

# DIVINE WORD COLLEGE

## MISSIONARY MINISTRY FORMATION

### MANUAL



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# **MISSIONARY MINISTRY FORMATION MANUAL FIELD EDUCATION PROGRAM**

## **DIVINE WORD COLLEGE**

The Religious Formation Program (RFP) of Divine Word College (DWC) includes as an integral element the program of apostolic formation generally known as the Missionary Ministry Program. Because of the importance of this program to the college seminary, all students and faculty are expected to make themselves aware of the Mission, Principles, Guidelines and Policies as well as the Program Requirement of this program. Each student is involved in the ministry from the first semester on and every faculty member shares a concern that the Ministries Program contribute positively to the education and formation of each student as part of their preparation for priesthood or brotherhood in the Society of the Divine Word or as religious.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Divine Word College Religious Formation Program aims to foster within candidates a religious missionary vocation. The Program encourages the development of a candidate's intellectual capability, their spiritual gifts, their growth in community and ministerial skills. This occurs within a community intentionally intercultural and shaped by the missionary spirituality of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD). The Program nurtures in candidates a life-long commitment to serving God's people.

### **INTRODUCTION: MISSIONARY MINISTRY FORMATION**

**Allows the candidate to begin to develop their ministry skills and to apply their gifts and education to missionary services.**

*In order that this vocation can develop fully, formation must be integral, rooted in one's own culture, community-forming, directed towards apostolic service and open to the needs of the world... (SVD Constitutions, 502)*

Besides the skills and knowledge requisite for mission, the Religious Formation Program offers opportunity for applying these tools in concrete activities within a Christ-centered community. This practical service helps the candidate see how their coursework and other activities fit in with a vocation to religious life.

Careful preparation, supervision and support, reflection and evaluation characterize the service experience. Challenges inherent in working with people of differing socioeconomic or cultural groups offer significant opportunities for growth. The structure of the program helps educate the candidate about their own areas for growth, and help them develop critical insight and sound judgment. The process further stimulates the candidate's desire for service as they learn of the

needs of the world and their own gifts in meeting those needs. It promotes the development of each student through active involvement in several different kinds of service throughout their years at the College.

The candidate begins to develop awareness of their own gifts and how these may be applied to the missionary endeavors of the Society of the Divine Word and of the Church. In the future the candidate will use their gifts to lead the Christian Community in worship and proclaim the Good News. Their gifts may lie in community organization or in the practical skills necessary to sustain a local church and community life. At the College level, the candidate begins to become aware of what will be required of them as a future religious missionary. Growth in missionary ministry involves establishing initial ministry skills and developing awareness of what may be required of them in mission.

### **Initial Ministry Skills**

The College provides opportunities for ministry which are often intercultural experiences for the candidate. These experiences are evaluated with the candidate's supervisor and are shared in reflection with their formation group twice a semester. The candidate completes an end of the year self evaluation of their own ministry efforts both within and outside the College.

Initial skills for ministry are measured through the candidate's willingness to go beyond simply meeting their own needs to extending themselves to be of genuine service to others. They exhibit this through their willingness to volunteer for common activities as their gifts allow. The student is willing to explore skills and activities they may not have tried before because they realize their development may be helpful in communal missionary life. The candidate shows responsibility and commitment to do their best in carrying out community assignments. They develop confidence in completing assigned tasks and taking initiative.

### **Vocational Awareness for Ministry**

By awareness, the candidate is able to come to a theological reflection, both oral and written, of their ministerial experiences and how they might be a lived reality of the Gospel message. Satisfaction and growth in ministry in the context of the theological reflection become important components for vocational discernment. Along with their formation group and their Formation Director the candidate takes a realistic look at their faithfulness in fulfilling various ministries both within and outside the College.

The College provides opportunities for the candidate to clarify their vocational call. There are opportunities to interact with Divine Word Missionaries who have served in other parts of the world. The candidate experiences first-hand the celebration of Mission Sunday and the College environment that constantly speaks to mission and its centrality in the Church. Through formation groups and interviews, the candidate also reflects on their behaviors and how they reflect their awareness of themselves as a religious missionary.

The candidate's self-evaluation and their reflection with their formation group and Formation Director provide a gauge of their understanding and sense of their vocation. Work-study

evaluations provide evidence of their faithfulness to basic community responsibilities. Participation in campus activities shows their willingness to go beyond minimum expectations.

