

FORMATION & ACCOMPANIMENT FOR MISSION



BACKGROUND & GUIDE

Background

One of the four themes addressed during the *Assembly for Mission* (AKA Mission Assembly) for the District of SFNO is that of Formation & Accompaniment for Mission. The 65 delegates from around the District came to Mont La Salle to read, listen, discuss, consider, and put together four directional statements, along with appropriate action steps. Once endorsed by the District Chapter and approved by Rome, they become the directional statements for the District moving forward.

This prayer service focuses on the work of the committee on Formation & Accompaniment for Mission, bringing their directional statements to the Boards for their future planning at the school. The CEO and school leadership develop strategies for implementing the substance and intentions of the directional statements. The Board annually monitors the CEO in responding to elements specified in the directional and action statements.

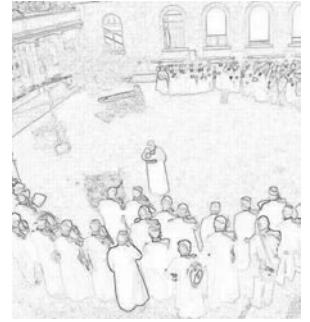
Guide

TIME REQUIRED: 20 Minutes (*More, if needed or desired*)

- ❖ **NOTE:** If a member of the board or institution attended the 2016 Mission Assembly, then he or she may be well placed to guide this process and perhaps take responsibility for one of these prayer/formation sessions.
- ❖ Make sure that you have enough copies of the PRAYER and other elements provided. All of these should be part of this packet. You may want to email them to board members for their perusal and study prior to the meeting.
- ❖ Choose readers before the meeting. Ask them to read their part and become familiar with it, so that they are able to read it slowly and deliberately.
- ❖ Provide any instructions (For example: “We will read Common Prayer on the back together, and in the formation section [name] will give some background and impressions of the Mission Assembly, after which we will”)
- ❖ Be sure to observe a pause (30-60 seconds) after the first reading and a longer pause (1 – 2 minutes) for the Personal Reflection Moment.
- ❖ The video is long (13 min.) and unless this prayer/formation is part of a longer retreat day, it should be suggested to board members as something to watch either before the meeting – after reading the information sheet – or after the board session, as a supplement to their own formation process. However, it is well worth the effort to watch the video. Virtually everyone will see it as a powerful example of what may be learned from a boring-looking video with a powerful message of faith.

FORMATION & ACCOMPANIMENT

FOR MISSION



Leader: Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.

[PAUSE]

Reading 1: (Luke 24:13-35)

Two disciples were walking to the village of Emmaus after the resurrection, talking about all the amazing things that had happened. Jesus came near and walked with them, but they didn't recognize him. When he asked what they had been discussing, they said, "You must be the only person in Jerusalem who doesn't know what's been happening here." "Tell me," the man said. So they told him about Jesus from Nazareth, what a great prophet he had been, what he had said and did, and how the priests and leaders had condemned and crucified him.

"But that's not all. Three days ago he was crucified and buried, but some of the women in our group were at his tomb early this morning and were astounded to find it empty. They told us they had seen angels there who told them that he was alive."

The man said, "Oh, how foolish and slow of heart you are to believe the things that the prophets have declared! Wasn't it necessary that the Messiah should suffer and then enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and the prophets, he talked with them about all the things about himself in different parts of the scriptures.

When they came near to Emmaus, he walked like he was going on ahead. But they urged him, "Stay with us. It's almost evening and the day is almost done." So he went in to stay with them. When he was seated at table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Suddenly their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to one another, "Were not our hearts burning within us as he was talking to us on the road, when he opened up the scriptures to us?"

[PAUSE]

Reading 2: (<https://www.sermonwriter.com/sermons/luke-2413-35-oasis-emmaus-bedingfield>)

Have you ever gone anywhere just to get away from something? Maybe that's what's happening in this story. The disciples have just suffered what was probably the biggest disappointment of their lives. If they were like the others, they had given up everything they owned and everything they knew, just to follow Jesus. And now all that seemed to have gone up in smoke – leaving them empty and wondering what to do next. So they walked down the road, away from what had happened, not necessarily **to** anywhere, just **away** from what had happened.

The wonderful writer, Frederick Buechner, in his book, *The Magnificent Defeat*, said, "Emmaus is where we go when life gets to be too much for us; ... the place we go in order to escape – a bar, a movie, wherever it is we throw up our hands and say, 'Let the whole ... thing go hang. It makes no difference anyway.' ... Emmaus may be buying a new suit or a new car or smoking more cigarettes than you really want, or reading a second-rate novel or even writing one. ... Emmaus is whatever we do or wherever we go to make ourselves forget that the world holds nothing sacred; that even the wisest and bravest and loveliest decay and

die; that even the noblest ideas that men have had – ideas about love and freedom and justice – have always in time been twisted out of shape by selfish men for selfish ends.”

Emmaus ... where is it for you? ... We all need to get away from life's bad news sometimes. But remember how today's story ends. ... [I]t is human to suffer disappointment, pain and setbacks in this life. ... And when those things happen, often we need an Emmaus – an oasis – through which we can temporarily block out the pain and let the loss sink in before we start to heal. BUT ... Jesus is walking next to us. Jesus – the risen Lord – is **always** on the road with us. ... And when we have had enough of walking away from our pain, Jesus is there to reignite the fire in our hearts – to turn us from looking inward and trying to lose our pain, to looking outward and upward toward the Good News of the Gospel.

