
Pope Francis: “priests wishing to serve as Holy See’s diplomats should carry out one-year missionary service in a diocese”

“To introduce into the curriculum of priests preparing to enter service in the Holy See's diplomatic corps a year of missionary work in a particular Church diocese so that they learn the apostolic zeal of going out, outside their own diocese of origin”. Pope Francis asked this in a letter to the President of the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy, Mgr. Joseph Marino, reiterating the desire already expressed in the recent Amazon Synod that “priests preparing for the diplomatic service of the Holy See devote a year of their training to missionary service in a diocese”. “I am convinced - Pope Francis wrote - that such an experience will be useful for all the young men preparing for or beginning priestly service, but especially for those who will someday be called to work with the Pontifical Representatives and, afterwards, will in turn become Envoys of the Holy See to nations and particular Churches”. “Future diplomats of the Holy See also need to acquire, in addition to a solid priestly and pastoral formation and the specific training offered by this Academy, a personal experience of mission outside their own diocese of origin, sharing a portion of their journey with the missionary Churches and their communities, participating in the daily activity of evangelization”. To that end, Pope Francis invited the President of the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy to “enrich the Academy’s formation curriculum with a year dedicated entirely to missionary service in the particular Churches spread throughout the world”, starting with the “students who will begin their formation in the next academic year 2020/2021”. Hence he pointed to the need to start “close collaboration with the Secretariat of State and, more precisely, with the Section for the Diplomatic Staff of the Holy See, as well as with Pontifical Representatives, who will certainly not fail to provide valuable assistance in identifying the local Churches that are ready to welcome the students and closely follow their experience”.

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