

Integrating Catholic social teaching into the Intellectual Pillar of Formation
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What does the integration of Catholic social teaching look like within the intellectual pillar?

The PPF-v charges faculty members in a very special way with presenting CST in its entirety; with appropriate principles of reflection, criteria for judgment, and norms for action; and paying attention to the social encyclicals of the popes (no. 208). Further, throughout their curriculum they need to highlight the biblical, theological, ethical, and historical foundations of the Church's teaching on social justice (no. 229). Furthermore, in order to inculcate in seminarians sensitivity for issues of social justice, they must possess first an awareness of the significance of questions of peace, justice, and respect for life (no. 356). CRS, *Sharing in the Fullness of the Mission of Christ*, p. 13.

Who?

The PPF-v charges *faculty members* in a very special way with presenting CST in its entirety. This charge, however, should not be the sole responsibility of faculty members. Everyone involved in formation (rectors of seminaries, presidents of schools of theology, deans, spiritual directors, academic advisers, registrars, *etc.*) need to "...possess first an awareness of the significance of questions of peace, justice, and respect for life" in order to encourage active engagement with CRS at all levels of formation (human, spiritual, pastoral and intellectual). Reducing our seminary engagement with CST to what happens in class can be impoverishing and ineffectual. How are we supposed to integrate CST?

How?

In order to answer this question, we will use concept of "significant learning" as a hermeneutical key.

Traditional models of learning, i.e., the taxonomy of educational objectives (evaluation, synthesis, analysis, application, comprehension, and knowledge) facilitate "recall" knowledge. This type of knowledge addresses the *information* piece of formation but leaves untouched the *reformation*, and *transformation* elements of it. Significant learning, on the other hand, is learning that leads to lasting change both in the seminarian himself and in his present and future environs.

Significant learning includes the following elements:

Foundational knowledge: this is the understanding and remembering of information and ideas, which provides seminarians with the basic understanding that will be necessary to acquire other kinds of learning.

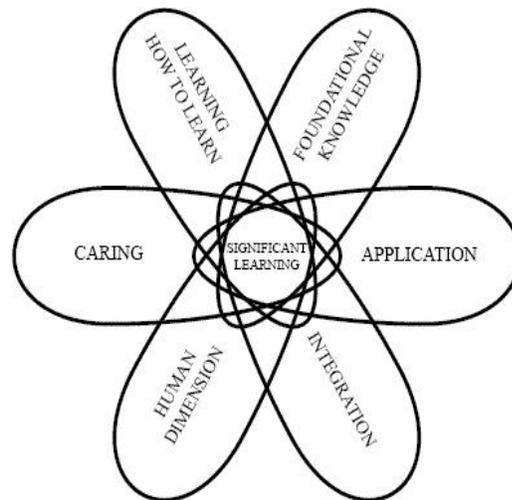
Application: this kind of learning occurs when seminarians learn how to engage in some new kind of action (intellectual, physical, social, *etc.*), in various kinds of thinking (creative, practical, critical, *etc.*), and/or in developing certain skills (communication, preaching, celebrating sacraments, *etc.*) that will allow them to put them to good use in the future.

Integration: this kind of knowledge allows seminarians to see and understand the connections between different things, specific ideas, whole realms of ideas, people(s), and/or different realms of life, such as seminary life *and* parish life, school *and* ministry, *etc.* Making new connections broadens the seminarians horizons and makes them better capable of serving the needs of those to whom and with whom they will minister in the future.

Human connection: When seminarians learn something important about their own self and/or about others, this enables them to interact more effectively with themselves and others. Seminarians discover the personal and/or social implications of what they have learnt or the way in which they have learnt it. This gives seminarians a new understanding of themselves (self-image) or a new vision of what they want to become (self-ideal). At other times, they acquire a better understanding of others: how and why others act the way they do or how they can interact more effectively with others.

Caring: True learning is supposed to change the degree to which seminarians care about something. This may be reflected in the form of new feelings, interests, and/or values. Any of these changes means seminarians now care about something/someone-other-than-themselves to a greater degree or in a way than they did before. This gives them energy for learning more about it (conversion of mind), doing something about it (conversion of heart), and making it a part of their lives (significant learning for the future).

Learning how to learn: This occurs when seminarians learn something about the process of learning itself. They may be learning how to be a good priest while engaging a particularly trying social issue (e.g., how to contribute to the eradication of poverty in Haiti) and doing it in a self-directed way. This greatly impacts the way in which seminarians will use their learning in the future with greater effectiveness.



What have been successes and challenges?

Integration of CST in the intellectual pillar requires a concerted effort on the part of all those involved in formation. However the PPF-v charges faculty members in a very special way with

1. Presenting CST in its entirety and with appropriate principles of reflection, criteria for judgment, and norms for action;
2. Paying attention to the social encyclicals of the popes;
3. Highlighting the biblical, theological, ethical, and historical foundations of the Church's teaching on social justice throughout their curriculum; and
4. Possessing first an awareness of the significance of questions of peace, justice, and respect for life in order to inculcate in seminarians sensitivity for issues of social justice.