### **Educational Purpose**

To support the educational purpose, both theoretical and practical knowledge are necessary. Theoretical knowledge of the human condition in a variety of expressions is made available through such basic courses as: Introduction to Sociology, Introduction to Psychology, and Introduction to Cultural Anthropology. Theoretical knowledge from other courses in the candidate's curriculum is also put into practice in the experience of missionary ministry. In this way, different areas of study come together to illuminate the educational experience. The courses mentioned above serve also as preparation for the interaction that takes place in the missionary ministries. While this practical experience is not primarily directed toward developing skills in a particular area, it does help to stimulate the desire for greater understanding while developing a critical sense and sound judgment.

The Program of Priestly Formation states, "College seminaries should provide a required program of apostolic activity, under the direction of a qualified director, who has faculty status. Evaluation of college seminarians should include consideration of their performance in pastoral formation programs. They should be encouraged to understand the relationship of their apostolic activity to their personal, spiritual, and academic formation as well as their ongoing discernment of a priestly vocation." (#256, Program of Priestly Formation, Fifth Edition)

Another purpose of the Missionary Ministry Program at DWC is to facilitate the growth of maturity in education, commitment and service in a manner that helps to prepare the college candidate for the missionary ministry of the Society of the Divine Word.

The Missionary Ministry Program offers a unique opportunity to help bridge and integrate the academic and formation departments while becoming, alone with every other program if the College, part of the foundation so necessary for the future missionary apostolate.

*At every stage of their education, seminarians should dedicate part of the time to apostolic activity. The goal of such efforts is that life and study, prayer and apostolate may form an organic unity. Purposeful planning, supervised implementation and final evaluation are necessary if these efforts are to be successful. Their planning and implementation can be entrusted to a qualified director. (The constitutions of the Society of the Divine Word, # 516.2)*

To be a good missionary requires that one first be a well-developed and healthy human being. A variety of experiences rather than an intensive experience is desirable. This is only possible in the large community setting and takes place in parishes, hospitals, shelters, nursing homes and homes for the handicapped and other environments, thereby earning the name "field education".

The Missionary Ministry Program is Formational as well as educational because it has a particular impact not only on the intellectual development of the college candidate but upon their spiritual, social and human development as well. The movement from a theoretical commitment

to service to practical involvement is challenging and demanding: sometimes-tedious situations raise significant spiritual questions about the cost of discipleship that may lead to significant growth. The experience of working with the elderly, teenagers, children, the handicapped, and the poor of varied socioeconomic groups offers significant opportunities for growth in communication skills and social interaction.

The educational and formational aspects of the Missionary Ministry Program at Divine Word College Seminary have a common aim: to help prepare students to be effective missionaries. This preparation is graduated one emphasizing at the college level human experience and personal development and pastoral experience that become the focus in the field of education programs after first vows. The College program attempts to put down a solid foundation of knowledge of people, knowledge of self, as well as spiritual and personal formation upon which the missionary's ministries life can be build. It is true that the means by which the ministries activities program achieves its goal are through the activities of Christian service well worth doing for their own sake, but their accomplishment is not the primary goal of the program. The primary goal is the education and formation that is achieved by the college level student in doing these acts of Christian service over a period so that they might be better prepared for a lifetime of service as a missionary.

## **PRINCIPLES**

Every program of field education that is part of ministry formation will include three elements: **adequate preparation** through theoretical understanding and training in the necessary skills in order to do the work effectively, **sufficient assistance and supervision** during the ministerial experience itself to enhance the learning of the student and **appropriate reflection and evaluation** during and after the experience to establish and clarify what has been learned and how it has affected the candidate's growth in their vocation toward ministry in the Church.

Doing ministry is an important part of missionary formation. Therefore, active and cooperative participation is expected of every college student. As with other programs of the College, ministry activities have a claim to a certain amount of the candidate's time each week and they are accountable for their ministry activity work as they are for other areas of college life.

## **COORDINATOR OF MISSIONARY MINISTRY**

1. The Coordinator of the Missionary Ministry Program is recommended jointly by the Vice President of Formation and the Vice President for Academic Affairs and is appointed by the President. The Director is ex officio a member of the Formation and Student Life Committee and the Academic and Formation Advisory Council.
  
2. **Rights and Duties**
  - 2.1 The Coordinator of the Missionary Ministry Program is in charge of all Ministry Activities of the College, including Field Education Programs (in summer and during

the school year) so that students engage effectively in appropriate programs, reflect upon their work and gain deeper insights into the mission of the Church in the modern world (PPF 432, 435, 436, 1992, p. 80).

