

THE FORMATION OF THE LEADER, AN ESSENTIAL CONDITION FOR THE CM EVANGELIZING TASK – PART 1

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The CM is a Movement of the Church and therefore has her same mission.
2. Its members are responsible for carrying out the mission of the Church following the CM own charism. The Pope helps us understand it by clearly saying: “I encourage you to ‘keep pressing forward’, to ‘go forth from your own comfort zone’ in order to reach all the peripheries in need of the light of the gospel.”
3. In order to accomplish their mission they must:
 - 3.1. Understand the fundamental importance of their formation for the evangelizing task to be developed where the Lord has called them to serve.
 - 3.2. Commit – in this formation – the service structures of the CM: National Secretariats, Diocesan Secretariats, Schools of Leaders, so that the global formation (human, Christian, methodological) reaches all the leaders, through the use of all the available sources: Internet, documents, books, etc.
 - 3.3. Deepen the conviction that the CM has to be developed in creative fidelity to its Original Charism, whose basic lines are perfectly clear in the third edition of Fundamental Ideas.
4. The development of our subject focuses on three key aspects: **Formation**, **Leadership** and **Evangelization**, and the main source of knowledge to address these three aspects will be FICM3 and the word of the Church in her documents.
5. We must, therefore, know very clearly:
 - 5.1. what **Formation** is;
 - 5.2. that a **leader**, a **Christian leader**, a **Christian leader of the CM** is;
 - 5.3. what **Evangelizing** is.
6. We want to encourage...
 - 6.1. The leader who, as a person, develops his or her natural qualities and starts those he or she does not have yet...
 - 6.2. The Christian leader, who tries through a productive reflection, to understand the scope of his or her baptized vocation;
 - 6.3. The CM leader who knows and puts into practice the indispensable literature so that the CM continues to be what it is: an instrument of evangelization of the Church in today's world.
7. We need, as leaders, to assume commitments:
 - 7.1. Towards the formation;
 - 7.2. Towards the understanding of the role of the Leader;
 - 7.3. Towards the mission of Evangelizing.

II. CONCEPTS

1. Formation

- 1.1. The concept of **formation** comes from the Latin word *formatio*. It is a term associated with the verb **form** – give form to something, arrange a whole from the integration of its parts.
- 1.2. It is a broad concept and includes personal, professional, spiritual, Christian, etc. formation. Today we talk about “permanent formation” as a continuous educational process that allows improving and updating knowledge, skills and abilities of a person.
- 1.3. Regarding Christian formation, it is clear that: *“Every Christian needs to be formed because the Christian faith has to do with the truth. The Christian has a double need for formation: one comes up from the faith that wants to be understood and known as true, and the other arises from our very human constitution, that is, our intelligence only rests in the final joy of truth discovered and reached.”* (Catholic University of the Most Holy Conception, Concepción, Chile)

2. Leader

- 2.1. According to the dictionary, a leader is someone who rightly addresses something towards a designated purpose or place; guides, showing or giving the signs of a path; governs, advises, orients...
- 2.2. A Christian leader has basically the task of forging the character of Christ in the lives of the people he or she leads, and guiding them to a lifestyle according to the will of God. He or she is chosen by God (John 15, 16), to build up the body of Christ and for the glory of his Name (Ephesians 4: 11-12).
- 2.3. The CM leader is a leader because of his human qualities; is a Christian leader because of his or her baptismal conviction; is someone who acts alone or in community as a ferment of his or her environments; is someone who keeps the CM alive, acting in fidelity to its own charism.

3. Evangelization

- 3.1. In his innumerable reflections on the subject, Pope Francis says that Evangelization is *“The proclamation of the Gospel for today through the testimonies of life, rather than words, taken to the world by”* credible *“people, capable of speaking as Jesus the language of mercy...”* (Audience to the participants of the plenary session of the dicastery for the New Evangelization, 15.10.2013).

III. SOME OBVIOUS QUESTIONS...

Now we need to ask ourselves – starting from the “ultimate goal” (the evangelizing task), and walking to the “first goal” (which is the formation of the agents of the evangelizing task)...

