

December 17, 2017 - Rome

Following up on decisions made at the last general chapter, Fr. General in Council has appointed Fr. Vincent Leclercq Secretary general for Formation. The chapter decided to create the Office of the Secretary general for Formation because of the growing number of young men in formation and the urgency of paying adequate attention to their needs. There are currently more than 350 young religious in formation from novitiate to early priesthood throughout the world.

Here are some of the possible responsibilities of such an office:

- to accompany and encourage formators, in particular those who bear central responsibilities at the provincial level and those in charge of international formation houses;

- to develop a plan of formation for formators and to oversee the constitution of solid formation teams, based on a regular dialogue with provincials and the Superior general;

- to make proposals simplifying the discernment process at the different levels of formation,

often perceived as too complex;

- to prepare first apostolic assignments, including specialized studies, keeping in mind mobilizing works and Assumptionist priorities;

- to undertake long-term studies regarding the creation of future formation houses, keeping in mind linguistic criteria (Spanish, English, French, etc.) and new territorial entities;

- to organize, for formators, sessions regarding the implementation and understanding of the *Ratio Institutionis*
;

- to undertake a systematic reflection on continued formation and to propose a plan to be implemented by the time of the next general chapter;

- to engage in a reflection on the formation of lay religious;

- to assist in the evaluation of formation plans.

(Acts of the 2017 General Chapter, #41)

We look to the future with confidence and this future of the Congregation depends on the seriousness with which we take formation. Pope Francis has reminded us clearly that he "wishes to renew the Church and above all the formation of its members, in particular that of its priests and religious". Let us pray for Fr. Vincent and his new ministry within the entire Congregation.

Fr. Vincent was born in France on April 1, 1969, made final vows in 1999, and was ordained a

priest on June 19, 2005. A medical doctor by profession, Vincent went on to gain a doctorate in medical ethics at Boston College in the United States. He has taught moral theology and bioethics at the Catholic Institute in Paris and at various seminaries in Kinshasa (Congo), where he also served as a member of the formation team. For many years he was on the leadership team of the Assumptionist Lay-Religious Alliance in France. He has published one book on end-of-life issues (*Fin de Vie : Pourquoi les chrétiens ne peuvent pas se taire* --- "End of Life: Why Christians cannot be Silent"), written many articles, and given numerous conferences.