If Jesus' resurrection story tells us anything, it is that there is hope – even in loss, even in death.

[PAUSE]

Personal or Group Reflection (*Choose one*)

- ❖ Where has been your most powerful “learning experiences” in life? In what way were other people and a sense of “accompaniment” involved? Describe that.
- ❖ How and where do you see your school or institution support, and encourage genuine accompaniment and formation for those entrusted to your care?

Our Common Prayer Response:

(Rev. Frank Schaefer)

All: Meet us, Lord, on the road to Emmaus,

Guide us on the path toward our destination,
and renew our strength as we continue to walk
and commune with you.

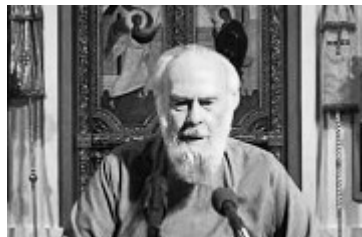
Open our eyes, so we see the signs of your presence around us;

Open our hearts, so we may receive your peace and love;
and empower us to pass on to others
the grace you have shared with us so freely.

Amen.

Supplemental Video (*13 minutes*)

(Well worth watching at some point. This is an edited clip from a longer presentation by Russian Orthodox Metropolitan Anthony Bloom. The power is not in what you see, but in what you hear and listen to. It is a story that illustrates HOW authentic formation for mission takes place. Note well how Bloom and the community accompany persons along the way. Transformation is through individuals and communities. So also is the case with Lasallians.)



Formation & Accompaniment - <https://youtu.be/o8ZWKPRxEus>



"The effectiveness of Lasallian institutions depends on the commitment of members of the educational communities. This commitment is strengthened by effective formation and accompaniment in Lasallian Mission. Quality formation and accompaniment is currently not available for all Lasallians." (Report of the International Assembly, 2013 - Section 1.2)

"Formation" & Accompaniment"?

"Formation for Lasallian mission is the process of interiorizing the constitutive elements of Lasallian identity. It involves the accompaniment of persons and it helps them fundamentally in their human and spiritual growth and maturation in order to respond to their vocation and to the needs of the mission." (MEL 51.3.1) It includes professional competence for the mission "together and by association" in a process of personal integration.

Increasingly, the word "accompaniment" has been used along with the word "formation" to indicate the personal, mutually interactive process by which we approach our collaborative Gospel journey within the Lasallian vocation. Genuine formation really only occurs when wedded to a long-term experience of accompaniment, whereby guidance is a collaborative journey over time.

Formation and accompaniment are two dimensions of the ongoing, transformative learning and growing experience, walking next to one another, in dialogue with one another, and holding one another accountable to the vision, ideals, and priorities that we share and aim to achieve.

Why should I care?

We are formed by our family, our friends, and the groups or communities we choose to join. All of these require attention and effort, sometimes joyful, sometimes challenging. But always we are involved **"with"** others in some way or other. If you know that you will be working or living or teaching with others, then this notion of accompaniment is a very helpful way for seeing it as a process that is mutually accountable and supportive. We face our futures together.



Towards the Year 2021: Living Together our Joyful Mission

4. Formation & Accompaniment - Overall Goal -

We wish to provide the means for ongoing and lifelong formation for all Lasallians as a means of responding to our common vocation as disciples and apostles. We give priority to Lasallian formation and teacher training, especially for Lasallians on the local level. We know that this will require us to foster a "culture of accompaniment," particularly among administrators of institutions and communities and also it will require the promotion of the training of a new generation of Lasallian researchers.

Strategies

4.1 To promote within Districts the strengthening and the creation of programs to train formation personnel and persons to accompany Brothers and Partners on the local level, in the Lasallian mission.

The Secretariat for Formation

is oriented to the needs of all Lasallians. It tries to respond from a global perspective to the specific formation of the different target groups ... The members of the Secretariat, Brothers and Partners, find diverse ways of listening to the needs from the grassroots and from those responsible at the District and Regional levels. They discern together the needs, foster effective responses and adapt their internal organization or structure to better respond to these needs. ... The members of the Secretariat want to become an international clearinghouse for Lasallian formation. ... They respond to local, regional and Institute needs for implementation and coordination. This coordination optimizes human and financial resources and fosters solidarity.

The International Council for Lasallian Association and Educational Mission (CIAMEL)

This is a deliberative and collaborative body of Brothers and Partners ... established for the animation and direction of all existing and future educational programs that embody the Lasallian mission.

It seeks to network with Lasallian universities and centers of higher education with a view to strengthening links, pooling resources, and encouraging research for the benefit of the Lasallian Mission, and to promote the integral formation of all Lasallians with a view to fostering a deeper understanding and broader implementation of the Lasallian mission.

Further information and details may be found in Circular 470.

From the Documents of the 45th General Chapter



Proposition 4

The Brothers will accompany Partners, and also will allow themselves to be accompanied by

them, in their respective journeys as Lasallian educators.

The Brothers will encourage and welcome the specific contribution that Partners bring to the Lasallian charism

Proposition 28

That each District will strengthen or create formation programs for the Lasallian mission for formation personnel, Brothers and Partners, for the purpose of

building teams of facilitators on the local level that can effectively train and accompany all who work in the mission.

Proposition 30

That all Institute levels – Regions, Districts, Sectors, and especially at the community level – will contribute to the creation of a "culture of accompaniment" for all Lasallians throughout their entire lives.