

## Charting the Path of Formation: A Phenomenological Exploration of the Acquired Values of Former Seminarians in the Seminary Formation

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### Abstract

Seminary formation leaves an enduring impact on seminarians that extends far beyond the confines of the seminary walls. As seminarians journeyed through their formation, they are immersed in diverse values, teachings, and experiences that hone their character and worldview. This study explores the acquired values of the former seminarians during their time in seminary formation, exploring how these values continue to shape and influence their lives beyond the confines of the seminary walls. Employing a transcendental phenomenological approach, the researchers interviewed ten former seminarians who spent three to five years in the seminary. Through data analysis, three prominent themes surfaced on the acquired values: spiritual, moral, and personal competencies. These acquired values were not merely abstract concepts but tangible guiding principles that participants actively integrated into various aspects of human experience, including spiritual and ecclesial life, social interactions, and personal and professional development. By paying careful attention to the lived experiences of former seminarians, seminary programs can be crafted to nurture better the spiritual, moral, and personal development of future generations of clergy.

**Keywords:** Seminary Formation, Acquired Values, Former Seminarians, Seminary

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### INTRODUCTION

A seminary is a place where future priests undergo formation. It is where the seminarians experience training according to the different aspects of formation (John Paul II, 1992; Holy Infant Seminary Formation Handbook 2020-2021). These aspects of seminary formation - spiritual, academic, pastoral, and human - guide the seminarians to prepare for their future ministry as priests (Congregation for the Clergy, 2017; Canoy et al., 2023). The

seminary environment fosters personal growth, character development, and spiritual depth, instilling virtues such as honesty, integrity, and compassion (Paul VI, 1965; United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005). Such a value learning process is influenced by socialization factors and interaction with peers, formators, and the seminary environment, facilitating the acquisition of values within a nurturing and supportive context (Schwartz, 1992).

However, not all aspiring seminarians proceed to the priesthood, leading to misunderstandings and misjudgments regarding their vocational journey. The process of discerning out is often misconstrued, yet it serves as a means to discern God's call to alternative vocations (Fisher, 2020). To address biases and misconceptions, this study explores the acquired values of former seminarians and their application in post-seminary life. This research generally answers the central question, "How do the former seminarians describe their acquired values from the seminary formation?". This inquiry seeks to uncover the acquired values of former seminarians during their time in the seminary and examine how these values continue to shape their lives beyond the seminary walls.

Grounded in Jean Piaget's Constructivism theory, which posits a dynamic interplay between experience and cognition in shaping understanding, this research also examines the values they assimilated through pastoral and daily encounters in the seminary (Brau, 2020). By understanding the enduring impact of seminary formation on individuals, this research aims to shed light on the value and significance of the seminary experience beyond priesthood candidacy.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This research study adopts a qualitative methodology, explicitly utilizing Moustakas' (1994) transcendental phenomenology. The choice of this research methodology is founded on its capacity to thoroughly investigate and uncover the complexity of the life experiences of former seminarians (Lester, 1999), particularly in examining the values that help shape their lives beyond seminary formation.

### **Research Environment**

The study was conducted within the Diocese of Pagadian in a specific organization composed of former priests and seminarians. The environment was relevant to the study because the target participants were former seminarians in the particular diocese.

### **Research Participants**

The research study elicited feedback from ten ex-seminarians, who spent varying durations in seminary formation, ranging from three years to those who completed both college and theological formation over two years. They were deliberately selected to provide a diverse and comprehensive range of experiences within seminary formation.

### **Research Instrument**

The researchers served as the primary tools for the study, supported by an interview guide consisting of three sections. The first section featured engaging questions, followed by exploratory questions in the second section, encompassing the central question, sub-questions, descriptive inquiries, and probing. The final section focused on probing. The researchers conducted face-to-face interviews and subsequently analyzed the gathered data.

### Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers composed an official letter directed to the President of a particular organization representing former seminarians from a minor diocesan seminary in region IX. The letter was acknowledged by the Dean of the College of Teacher Education Arts and Sciences department before being forwarded to the President of the intended organization for review and approval to proceed with the study. Data collection took place during the first semester of the 2022-2023 academic year through face-to-face interviews. Interview venues were selected randomly based on participants' proximity and convenience. The study lasted approximately 10-15 minutes per session.