1. What sort of evangelizing task is waiting for us?
2. What kind of leaders do we need to accomplish that task?
3. What is the necessary formation for that task?

4. What are the necessary means to reach such formation?
5. What are the structures that will make such formation possible?

IV. BUT BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE... A LITTLE BIT OF FICM 3...

1. We need to know, deepen, and put into practice the Fundamental Ideas of the CM. It is the only book that can guarantee the identity of the CM worldwide. The CM has a vast literature, produced by dedicated authors and deep connoisseurs of the CM. In each country, as a reflection of the local culture, these authors render an invaluable service to the CM with their writings. But FICM is the book that allows the CM to keep unity in diversity...
2. In the first and second editions, the book was presented in a patchwork style: a Commission was formed; one or two chapters were assigned to each member, sent to the National Secretariats for suggestions and changes, approved and published... The result was that, while the content was very good, the presentation of the content did not facilitate understanding and implementation.
3. Only in the third edition it was possible to transform FICM into a book that can be used as a manual, because of its characteristics: simplicity, pedagogical presentation, conciseness (the necessary, the essential), clarity...
4. There is beginning, middle and end... There is a link between the chapters: the charism gives origin to a mentality, which suggests a strategy that, applied in accordance to a method, according to the same charism, allows the achievement of the purpose of the CM, in his three stages, in the life of the Church, supported by a structure...
5. The Mentality chapter is deeply related to what is expected and demanded from the CM leader as an agent of the evangelizing task of the CM.
 - 5.1. The generic definition of mentality says that it is “*a way of thinking, a perspective, a set of beliefs, ideas, attitudes and values of a person, a culture or a society*” (FICM 3, 64)... When talking about what is evangelizing Pope Paul VI clearly shows that everything is based on the mentality, which must be changed from within... It is our mentality that makes us what we are: a person indifferent or concerned with the other; an honest or corrupt politician; a sincere or deceitful leader, etc.
 - 5.2. The definition or description of the **CM mentality** (FICM 3, 65-66) says that it contains “*the irreducible core that identifies the CM, the initial direct expression of the charism of the Movement's* “. That it “*arises when the charism, a gift of the Spirit, comes alive: a group of people, faced with a concrete reality, shares a new way of thinking and proceeding.*”
 - 5.3. One could affirm that, if there are deviations and errors in the CM, if the CM does not achieve its purpose and is not a fantastic tool of evangelization today it is only because its leaders do not know, do not live and do not share its mentality.

V. WHAT SORT OF EVANGELIZING TASK IS WAITING FOR US?

1. The Cursillo Movement has been defined as *“a movement of the Church which, by means of its own method, makes possible for people to live what is fundamental for being Christian, and to live it together, it helps people discover and fulfil their personal vocations, and it promotes the creation of core groups of Christians who leaven their environments with the Gospel”*. (Introduction of FICM, quoting no. 2 of the Preamble to the OMCC Statute).
2. The Glossary of FICM3, presents some vital comments so that we can better understand the definition of the CM, which can be summarized as follows:
 - 2.1. The CM is an ecclesial movement with a specific evangelizing method of its own, that is, a procedure which, applying means and resources in an appropriate way, makes it possible to carry out its evangelizing mission and reach its goal...
 - 2.2. ... getting to the environment, that social setting, made up of persons, ideas, values and circumstances which come together in a certain time and place, and which influence everyone's way of being, thinking and acting of all.
 - 2.3. The CM aims to bring the Good News of the love of God to every person – but especially to those who are far away, who have been preferentially addressed since the beginnings of the CM – and form groups of Christians that transform little by little their environments by the strength of their witness.
3. There are innumerable definitions of what Evangelizing is... In 1975, Paul VI wrote the Evangelii Nuntiandi, presenting a description of what the Church should do through her agents of evangelization. Such description was, on the one hand, very modern and, on the other, perfect for our Movement.
4. For the Church, evangelizing means bringing the Good News into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new: “Now I am making the whole of creation new.” But there is no new humanity if there are not first of all new persons renewed by Baptism and by lives lived according to the Gospel. The purpose of evangelization is therefore precisely this interior change, and if it had to be expressed in one sentence the best way of stating it would be to say that the Church evangelizes when she seeks to convert, solely through the divine power of the message she proclaims, both the personal and collective consciences of people, the activities in which they engage, and the lives and concrete milieu which are theirs. (EN 18)
5. For the Church it is a question not only of preaching the Gospel in ever wider geographic areas or to ever greater numbers of people, but also of affecting and as it were upsetting, through the power of the Gospel, mankind's criteria of judgment, determining values, points of interest, lines of thought, sources of inspiration and models of life, which are in contrast with the Word of God and the plan of salvation. (EN 19)
6. The evangelizing task of the CM leader is, therefore, very clear:
 - 6.1. Bringing the Good News into all environments.

