

GROUP SHARING:

You may choose one case or both for discussion.

1. "Formation, as a process, brings about a transformation in the person and that affects the person's entire mode of existence."

Case #1:

During the spiritual conference of the community, the speaker talked about what a religious community is and should be. He proceeded to define community as a "human zoo." There are *cats* who acts as masters and enjoys the services of others and scratches when intimidated. There are *dogs* who barks and bites and display loyalty to the master, not necessarily the superior. There are *leopards* who stretch neck all the time to snoop into other's life. There are *lions*, *tiger*, *snakes* and *crocodiles* and so on, who fight, attack and harm. In the end, he asked, "which animal are you in this community?"

Someone from the audience stood up and stated a fact saying: "I very well know a person who joined our community some years ago. She was as meek as a *dove*, was very kind, smiling, accommodating, very industrious, gifted and prayerful...just perfect for the community. In fact, she became my secret idol. She was given various responsibilities and was assigned to the missions. After some years, when I met her again and she has changed a lot. She turned out to be like a *cat* who scratches, a *dog* who barks at anyone, a *lion* who attacks by verbal assaults at others. She has turned to be so negative of others and she thinks she is always right! The *dove* is nowhere to be found!" And the speaker saw almost everyone nodding in agreement to the story.

Questions:

- [What is your reading of the story in relation to formation-formand-formators' (including community) responsibility?
- [Identify at least two (2) dominant readings or issues, reflect and share.
- [What challenges do we see as regards "formation and transformation" being a life-long process?
- [What relevant resolutions could possibly address these challenges?

[Collate, rank and share (big group sharing)

2. "Ongoing formation enables the person to open to *change and continuity and continuity amidst changes.*"

Case#2

One day, a novice was assigned in the kitchen with a professed Sister. She was told to sweep the floor which she did but she heard a loud voice saying, "that is not the way how to sweep. Do it this way (demo). This is what "mother said." After some weeks, she was assigned in the laundry house. She was not used to this because at home, they had a laundry woman. Everything was new to her but she tried. When she was about to hang the laundry, her Sister companion said, "this is the way how to wring the laundry. Mother said, this is the way how to hang them!" For this and the other experience, she was able to say, "thank you Sister!" Her next assignment was to help in the piggery and cow's stable. She had a good companion who showed her calmly what to do. She knew how to feed the piglets and how to milk the cow. She had to get up several times at night to feed the piglets and at dawn, to milk the cows. She felt she was doing fine because she did not hear anything from her companion Sister. One day, as she was walking towards the kitchen with a pail of milk, she stumbled and left all the milk spilled on the ground. She went to the kitchen to report it and she got a severe scolding from the kitchener, an older Sister who have been a kitchener for so many years, who did not believe that it was an accident. Instead, she scolded her for being so unconcerned, lazy, dumb, etc. This time, she did not say, "thank you" instead she courageously blurted out with tears in her eyes, "I never heard my own mother say what you just said to me even when I commit mistakes. I thought you would say better things and you would understand better because you have been a religious for so many years. I am sorry. I felt like a fish out of water. This is not what I expected to be the way of finding Jesus. I tried to endure the pain in my body after a hard day's work, and I tried to be grateful for the many "formators" who want me to learn what "mother said" but you just showed me I am a hopeless case here, so I rest my case." She decided to go home.

Question:

- [What challenges do you find in the story? Identify, reflect and share
- [What implications of "change and continuity and continuity amidst changes" that confront you (as an individual and as a group) and what resolutions would you want to work on as regards initial and ongoing formation?
- [Collate, rank and share (big group sharing)

Note: At the end of the sharing, the group will be asked to present a summary of the sharing that specifically tackled the:

- [**Challenges of Monastic Formation (Initial and Ongoing)**
today and the future.
- [**Possible ways and means to address them**