### Data Analysis

The researchers conducted data analysis using a Phenomenological method known as the Modified Steveck-Colaizzi-Keen method, outlined by Moustakas (1994). This involved following six sequential steps to systematically analyze the data. The initial step involved the Researcher's epoch, followed by Transcendental phenomenological reduction. The subsequent steps included Imaginative Variation, Synthesizing, and repeating the process for each participant until saturation was reached. Finally, the researchers combined textual-structural descriptions into a composite representation, capturing the essence of the collective experience of the entire group.

### Ethical Consideration

The researchers upheld ethical standards by securing informed consent from both the participants and the president of the organization of former seminarians before conducting the study. Similarly, the research participants willingly agreed to participate in the study and were assured

that their personal data would be kept confidential to prevent any potential misuse in the future.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Throughout their seminary formation, the research participants assimilated specific values as they were immersed into various values, teachings and experiences. Such values brought and left significant impact to the different aspects of life experiences, encompassing spiritual, moral, and personal dimensions.

*Spiritual Values.* A primary aspect of seminary formation involves the acquisition of spiritual values. Indeed, seminary formation is often synonymous with spiritual development and is considered central to the process (John Paul II, 1992). Data has shown that former seminarians unanimously emphasized the significant impact of spiritual formation during their time in the seminary. They highlighted the growth of their spirituality as the foremost and most crucial value they absorbed within the seminary environment, aspiring to embody qualities akin to Christ. Participant 7 emphatically said, “[t]he seminary formation has molded me to become Christ’s like.” Seminary spiritual practices like daily masses, scheduled daily prayers, and devotion to the saints help them in their values formation. When asked about the primary values they acquired during their seminary experience, several participants echoed these sentiments.

*Spirituality, the development of your spirituality is that you were able to acknowledge the presence of your God in your life*  
– P3

*The values that I acquired when I was still in the seminary formation are; kindness, loyalty, discipline, honesty,*

*courage, and most especially spirituality. – P6*

*The values I acquired during my stay in the seminary are; understanding, giving, faith in God, honesty, and prayerfulness. - P1*

*Spirituality which is prayer, for it made the person firm, especially inside the seminary. – P6*

*During my stay in seminary, I would say that there are many values that I acquired, but to be more specific, first is the prayer which is the fundamental of being a seminarian - P8*

One participant particularly noted the strong impact of prayer during his stay inside the seminary.

*During the time of Fr. Dodo Suarin as seminary rector, there were many demonic possessions that many of my companions transferred from their usual place for sleeping, for they were afraid, but I did not feel any fear because I felt secure. I felt secure in my strong faith in God and that he is always at my side. From time to time, I feel the development because when I was a child, I felt nervous, unlike now when I do not feel any nervous even whatever happens. – P2*

Just as the tree can bear no branches and fruits without its trunk, all other priestly formation is fruitless without spiritual formation and values. Spiritual formation is both the core of priestly formation, which unifies the whole of life and the goal of priestly formation, its completion. “Spiritual formation... should be conducted in such a way that the students may learn to

live in unceasing union with God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit.” (Seminary of Christ the King, 2022).

The seminary tries to create an ambiance whereby the spirituality of the student is lived in the context of his whole life, whether inside or outside the seminary. A daily Rule of Life worked out in collaboration with one’s spiritual director and the rector is an essential practice of daily seminary living. Seminary life has a rhythm of prayer, study, recreation, fraternal life, and apostolic life that inculcates order and balance into the seminarian’s daily and weekly routine. The daily Eucharist, Liturgical prayer, the Rosary, the Divine Mercy, Confession, Eucharistic adoration, and the Way of the Cross are just some of how priestly spirituality is fostered at the seminary. Frequent spiritual direction and following up on orientation days are regular features at the seminary (Seminary of Christ the King, 2022).

*Moral Virtues.* The seminary serves as more than just a center of spiritual maturity. It is also a nurturing environment and a stronghold of moral integrity, instilling in aspirants the moral virtues necessary to embody the moral ascendancy and authority expected of a church minister (Paul VI, 1965). Interestingly, participants voiced out particular moral virtues they greatly valued, which they internalized during their seminary years, such as generosity and understanding, courage and perseverance, and honesty.