- 2.2 The Coordinator of the Missionary Ministry Program works with the Dean of Students and the Vice President for Academic Affairs in the implementation of the Missionary Ministry Program.
- 2.3 The Coordinator of the Missionary Ministry Program evaluates each student at the end of the year
- 2.4 The Coordinator of the Missionary Ministry Program is accountable to the Vice President for Formation.

The Coordinator of the Missionary Ministry Program works with coordinators at the different sites who implement their respective programs. It is the responsibility of the Coordinator of the Missionary Ministry Program to facilitate the necessary preparation, supervision, and reflection of the field education programs.

Various types of ministries are offered throughout the year as opportunities for the experience of Christian witness and service. There are also other opportunities during vacation periods for more extended ministries, especially in a cross-cultural setting.

Students participate in field education programs that are already established in parishes, institutions and other organizations. The student serves under the trained personnel who are responsible for these on-going programs. In no case is the student to be the person responsible for direction and operation of the parish program, or total program of the institution or organization.

Voluntary involvement on the part of students in other off-campus activities of a service nature is highly recommended but is not part of the Ministries program.

## **GUIDELINES**

The Missionary Ministry Program should provide students with experiences of service that will promote their growth as mature persons and as active Catholics. It achieves this goal in a particular way by exposing college students to authentic experiences of Gospel living. At the college level, ministries are in its initial stages.

With this in mind, the Missionary Ministry Program at Divine Word College Seminary is so structured that a student may gain a varied experience over the four-year period of college formation. The emphasis is on human experience rather than ministerial experience and the college works in conjunction with the many volunteer programs that exist in the immediate geographical area.

While beginning ministry experience should involve an element of choice by students, a variety of service experiences often proves more helpful than an intense introduction to any one ministry activity. In general, ministry placements should progress from simpler experience with limited objectives for beginners to more complex involvements for experienced students. There should always be on-site supervision and evaluation. (#248, Program of Priestly Formation, Fifth Edition)

The student is offered choices in experiences and is guided by the Coordinator of the Missionary Ministry Program and the Formation Director who look to a variety of experiences over the four years rather than any one intensive experience.

The basic formation must be rooted in the cultural and spiritual milieu of the country and derive inspiration from the acceptable religious traditions of the people. (The Constitutions of the Society of the Divine Word, #504)

College ministerial experience should acquaint seminarians with the challenges of ordinary life which, in turn, call them to Christian service. In achieving this goal, the seminary may want to provide a broad introduction to varied situations in society, especially the condition of minorities, the underprivileged, and the homeless.

The program should strive to integrate the learning students experience from real human situations with the spiritual and formation direction they receive at the seminary. It should aim at:

- a. Broad acquaintance with the actual conditions of human life in society and difficulties of minority and underprivileged groups
- b. A ministries program which helps students gain an increased, practical sensitivity to Judaism, other Christian churches, and other religions, especially those which play a prominent role in the life of the local church.

The Missionary Ministry Program should be entrusted to a director with faculty status who has the responsibility for developing the program and evaluating the performance of the students. (#256, Program of Priestly Formation, Fifth Edition)

The four-year experience of doing ministry is structured so that a student in formation gains experience of a cross section of the needs in the social and geographical environment around Divine Word College Seminary and attempts to integrate their experience with the spiritual and academic formation they receive at the seminary.

The present options provide students with an experience of the aging process as they work in area nursing homes - these experiences vary from the very needy and mentally impaired elderly to those of more moderate means. In the hospital ministry of the area, the upperclassmen gain an



initial experience in pastoral care and visiting the hospitalized. This experience broadens their acquaintance with the people of the rural area and poor of different economic groups.

Upperclassmen also have the opportunity to experience families in need at locations like the Dubuque Rescue Mission, the Catholic Worker House, and Maria House. These students gain insight into the needs of broken families and the hardship caused by economic difficulties in the area.

All students are required to take certain basic courses as part of their degree programs. Several of these are linked with and provide insights into the lived experience of the Missionary Ministry Programs. These courses enable them to learn, practice and reflect on certain skills that will be instrumental in their service activities from the first semester on through the four years at Divine Word College Seminary.

Through the special opportunity of the Intercultural Minor offered at Divine Word College Seminary, students take "Introduction to Cultural Anthropology" in which they are exposed to the different ways of life of peoples world-wide and to a cross-cultural understanding of the concept of culture and adjusting to human variability.

Reflection sessions on ministry are an essential part of the Missionary Ministry Program at Divine Word College Seminary. These sessions help the student to reflect on their own human development and on ministry within the missionary calling. The periods of reflection also help to integrate the theoretical and experiential knowledge that are part of a student's formation in the field of ministry.

