

Formation in Relational Maturity – F.i.R.M.  
Competencies/Benchmarks – Knowledge, Skills, Values, Attitudes

Module 1 – Affective Maturity

- Understanding of core elements of affective maturity and finding similarity with others in the journey
- Knowledge of Dr. Weber's 6 Markers of Human Maturation
- Ability to critically evaluate situations where affective maturity is essential to priestly effectiveness and collaborative ministry, and apply in a problem-solving manner
- Ability to identify personal areas of strength and needed growth regarding affective maturity
- Recognition of the value for ongoing attention to strengthening one's affective maturity throughout formation and post-ordination
- Ability to describe the relationship between affective maturity and intimacy needs
- Self-examination of one's ability to regulate and thereby appropriately express difficult emotions such as sadness, shame, loneliness, or discouragement

Module 2 - Intimacy

- Broadened understanding of intimacy including: cultural variations and the relationship with psychosexual maturity and overall mental well-being in the priesthood
- Increased awareness and self-knowledge regarding one's ability to cultivate intimate encounters with others
- Awareness of Len Sperry's 8 barriers to intimacy
- Able to identify barriers to male intimacy and strategies to overcome
- Demonstrated understanding of the risks associated with loneliness in priestly life including the impact on mental well-being and potential for misuse of power
- Able to identify the skills that foster greater intimacy and help one to grow in openness to close, compassionate, and self-revealing relationships with others (e.g., creating safety, the art of self-disclosure, expression of empathy, tolerance for diversity, emotional attunement)

Module 3 – Sexual Self-Knowledge and Integration

- Understanding of psychosexual maturity components and sexual integration
- Increased awareness, insight, and comfortability addressing basic sexual education information
- Able to engage in an examination of one's attitudes, values, and feelings regarding human sexuality as well as one's own sexuality and psychosexual developmental history (e.g., family influence, abuse)
- Understanding of sexual identity dimensions and how these are expressed in relationship
- Identification of barriers to healthy sexuality, intimacy and friendships, and strategies to effectively address these concerns
- Demonstrated understanding of markers of healthy sexuality and integration (McClone)
- Able to integrate an understanding of sexuality as "gift" and key to relational maturity and spirituality including how to cultivate healthy heterosexual relationships with women

Module 4 – Relationships with Women in Ministry

- Able to identify the qualities and benefits of celibate intimacy and of healthy, "virtuous" friendships/relationships with women
- Knowledge and understanding regarding the different types of intimacy that foster priestly well-being and a strong commitment to celibate life
- Greater appreciation for the "feminine genius" and the complimentary nature of male-female relationships to further the mission of the Church
- Able to explain the meaning of sexual integration, assertive sexuality, and the value for practicing strategies for dealing with sexual feelings
- Identification of and appreciation for the risks of unintegrated sexual identity in ministry work with women
- Demonstrated ability to assess one's current capacity for healthy celibate relationships with women including acknowledgement of one's integration of the values of and commitment to celibacy

Module 5 – Intentional Celibacy in Formation

- Greater knowledge and understanding of the dimensions of celibacy; able to identify and reframe unhealthy and limiting attitudes and understandings of celibacy
- Able to identify the skills necessary for devoting to a healthy celibate life
- Able to discern one's motives for choosing celibacy
- Integration of a theological understanding of celibacy; sexual and spiritual dimensions of one's life
- Growth in recognition and understanding of the role of celibate intimacy in the life of a priest
- Identification of risks one faces in a celibate life and how to manage

Module 6 – Clericalism – Priests and the Power of Relational Maturity

- Ability to critically reflect upon and discuss the theories of how clericalism develops and the contributing roles of both clergy and laity
- Understanding of strategies to disempower a clerical culture and support a priesthood marked by humble service
- Ability to identify both overt and covert clericalist attitudes, behaviors, and assumptions
- Engagement in an authentic reflection and exploration of one's experiences of clericalism and impact on self, others, and Church
- Understanding of the virtue of relational humility and its value to a new culture of priesthood
- Increased awareness of and value for a reformed Church and the complimentary roles of pastor and lay ministry

Module 7 – Interpersonal Management: Priest as Pastor

- Ability to describe in detail emotional intelligence competencies and their practical application to ministry work
- Understanding of how to apply conflict management skills in a variety of situations in the Church
- Increased value for non-competitive and mutually supportive and emotionally sensitive fraternal relationships
- Improved communication skills: active listening, empathy/attunement, humility, and respectful dialogue for differences
- Examination of diverse evidence, attitudes, and perspectives regarding technology and how to effectively use in ministry
- Knowledge and practice of teamwork and collaborative skills including identification of those that require further development

Module 8 – Ethical Relational Leadership in Ministry

- Awareness of the elements of ethical leadership; behaviors, values, etc.
- Understanding of how self-differentiated leaders conduct themselves
- Able to explore the possible impacts of clerical leadership roles (e.g., conflict, burnout, discouragement, etc.)
- Increased value for shared power and co-responsibility in Church ministry
- Skills for ethical leadership and areas for growth noted
- Understanding of the value of expressing both strength and warmth as a leader