Regarding generosity and understanding, two research participants specifically highlighted their acquisition of these qualities. On the one hand, Participant 1 emphasized that he internalized these virtues during his seminary formation and

recognized their significance in shaping his character. He said, “The values I acquired during my stay in the seminary are understanding, generosity, faith in God, honesty, and prayerfulness.” Participant 7, on the other hand, expressed the same sentiments and amazingly delineated that the virtue of generosity caused him to embody the virtue of understanding, directing him to become sensitive to the needs of others. He said,

*If there are manifold blessings to come, we do not know if we give them to those who are needy. But the conviction is that we are just caretakers of material things; we must share them with others, especially people in need. Now, even if I don't have a job anymore, there are still individuals who would come and ask for help, and I offer them my assistance in a little way; I feel guilty if I cannot help them because I know I have a small amount to extend as help. P7*

A generous life is a life responsive to a generous God. A generous life is an offering of gladness, an act of worship, an expression of trust rooted in the confident faith that need not be grasp too tightly, for God is a God of gracious provision. When one is held prisoner by fearfulness rooted in an assumption of scarcity, lives turn inward, and hunger and appetites become a chief obsession. One misses out on the joy God intends for humanity, the joy of a shared life, where neighbors matter, and where a Kingdom worthy of investment is at hand (Union of Presbyterian Seminary, n.d.).

Another sub-theme about moral virtues is the participants' integration of courage and perseverance in their character.

Many participants emphasized that seminary formation instilled in them a courageous disposition, enabling them to persevere and endure various challenges and trials, both during their time within the seminary and in their lives beyond its walls. For instance, Participants 2 and 3 cited how their internal struggles during their seminary years were surmounted through the courage and perseverance instilled in them during that time. They pointed out,

*During the time when I was in the Seminary, I developed courage where I do not have any fear of any spiritual events. – P2*

*Perseverance, in how you will persevere in your study and your different programs in the seminary. – P3*

Participants 6 and 9 expressed the same sentiment. However, they pointed out and add that courage and perseverance are what hold them to confront challenges not only during their seminary years but also in their current lives outside seminary formation. They said,

*The values that I acquired when I was still in the seminary formation are; kindness, loyalty, discipline, honesty, courage, and most especially, spirituality. Supposedly, there are many values, but I have chosen these six values because they are touching me. – P6*

*I think the values that I have acquired are consistency and respect. This could also include perseverance and persistence. I think these are the values that are more present in me right now. – P9*

Courage is not just the absence of fear; it is doing what is ought despite fear because of the strength received from Christ. Courage is needed to train oneself through mortification, to say yes to God and no to the concupiscence of the eyes, flesh, and pride of life. Finally, in this era, many individuals abandoned various aspects of life: prayer, combatting sin, enduring suffering, attending Mass, receiving Confession, maintaining marriages, upholding religious vows, pursuing priestly vocations, sustaining employment, keeping hope, and even continuing living itself. It is essential to possess courage, never yield, persist in running the race, contend for what is right, maintain faith, and continually nurture it. God knows that the world needs courage and gives all to live boldly. For this reason, one might face the world with boldness and the future with confidence (Landry, 2019).

The last sub-theme related to moral virtues involves the former seminarians' adoption of the value of honesty, guiding them to lead authentic lives. Several participants indicated that seminary formation enabled them to yield the cultivation of honesty. For example, Participants 1 and 6 explicitly voiced out that seminary education imparted the virtues to them. They remarked,

*The values I acquired during my stay in the seminary are; understanding, generous, faith in God, honesty, and prayerfulness. – P1*

*The values that I acquired when I was still in the seminary formation are; kindness, loyalty, discipline, honesty, courage, and most especially, spirituality. Supposedly, there are many values, but I have*

*chosen these six values because they are touching me. – P6*

Participant 7 similarly echoed this sentiment and even pointed out that honesty serves as his stronghold for moral discernment and decision-making, particularly when confronted with the temptation of financial corruption in his workplace. He said,

*In my experience working in the government, there are tempting opportunities, like I can get more, mainly financial matters, but I remain honest because of the seminary teaching. – P7*

The seminary is a school of human virtue, of growth in honesty, integrity, intellectual rigor, hard work, and tolerance, where the common good is built with solidarity and discipline—all leavened by humor and healthy enjoyment (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005).