- 6.2. Transforming humanity from within.
- 6.3. Making possible the purpose of Evangelization, that is, by the power of the message proclaimed, to convert the personal and collective consciences of people, their activities, their lives and their environments.
7. The evangelizing task of the CM leader will render concrete – completely and definitively, I think – when he or she manages to reach and transform through the power of the Gospel, both in himself or herself and in the others:
 - 7.1. The criteria of judgment,
 - 7.2. The determining values,
 - 7.3. The points of interest,
 - 7.4. The lines of thought,
 - 7.5. The sources of inspiration,
 - 7.6. The models of life.
8. Do we understand well what it means to put into practice the contents of EN no. 18?
 - 8.1. *Bringing the Good News into all environments*: Evangelizing by means of what we say and do, is a task of 24 hours a day...
 - 8.2. *Transforming humanity from within*: this is conversion, the work of a whole life, a true change of mentality.
 - 8.3. *Making possible the purpose of Evangelization: by the power of the message proclaimed, to convert the personal and collective conscience of people, their activities, their lives and their environments*: that is the same as changing the world, from where we live, as leaven.
9. Do we understand well what it means to put into practice the contents of EN no. 19? It is *to reach and transform through the power of the Gospel*:
 - 9.1. *The criteria of judgment*: The world judges with social, political, economic, philosophical, prejudiced, racist, excluding criteria... Transformed by the power of the Gospel, they will become criteria of: justice, respect, love, solidarity, welcome...
 - 9.2. *The determining values*: The determining values of the world are: money, social position, possession of material goods, high positions in professional life... Transformed by the power of the Gospel, the values will become... love for the other, humility, simplicity, joy, honesty, friendship...
 - 9.3. *The points of interest*: The points of interest in the world are: fame, professional and social ascension, sports, fun, fashion... Transformed by the power of the Gospel, the points of interest will become... the needs of other people, the good that one can do to the needy of countries that are in conflict or in war, the political commitment to a better world, in all senses...
 - 9.4. *The lines of thought*: The world's lines of thought are... me and my family in the first place, each one should take care of their own problems and their needs, I do what I like, I do not care about others... Transformed by the power of the Gospel, the lines of thought will be: I am the brother or the sister of all the men and

women of humanity, what the hungry people suffer in Africa is my problem, if there is suffering here or there, it is Christ's suffering and, therefore, it is my problem...

- 9.5. *The sources of inspiration:* The inspiring sources of the world are... the event that leads to wealth, the professional competence that transforms men into magnates, the courses that promise that unknown people can become celebrities... Transformed by the power of the Gospel, the inspiring sources will be... the holiness, the humility, the prayer, the reading of the Word, the writings of those who dedicate themselves to showing the Way, the Truth, the Life...
- 9.6. *The models of life:* The models of life of humanity are... soccer players, famous actors, politicians of international projection... Transformed by the power of the Gospel, the models of life will be... holy men and women either known or anonymous who give their lives for the others, whether through official martyrdom, or because their lives were uncomfortable to the oppressors, men and women whom nobody knew, but who help by their humble lives to save other lives...

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Secretary to the OMCC during the term of Brazil (2002-2005).

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