Successes

1. Through most of our morality classes (Introduction to Catholic Morality, Sexual Ethics, Medical Ethics, and especially Catholic Social Teaching), CST is presented. Principles of reflection, criteria for judgment, and norms for action, especially in light of the social encyclicals of the popes, are explored and utilized during these classes. Especially during CST class, the biblical, theological, ethical, and historical foundations of the Church's teaching on social justice are also presented.
2. There has been a constant promotion of awareness of the significance of questions of peace, justice, and respect for life both at Aquinas Institute of Theology and at St. Dominic Priory, our house of formation.
3. Engagement in class activities, practical activities, such as rice bowl and fair trade, and liturgical/prayer activities have promoted significant learning among faculty, staff, formators, and seminarians alike.

Challenges

1. A wider audience has not been reached. CST is still viewed by some as "the CST professor's 'thing'."
2. Significant learning comes after a slow, gradual process, and arduous process so patience and humility are required.
3. Further inclusion of non-clergy, especially at AI is still an area of growth and further exploration.

The intellectual pillar of formation

The intellectual pillar of formation looks to form, reform, and transform the mind and heart of future priests, in order to help them become agents of change in the Church and in the world. Change, however, must begin with the each and every seminarian's effort to appropriate ever more closely the "mind and heart of Jesus Christ." Once individual conversion has occurred, then the work of transforming the Church and the world can begin.

2.1 Informing in order to form

Intellectual/academic pursuits ought to inform the intellect of future priests in order to help them acquire knowledge *and* wisdom. This means that the mere acquisition of knowledge is insufficient and can even be detrimental to a seminarian's proper development, especially if it promotes unhealthy attitudes, such as a sense of false superiority and entitlement.

Consequently, *information* must always lead to the *formation* of good intellectual and moral *habits*, to the enrichment of the future priest's spiritual life, and to the promotion of a pastoral sensitivity that compels future priests to be always sensitive to the needs, struggles, and lived-realities of those to whom and with whom they will be sent to minister.

2.2 Informing in order to reform

The amount of information a future priest receives during his formation years can be confounding, conflicting, and even challenging, especially at the beginning of the formation process. This barrage of information is supposed to prompt an internal reform in the mind and heart of the future priest so that he moves out of his comfort zone and embraces a searching and questioning stance that will help him remove his preconceived notions, prejudices, and misconceptions. After all, true intellectual formation is supposed to promote a real hunger for truth, a true conversion of heart, and a widening of the future priest's horizons. The prophetic announcement of the Kingdom of God will demand of the future priest this critical stance so that he can embrace the larger and wider truths and present them in a critical way to the world and to the Church.

2.3 Informing in order to transform

According to the PPF-v, no. 138, intellectual formation "...culminates in a deepened understanding of the mysteries of faith that is *pastorally oriented toward effective priestly ministry, especially preaching.*" In other words, the end-goal of the intellectual formation of future priests is, on the one hand, to help them acquire a solid intellectual acumen in order to be able to give a reasoned account of the faith; on the other hand, the long and arduous years of studies are supposed to help future priests to amass a "tool-box" that will help them assemble sound strategies for the promotion of justice and peace and against sinful structures that threaten to destroy human dignity and human rights.

A vertical integration of the intellectual pillar:

Three diverging approaches:

- The "token" approach: this is the practice of making a perfunctory gesture to indicate compliance with the external demands of the institution to include CST in the syllabus.
- The "hit and miss" approach: this is the practice of the sporadic, sometimes good and sometimes bad inclusion of seemingly related CST themes in the syllabus.
- The "seamless garment" approach: this approach argues for a continued use of CST to inform and transform, to produce both intellectual and moral conversion.

1. **What metrics might we move toward which reflect an effective integration of Catholic social teaching - for our faculty?**

Faculty integration

The PPF-v reminds those in charge of formation and faculty members that the best guidance they can give to those in formation is the “wholesome witness of their own lives.” Besides, a special emphasize is placed on the role of the rector in delineating “attitudinal and behavioral expectations (no. 104).

The pillars used to form future priests are the same pillars that ought to support the life of those accompanying them all throughout their formation process. Hence, an effective integration of CST on the part of faculty and those in charge of formation should be clearly evidenced in the way they interact with others, lead others, pray for and with others, are informed and involved in issues of justice and peace, and use preaching and teaching to enact change.

Seminaries and house of formation should pay careful attention to the selection of their faculty and staff. Faculty members should be people who have a high level IQ *and* EQ, who have the capacity to understand, empathize, and connect well with people both near and far, and who have had significant experiences, both locally and abroad, of working with and in favor of the poor.

The following is an example of some performance metrics that could be used to assess the effective integration of CST in the life of a seminary and/or house of formation and/or school of theology:

NB: These metrics are supposed to help assess the level of institutional engagement with CST, especially on the part of faculty and staff.