The program is structured to allow for reflection on the one hand as part of the regular Wednesday night formation session and on the other hand, to allow for a small group reflection after each four-week unit of fieldwork. The knowledge of people, situations and themselves is gradually brought together over the four-year period in an on-going program of ministry.

## **POLICIES**

1. Students are normally involved in their field education placement during the afternoon, the evening or on the weekends.
2. Students are expected to devote from two to five hours a week to their fieldwork depending on their placement, preparation and travel time. Any involvement beyond this is at the discretion of the student depending on their own interest and freedom from other responsibilities.
3. As far as possible, each field education placement will have professional supervisors on location. Students are encouraged to get to know the staff in charge at their location and to learn from them. They are to give them their cooperation and respect. These coordinators will be asked for an evaluation of the student's work and this will be included in the end of the year evaluation process together with the evaluation by the

Coordinator of Missionary Ministry Program. Coordinators are encouraged to share their evaluation of the students with the individual student to facilitate their learning but are free not to do so.

4. The Coordinator of Missionary Ministry Program or an Assistant Director will personally supervise students on site at least once a month in addition to the staff person from the parish, institution or organization who serves a supervisor/coordinator at the site. Students are expected to cooperate with this visit and use it as an opportunity for learning and reflection.
5. The Missionary Ministry Program covers all expenses incurred for transportation and other program related costs.
6. The minimal attire for apostolic activities will be slacks, shirt/sweater, street shoes and socks. If there is a need to vary this in a particular placement, the student should consult with the Coordinator of the Missionary Ministry Program. The staff supervisor/coordinator at the field education location should also be consulted if there is to be a change in dress.
7. Since the Missionary Ministry Program is an official activity of Divine Word College Seminary, all regulations in the Student Handbook concerning the use and possession of intoxicants and drugs are applicable during fieldwork and travel to and from fieldwork sites (Stud. Hand book 111).
8. Students are expected to participate in preparation, meetings, etc. as designated by the ministry program they are preparing for. They are also expected to participate in the designated reflection and evaluation meetings.
9. Students who enter Divine Word College Seminary begin their Missionary Ministry Program with the first-year program even though academically they may be at another level. If a particular student wishes to make an exception to what would normally be their field education placement because of previous experience or special reasons, they are to consult with the Director for approval. These adaptations must follow the principles of the ministry program, especially adequate preparation, sufficient assistance and supervision, and appropriate reflection and evaluation.

## **EVALUATIONS OF STUDENTS**

The candidate begins to develop an awareness of their own specific gifts and how they may be applied to the missionary endeavors of the Society of the Divine Word and of the Church. The facets of missionary ministry is built around two core dimensions of development initial ministerial skills and awareness of what may be required of them in mission.

**Initial Ministerial Skills.** The College provides missionary ministries, which are often intercultural experiences for the candidate.

1. These experiences are evaluated and reflected on with the candidate's on-site supervisor and are shared in reflection with their formation group two times a semester.
2. The candidate completes an end of the year self-evaluation of their own ministry effort both within and outside of the College.
3. The beginning skills for ministry are measured through the candidate's willingness to go beyond simply meeting their own needs and extending themselves to be of genuine service to others. End of the year self-report, peer review and observations of their formator give information as to their progress.

**Awareness.** By awareness, it is meant that the candidate is able to come to a theological reflection, both oral and written, of their ministerial experiences and how they might be a lived reality of the Gospel message.

1. The candidate comes to take a realistic look at their faithfulness in fulfilling the various ministries asked of them both within and outside the college, as do their formation group and Formator.
2. There are opportunities to interact with Divine Word Missionaries who have served as missionaries in other parts of the world. Through formation groups and interviews, the candidate also reflects on their behavior and how these speak to their awareness of themselves.
3. The candidate's self-evaluation and their reflection with the formation group and their Formator provide a gauge of their understanding and sense of their vocation.
4. Work-study evaluations provide evidence of their faithfulness to basic community responsibilities.
5. Participation in campus activities show their willingness to go beyond minimum expectations.

## **EVALUATION OF THE MISSIONARY MINISTRY PROGRAM**

The Missionary Ministry Program is evaluated at the end of the year evaluation. Candidates are asked to give feedback about the sites they are assigned to for ministries and any other aspect of the ministries program. There are several questions on the Religious Formation Program Assessment (RFP-A) form to help us assess if the Missionary Ministry Program is doing what we expect it to do. This evaluation is done at the end of a student 2<sup>nd</sup> year in ESL, at the end of their sophomore year and at the end of their senior year.

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