*Personal Competencies.* The seminary is more than a mere hub for spiritual development and moral integrity; it serves as a fertile ground for cultivating personal qualities and skills essential for future ministry within the church. Here, seminarians are afforded ample opportunities to actualize their potential and hone their skills in various facets crucial to their future roles as ministers of the church (Canoy et al., 2023). Similarly, data from research participants corroborate this notion. Several participants acknowledged that their seminary experience significantly honed their personal competencies and skills, including time management, interpersonal skills, and leadership and service.

Participants 3 and 8 candidly expressed that the structured daily schedules of the

seminary, which often include early morning prayers, classes, meals, and various activities, helped them cultivate their resilience, punctuality, and time management skills. The demanding nature of seminary life necessitated adherence to strict timelines and efficient organization of tasks, fostering in them the ability to manage their time effectively and prioritize responsibilities amidst a busy schedule. This experience equipped them with practical skills that they continue to utilize in their personal and professional lives beyond the seminary walls. They remarked,

*Time management is a good value and promptness or punctuality in everything you will do. – P3*

*Secondly, the time management wherein you can divide and organize your schedules, your endeavors within a proper schedule. – P8*

Time stands as one of the most precious commodities bestowed upon individuals. As the adage goes, “time wasted is time lost.” Similar to the demanding schedule of a priest, seminary life unfolds as a bustling journey. Yet, amidst the hustle and bustle, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that individuals hold responsibility for their entire lives and must be accountable for their time (Holy Apostles College and Seminary, 2015).

Transitioning to the other sub-theme regarding personal competencies, some participants recounted their experiences of developing effective interpersonal skills within the seminary environment. Through daily interactions with peers, faculty members, and other members of the seminary community, they found ample opportunities to refine their ability to build meaningful relationships. Whether through

collaborative projects, pastoral activities, communal prayers, or socializations, some research participants learned the importance of fostering connections with others. Three of them recounted,

*Solidarity night, as I said, strengthens our camaraderie as seminarians. It helps us grow our companionship and relationship. - P4*

*I got surrounded not only by Muslims but different kinds of people, different kinds of cultures, and you need to understand them, you need to mingle with them, and that is what I get from the seminary. – P9*

*I acquired those values because it is helpful; when you obey, you gain lots of friends, and you gain relationships. – P5*

An essential part of a seminarian’s human formation concerns the types of relationships he establishes. Healthy friendships are a necessary indicator of personal traits and character. The capacity to develop such relationships with men and women is one of the elements to be considered in discerning the presence of a vocation to ordained ministry, particularly the diocesan priesthood (Notre Dame Seminary, 2022).

Ultimately, seminary formation goes beyond the mere refinement of time management and interpersonal skills as personal competencies. It is chiefly focused on equipping individuals with the essential skills for leadership and service, as these lie at the core of ministerial duties. Through rigorous training and practical experiences, seminarians are prepared to assume leadership roles within the community and serve others with compassion and

dedication. After all, the essence of ministerial service lies in leading by example and selflessly serving the needs of others. It is in this vein that Participants 5 and 7 significantly remarked,

*When you are on a committee, of course, we, inside the seminary, cannot afford not to join. We are required to join any committee even if we like or dislike it. But the significance is that I consider it valuable for it hones our obedience and leadership when you are being part of the committee. – P5*

*I do not know if it is already a value, for example, offering yourself to serve without expecting a return. – P7*

Seminary education seeks to train leaders to realize peace or shalom in urban areas. Students will develop organizational leadership skills to effect sustainable change. These courses are guided by competent faculty members with extensive backgrounds in urban leadership, spanning decades of expertise. The curriculum encompasses a variety of subjects, ranging from entrepreneurship and public policy to spiritual direction and peacemaking (Lewis, 2018; Fresno Pacific University, n.d.).

### **Former Seminarians' Utilization of Acquired Values in Post-Seminary Life**

Drawing from their seminary training and education, research participants emphasized the profound significance of the values they acquired, highlighting their enduring impact on their current lives and engagements beyond the confines of the seminary walls. These values, instilled during their formative years within the seminary, continue to

guide their actions, decisions, and interactions in various aspects of their personal and professional lives. According to them, such values had an enduring impact on the areas and aspects of their present lives. Three general themes emerged, namely, spiritual and ecclesial life, social interactions, and personal development.

*Spiritual and Ecclesial Life.* As research participants reflect on their former vocational journey, they underscore the enduring significance of spiritual values, which they continue to regard as a steadfast foundation in their present lives. These values, deemed paramount during their time in vocational training, remain deeply ingrained and influential, shaping their beliefs, decisions, and actions in their current endeavors.

