through e.g. handicrafts, card making, gardening, as well as ministry involvement.



Sharing of Congregational Resource Personnel

- The list of Sisters throughout the Congregation with particular gifts, expertise and availability will be kept current. Requests from PLT/RLT for such services will be made well in advance to the CLT who will coordinate responses.
- Formators will invite senior Sisters in our Provinces/Regions and our Sisters on home leave from International Mission to share their lived experience of mission with our formees.

Vocation Promotion

Each RNDM is responsible for vocation promotion

- Provinces and Regions will name a Sister as Vocations Promoter.
- Our vocation literature will reflect our RNDM international missionary identity. It will be attractive and updated regularly by the Sisters with responsibility for vocation promotion.
- “Come and See” programmes will keep the implications of this identity clear, for example
 - ❖ Language(s) to be learnt
 - ❖ Adequate educational level
 - ❖ International / Intercultural living in Community
 - ❖ Willingness to live and work in different cultures/countries.
- Vocation Promoters will share materials that can be used in Vocation Promotion across the Congregation.



*'For their sake
I consecrate myself
so that they too may be consecrated
in truth'
John 17:19*