



FILLED WITH INFINITE ADMIRATION (1CEL 94)
*FINAL DECLARATION AND PROPOSALS OF THE MEETING OF TEMPORARY
PROFESSED FRIARS OF EUROPE*

PREMISE

By presenting the summary of the contributions that emerged from our exchanges, we would like to underline that our observations and proposals are not intended to be limited, as a perspective, only to the time of temporary profession, but emerge from a general reflection on the charismatic identity of the friars minor. We believe, therefore, that the issues set out below must also be addressed in the context of ongoing formation.

This summary intends to expose, first of all, the critical issues experienced in European formation environments and subsequently formulate proposals for a better implementation of the *Ratio formationis* of the Order, aware that this document is already valid in itself to guarantee norms and principles for our formation.

Rather than actual modifications to the *Ratio*, we attempt to suggest a better and more concrete application.

CRITICAL ISSUES

In some parts of Europe, formation tends to be standardized, aiming above all at the clerical option, and characterized by deadlines to be fulfilled in times that ignore the personal, human and vocational characteristics of the person being formed.

In this regard, there is also a lack of adequate human and psychological training together with the presence of suitable spiritual companions.

Contrary to what is expressed in *RF 76*, within one's own provincial realities one experiences a strong closure towards the other Entities of the Order, thus one's awareness of belonging to them is lost as well as the knowledge of «a second language as an indispensable means to favor the brotherhood at an international level."

In some European countries an accentuated clericalism creates a strong gap between the temporarily professed friars and the priests (as well as between the latter and the solemnly professed lay people). The relationships generated by this type of relationship are often of subjection, contrary to what is stated by the Fundamental Principles of the Order, namely that «by virtue of their profession, all the friars are truly equal in religious rights and duties, except for what comes from 'sacred order' (CC.GG. 3)

In the life of community prayer, the almost complete solitude of the temporarily professed sometimes emerges. Most of the time the lack of fidelity to prayer on the part of the solemnly professed is caused by an overload of pastoral activities.

In the context of fraternal life we experience a widespread superficiality of community moments, often tending to resolve themselves into banal activities that do not lead to a true sharing of life, but rather to gossip and murmuring.

After the novitiate it is easy to find yourself overloaded with activities ranging from pastoral care to academic studies. There is a need for a more gradual approach to allow better knowledge of oneself.

PROPOSALS

1. The life of the temporarily professed requires greater international scope and trust towards those in formation to allow mission experiences and comparison with the different realities of the Order (see *RF 91*). In the European context it is appropriate to consider greater collaboration with the other Obediences of the Franciscan family both in the field of evangelization and in that of theological studies. To support the cultural exchange within the Order it's necessary to make sure the learning of the English language, especially in the European context.
2. It is good that formation should be based on integral franciscan approach including the knowledge of Franciscan Sources and franciscan spirituality, not having as its main scope activities linked to clerical life but is open to other forms of commitment which have the poorest brothers as subjects, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, ecological activities. It's opportune that the European provinces provide, for friars in formation, fraternities that live according to the principles expressed in *Ite, nuntiate* and more faithfully the General Constitutions and Statues.
3. It is desirable that the temporarily professed friars "do not extinguish the spirit of holy prayer and devotion" (*Rb 5*) and for this reason regularly have periods of time available, free from deadlines and fraternal and pastoral activities, to dedicate to prayer and contemplation. It is also good that each Conference has at its disposal a house of prayer suitable to satisfy the needs of the friars who request it.
4. We ask to the General Curia of the Order to provide us guide lines about the best behavior to have on the digital continent and about the new evangelization forms on the internet.