



CHRISTIAN FORMATION AS MISSION AND PATH

Mario J. Paredes

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Rediscovering formation in Christian life is not a minor issue, nor is it an activity reserved for those who are professionally engaged in religious studies. Instead, it is an essential dimension in a life of faith and ecclesial responsibility, especially in times like ours, amidst diluted references, fragmented discourses, and a population where many people live without clear interior direction. Formation doesn't simply mean acquiring knowledge, but learning to live meaningfully, recognizing truth, cultivating an open gaze on the world, and remaining attentive to God's action in history. Formation isn't a matter of accumulating data; rather, it's about constructing a way of thinking and inhabiting the world, aligned with the Gospel.

In the Christian life, formation means participation in a demanding process that requires constancy, humility, and openness. True formation is born of continuous contact with Sacred Scripture, read in the light of the living Tradition of the Church, and with the Magisterium, which guides the People of God through the cultural, social, and spiritual challenges of every age. Among the most necessary areas of this formation is a serious understanding of the Social Doctrine of the Church, which offers precise criteria for understanding contemporary reality and responsibly committing oneself to it. Social justice, respect for each person's dignity, fostering the common good, care for one's work, the economy, peace, and the health of our earth cannot be approached from the lens of improvisation or opinion, but from a profound reflection that integrates faith and reason, pastoral experience, and critical thinking.

At the same time, Christian formation cannot occur in isolation or a purely intellectual setting. It must be rooted in sacramental life, personal and liturgical prayer, spiritual accompaniment, and the concrete experience of community. Only when knowledge is linked to constant spiritual practice, the celebration of the Eucharist, frequent participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and listening to the Word can it become

wisdom. And when this spiritual life is lived in a fraternal environment, where searches are shared and answers are confronted, formation bears fruit. No one matures in faith in isolation. Our communities allow us to compare what we have learned, illuminate what we have experienced, and sustain what we have chosen. There, you also learn the value of patience, dialogue, and respecting others' pace.

In this formative journey, what is at stake is not only personal growth but the ability to read the world through an evangelical lens. That is why this formation must offer not only religious knowledge but also access to other disciplines and knowledge that allow a better understanding of society, culture, and history. Christians cannot ignore their world. They are called to immerse themselves within it, with awareness, intelligence, and responsibility. They need intellectual tools, cultural sensitivity, and a deeply introspective life. This forms the foundation of what some have called Christian humanism: a way of thinking and living that recognizes the centrality of the person, their transcendent vocation, and their need for truth, justice, beauty, and communion.

During the Jubilee of Young People, Pope Leo XIV recalled that our hope is not based on ephemeral promises or human strength, but on the certainty that Jesus walks with us. He invited us not to settle for small solutions or mediocre aspirations, but to look for the essential, to choose what is truly worthwhile. Hope, he said, is an active force that drives us to commit ourselves, make decisions that orient our lives upwards, and not lose hope when faced with disenchantment or fear. Hope, he said, is cultivated in a life of faith, but also in the constant effort to grow in knowledge and virtue. The Pope spoke clearly to young people: the world needs people who know why they believe, who live with meaning, who transmit confidence, who do not presume to have the answer for everything, but rather have found their way and can share it with humility.

The responsibility to form Christians in this manner does not rest with any single person or institution. Instead, this is a mission shared by the entire Church, supported by academia and numerous other initiatives that, from diverse charisms, contribute to this common effort. Through spaces for intellectual formation, reflection meetings, schools of thought, leadership programs, retreats, and community experiences, we weave together a network of proposals that help people to think better, live with greater awareness, decide freely, and serve with joy. These institutions do not aim to replace the Christian community, but to put their resources, experience, and educational vocation at its service.

Much of our academy's work is geared precisely to this task, which is not only a matter of forming young people, although they are a priority due to the importance of their stage of life. It is, above all, a matter of offering all people who wish to do so the opportunity to grow through comprehensive formation that encompasses intelligence,

will, affectivity, and spiritual life. We are not developing specialists or copying old patterns. We are raising authentic questions, offering solid criteria, accompanying personal journeys, and proposing a demanding yet fruitful path. This is a journey in which the Word of God, the Tradition of the Church, the sacraments, intellectual reflection, and community experience are articulated coherently and openly.

Rediscovering formation is not a passing trend or just another pastoral renewal plan. It is, instead, an urgent need if we want to sustain a faith that bears fruit in everyday lives. Formation is not preparing for something later; rather, it is an essential part of Christian life itself. It is learning to live meaningfully, think clearly, and act justly. Not as one who seeks to control reality, but as one who wishes to respond faithfully to the gift received. Those who are formed in faith gradually discover that truth is not an abstract idea, but a living presence. They learn that living according to the truth is, in the end, the most human, most free, and most fruitful way of life.

Mario J. Paredes is the President of the Board of Directors of the International Academy of Catholic Leaders.