For instance, the structured routines of daily mass and the liturgy of the hours during their seminary days greatly influenced some participants to maintain a consistent attendance at mass, particularly on Sundays, and to establish a habit of personal prayer. Reflecting on the impact of these acquired values on their present lives, Participant 1 shared, "I think by still going to church, especially on Sunday, and for personal prayer also." Participant 2 echoed similar sentiments, placing a strong emphasis on the significance of personal prayer and daily gospel reading in his life. He explained, "While I may not attend mass as frequently as I should, personal prayer remains a cornerstone for me. I may have stopped praying the breviary, but I make it a point to read the Gospel every morning."

Participant 3 also recognized the importance of spiritual values acquired during his seminary formation, emphasizing the need for a balanced lifestyle to maintain spirituality amidst a

hectic schedule in his present endeavor. He remarked, “Attending mass outside for prayer, even though there is a hectic schedule, especially now I tried to give time for mass and then organize workloads so that it will not be a burden to maintain a balanced lifestyle.”

What one receives at Mass transcends mere emotional upliftment or moral instruction; rather, it entails a profound theological reality. In the Holy Eucharist, individuals participate in the passion, death, and resurrection of Christ himself, receiving his body, blood, soul, and divinity. They accompany Christ on his journey to Calvary, sharing in his sufferings and offering their own struggles before the altar. This awareness underscores the significance of each Eucharistic celebration, where Heaven and Earth converge in a divine embrace. For Catholics, attending Mass is therefore paramount, as it allows them to partake in the greatest of all dramas (St. Coleman Catholic Church, n.d.).

In addition to regular participation in Mass and the cultivation of personal prayer practices, participants noted that involvement in various ministries of the Church is another significant impact stemming from the spiritual values instilled during their seminary formation. Recognizing that the Church encompasses numerous ministries to fulfill its mission, research participants actively engage in these endeavors. Participants 5 and 7 emphatically said,

*When the parish priest asked me to lead this youth, I obeyed his order and good thing that I belong. I became a leader in a committee in the seminary because it is no longer hard for me to lead the different groups*

*and ministry in the parish and not just in the parish, even in the schools when you lead players when you coach players and leading players that's what I gained and acquired outside the seminary formation. – P5*

*I continue being Christ-like outside by being a teacher and a Religious Education teacher and also as an extraordinary minister of holy communion. – P7*

*Social Interactions.* Given that community is regarded as a cornerstone of seminary formation, the development of interpersonal skills is deemed essential. This aspect of seminary life emphasizes the importance of fostering healthy relationships, effective communication, and collaborative teamwork among seminarians (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005). Consequently, former seminarians have honed specific interpersonal skills adept at fostering friendships with individuals from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds, including Muslims. Through shared experiences and interactions within the seminary community, they cultivated a deep understanding of cultural diversity and religious pluralism, enabling them to forge meaningful connections beyond the confines of the seminary walls. Some participants remarked,

*I had no friends because I was a seminarian. I was not able to connect with other people because it seemed like I was different from them, but then I realized that I needed someone. I realized the camaraderie that I experienced here, that I have*

*gained here in the seminary. I gained friends, I gained true friends, and I always loved to gain more friends, and I value relationships. – P4*

*Here in Mindanao State University, where you will be surrounded not only by Muslims but of different kinds of people, different kinds of cultures, you need to understand them, you need to mingle with them, and that is what I get from the seminary. We should respect each other; we should respect each religion, we should respect the culture, and we should respect the individuality of a person. And thank you for that; it gives me a chance to mingle with them and to understand them not to put biases and put a barrier. – P8*

The seminary should create a climate for mutual respect, communication, and collaboration as a contribution to the overall development of the seminarians as they interact with many other individuals and communities as well. Men and women mingle with seminarians in various settings: personal, academic, pastoral, and ecumenical. The interaction of seminarians with seminary administrative staff and service personnel often reveals attitudes toward others in general. Seminarians' ongoing contact with their own family and home community should continue to form a significant dimension of their life. Seminarians should participate in parish activities and volunteer for service regularly (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005).

