

SEDOS Residential Seminar May 2022

SEDOS (Service of Documentation and Study on Global Mission) held its annual residential seminar at the House of the Divine Master, Ariccia (Rome), Italy, and online, May 9-13, 2022. The theme was *Formation for Mission* with these sub-themes: intercultural competence in missionary formation, Jesus' formation of his disciples, growth in becoming a missionary, formation, and accompaniment of formators, and lessons from the Covid-19 crisis. Four SSNDs who participated online share their learnings below.



S. Carolyn Anyega

The seminar gave me new insights and challenges about formation. I was reminded that mission is God sharing the gift of his Spirit, his very self; we are privileged to participate in God's mission. As a mission on earth, I am called to bring light, blessing, life, healing, and liberation. The new paradigm for mission, *Missio Dei*, challenges me to grow in contemplation, dialogue, humility, collaboration, and joy.

Fr. Len Kofler, the Director of the [Institute of St. Anselm, Rome](#), emphasized a focus on both the *content* and *the processes* in accompanying the sisters' bio-psycho-spiritual journey on a deep level. To do this, "Care-fronting" is necessary for dealing with human emotions, sexuality, values, wounds, beliefs, and needs in the community. A better "hygiene" of the heart (a pure heart) is critical in recognizing the dignity of every human being, to have meaningful relationships. If my heart and gazes are tainted with prejudice, the mission of God will be undermined.

Jesus formed his disciples within the context of his students. He accompanied them in humility, love, and a willingness to be surprised. In informing people, we have to take into account the different contexts of the formation while integrating both the "doing" and "being", especially because witnesses and experiences are better than theories ([Evangelii Nuntiandi](#)). Separating work from our private lives does not might not give a credible witness but produce a disjointed life. Any ministry can be fulfilling if we nurture a deep relationship with God, be open to grow and surrender "**Less**" for the sake of "**More.**"



S. Monika Ulrik

I read from S. Augustine that God creates the World in each moment. The SEDOS seminar touched me deeply with the reminder that each moment is MISSION. In each moment, I may be a healer, but I also may be the one who makes the moment or the situation sick. I may bring joy and peace into each moment, but I may also increase the tension.

Other insights were also deepened within me. I was not born a formator. God calls me to be a formator. It is a process. The novices with whom I live and work are part of how God works on me. Self-care and creating a HEART SPACE are vital. Jesus wants us/me to live a full life, full of energy! If I am not one with God, whose mission do I live for? The mission is God breathing, the Breath of Life in the World, Divine Breath. Gazing at the world with the eyes of God is the way to participate in God's Dream. My unfinished work in myself, often unconscious, could be abusive (emotional, spiritual) for the formees.



S. Martina Radež

The SEDOS seminar was an enriching experience. The presenters called us to move from doing to being. In the past, skills and effectiveness were most important for formation for mission, but today the focus is on witness and credibility. In the gospels, Jesus offers three roles that illustrate the character of a missionary and a formator: a farmer who, in harmony with nature, patiently facilitates the growth; a fisherman who is open to surprises and collaborating with the whole universe, who understands that if nets are empty today, tomorrow is another day; a shepherd who stays with the sheep, moves with them, knows, and protects them.

Mission is an activity of God; it is God breathing a breath of life into the world. We are privileged to participate in this *Missio Dei*.



S. Marinez Capra

I was deeply grateful for being able to participate in the Seminar. The inputs provoked a deepening for a change of mind and heart and made me reflect on my ongoing formation process for mission. These thoughts still resonate with me and challenge my learning.

Mission is God sharing the gift of his Spirit, his breath, his very life, his very self. The new paradigm for mission *Missio Dei* requires among other attitudes: contemplation, dialogue, humility, collaboration, and joy.

Ongoing integral formation for mission places us in a transformation process on a personal and communal level. It challenges us to develop intercultural competencies and skills. The focus is not on content transmission but on cooperative and experiential learning. Integral formation develops the competence to respond to situations in a manner consistent with the "mind and heart of Christ." Those who respond to situations in a Christ-like manner grow more and more in the divine image exemplified by Christ. This understanding of formation requires being attentive to the concrete situation and cooperating with God's action in daily life.

The *Why* of On-going Formation is essential. Yet we can be caught focusing on the *What* and *How*. The *Why* involves naming and purifying of one's motivations and confirming the interface of one's personal charism with the charism and spirituality of the Congregation. It is a lifelong process. Religious life has a unique opportunity to update the charism in an intercultural and transcultural perspective, bringing renewal, transformation, and life for mission in unexpected ways. The journey from change to transformation is a journey for the mature soul. In our world of cultural changes happening with great speed, our call remains to transform *self* and the *world* until Christ is "All in All."