Performance Metric	Human	Spiritual	Intellectual	Pastoral
Strategizing	getting involved or remaining involved in CST activities	[Presiders/preachers] promoting a balanced integration of spirituality and concern for the poor in the liturgical presiding and preaching that happens at the seminary/house of formation	[Individual faculty members] including CRS resources/activities in course’s syllabi in order to ensure inclusion of CST themes/principles – see CRS’ Global Campus	creating a short-term and a long-term strategy to remain involved in social justice work

Performance Metric	Human	Spiritual	Intellectual	Pastoral
Planning activities	participating in activities that strengthen personal commitment to remain involved in issues of social justice	[Spiritual directors/faculty members] planning retreats, communal reconciliation services, and other spiritual activities using CST component – resources can be found in CRS website	[Curriculum Development and Assessment committees] doing curriculum mapping to ensure cross-pollination among fields of knowledge and inclusion of CST themes/principles	including in personal calendar time to actively participate volunteer in a CST related ministry
Getting feedback	talking to people who have direct experience of working with the poor in order to assess/change possible personal prejudices, misconceptions, and/or blind spots	[Spiritual directors/confessors] promoting a healthy awareness regarding social/structural sin and the individual responsibility to combat it	meeting with Dean and/or peers to get feedback on syllabi and to get ideas as to how to include CST in a more effective way	allowing those we teach and those who challenge us to move out of our comfort zone to challenge our sense of security and comfort
Monitoring relationships	engaging in work and conversation with people from many different backgrounds and states of life	[Spiritual directors/faculty members] emphasizing the Sermon on the Mount's teaching regarding the link between works of mercy and sanctification/salvation	[Individual faculty members] inviting CRS representative(s) or people working in the field to address individual class on pertinent CST themes/principles	making sure to remain connected with those who work on issues of social justice from inside and from outside the Church

Performance Metric	Human	Spiritual	Intellectual	Pastoral
Monitoring ministry	finding volunteering opportunities, especially abroad, to test knowledge with the concrete, lived reality of those about whom one teaches	[Rectors/Deans] making sure that presiders/preachers, spiritual directors, and faculty members bring CST into their planned activities, especially during the holy seasons of Advent and Lent	[Institution] promoting and supporting individual's involvement in CST activities, as offered through on-going formation (Sabbaticals), academe, and traveling with CRS	finding a healthy balance between teaching/administration and work with and for the poor.
Supporting ongoing efforts	getting directly involved in institutional and efforts to promote CST	[Presiders/preachers] making sure that CRS resources for Advent and Lent are integrated into the seminary's /house of formation's liturgical life	[Individual faculty members] teaching students regularly on CST related themes/principles	encouraging seminarians to get involved in social justice ministries by leading with the example
Improving	enrolling to receive CRS' feeds/alerts in order to remain informed and engaged	[Deacons and priests] training lower-class seminarians to preach and pray, to praise and worship with a spirit of solidarity with the poor	[Individual faculty members] updating information through reading books and attending seminars/webinars, and other academic opportunities	traveling with CRS or volunteering to serve the poor locally
Evaluating	revising and updating personal commitments	[Spiritual directors] promoting regular examination of	[Individual faculty members] evaluating	including an item in the course's final evaluation to

Performance Metric	Human	Spiritual	Intellectual	Pastoral
	and ways of witnessing, leading, and teaching	conscience and confession to help keep accountable individuals and structures regarding the Gospel mandate to serve the poor.	students in their learning and assessing effectiveness of teaching methods	assess how effective the work in promoting CST has been
Doing fundraising	actively participating in Rice Bowl and Fair Trade in order to raise funds to support the work of CRS	N/A	N/A	N/a
Collaborating with others	volunteering to help the poor at home, to go and teach abroad, and/or to advocate against injustice and in favor of a more just and peaceful society	preaching and/or directing retreats and renewals during special liturgical seasons offer an invaluable opportunity to network and connect with those who work in the field and whose stories can strengthen our spiritual life and inspire us to do works of mercy.	team-teaching and/or participating in CST related activities, especially with CRS representatives who work in the field.	creating an opportunity for mutual enlightenment with a pastor or a CRS agent to exchange information and experiential/ anecdotal data from the field.

2. For our students? What resources have we found/need to find which will help us?

Existing

1. Personal witness/example of Pope, bishops, rectors, deans, faculty, staff, people working on the field, and peers In sum: a clear institutional endorsement.
2. Preaching and teaching
3. Traveling with CRS and CRS' online resources

Needing development

1. A wider, clearer, more forceful institutional endorsement
2. A more concise and precise set of expectations with regards to faculty and student involvement in the ambassador's program
3. A set of "incentives," such as a national gathering of ambassadors or an "award" or something like that.

Horizontal integration of Catholic social teaching across the PPF

- Moving toward a 'seamless garment' approach – what does a fully integrated formation program look like?
- Curriculum mapping? Inter-disciplinary courses?
- Faculty/student orientation? Environmental considerations? Metrics?