*Personal Development.* Seminary formation is meticulously crafted to foster the holistic development and enhance the personal competencies of seminarians. The rigorous training within the seminary environment serves as a crucible where seminarians undergo spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and social transformation. They are encouraged to reflect deeply on their beliefs, values, and purpose, while cultivating a profound understanding of theological doctrines and pastoral care principles (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005). Moreover, the formation process extends beyond the confines of the seminary walls. Former seminarians carry with them a profound sense of responsibility and a commitment to service as they encounter the diverse challenges of the external world.

Data have shown that research participants consistently highlight the enduring strength derived from the values cultivated within the seminary environment when facing various trials and difficulties in life. For instance, Participant 3 attributed his resilience in overcoming life's adversities to the spiritual values he imbibed through his seminary education. He recounted,

*The prayer time is significant for I was able to survive outside since it was new to me from the time that I stepped outside, but because of the values that I learned from the seminary, I was able to survive, and I was able to face the struggles outside the seminary because of those values.*

Participant 6 echoed similar sentiments, underscoring the immense impact of seminary formation on his ability to navigate through life's challenges,

particularly in the realms of finance and academics. Despite facing daunting financial hurdles and academic pressures, Participant 6 found solace and strength in the spiritual values he acquired during his seminary education. He recounted,

*In times that I feel being tired in my studies because I feel that my batch mates were already ahead of me, there are really times that I just wanted to stop studying but God uses someone as an instrument for me to remember that Education is not a race but it is all about persistence. There are also times that I experience financial problems because I am living in a boarding house; sometimes I don't have any allowance but God still sent someone as His instrument for me to remember being persistent.*

Faith and persistence intertwine seamlessly. In this context, faith entails an unwavering commitment, a refusal to surrender even in the face of exhaustion. It embodies an unyielding resolve; a determination to persevere against all odds. When individuals live in faith, they are inherently persisting. They draw upon a divine wellspring of strength to endure. This strength empowers them to persist through the trials of a failing marriage, to rise again after a fall, to press forward amidst financial adversity, and to hold fast to their convictions despite external pressures. The essence of faith lies in persistence—maintaining focus on God rather than on the problem at hand. The omnipotent force of God's grace enables individuals to persist, to endure, and to overcome. This wellspring of divine power

is ever-present, awaiting invocation. One must simply ask for it (Warren, 2022).

## CONCLUSION

The values cherished by former seminarians were not merely imparted; rather, they were forged through personal experiences within the Seminary walls. Throughout their formative years, knowledge was actively assimilated and integrated into their belief systems, shaping their core values. This study aligns with Jean Piaget's Constructivism theory, suggesting that individuals construct knowledge through the dynamic interplay between experiences and existing ideas.

Seminary formation serves as a crucible where knowledge is transformed into deeply ingrained values. It provides a structured environment for rigorous intellectual pursuits, reflective practices, and communal experiences, all contributing to the cultivation of enduring values. These values, nurtured within the Seminary, continue to exert a profound influence on the lives of former seminarians, guiding their actions and decisions long after they have left its hallowed halls.

Based on these findings, several recommendations can be made for seminary formation programs. Firstly, it is essential to continue prioritizing spiritual formation as the core of seminary education. Providing structured routines for prayer, daily Mass, and devotion to foster a deep relationship with God should remain integral to seminary life. Additionally, encouraging active involvement in various ministries of the Church can help seminarians apply their spiritual values in practical ways and develop a sense of service and leadership.

Furthermore, the nurturing of moral virtues should be a central focus of seminary formation. Emphasizing the

importance of generosity, understanding, courage, perseverance, and honesty can instill a strong moral compass in future church ministers. Creating opportunities for seminarians to practice these virtues in real-life situations and providing guidance on moral discernment and decision-making can further enhance their moral integrity.

Lastly, seminary programs should continue to prioritize the development of personal competencies. Teaching time management skills, fostering effective interpersonal communication, and providing opportunities for leadership and service can equip seminarians with the necessary tools for their future roles as ministers of the Church. Additionally, encouraging seminarians to engage with diverse communities and cultures can enhance their ability to build meaningful relationships and promote inclusivity.

By implementing these recommendations, seminary formation programs can continue to cultivate seminarians who are spiritually grounded, morally upright, and equipped with the personal competencies necessary for effective ministry. This will contribute to the formation of future church leaders who can competently face the complex demands of the world while remaining steadfast in their values and commitment to serving others.

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