

Oleksandr Levytskyy

VOCATION FORMATION AS THE BASIS OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE PRIESTHOOD

1. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The importance of vocation to the priesthood and monastic life is pointed out by the Holy Father Benedict XVI, who has mentioned that they are born from the experience of personal meeting with Christ, from the confidential and genuine dialogue with him, realizing his will. The Pope explains how important it is to “grow in the experience of faith, understanding it as a deep relationship with Jesus.”¹ According to Benedict XVI, church communities and priests play a vital role in facilitating this encounter with God. In particular, in his message, the Roman High Priest expressed the wish that there would be enough devoted priests who could accompany young people on their way, helping to recognize Christ – the Way, Truth and Life, so that young men and girls, in their turn, “among many superficial and passing proposals could develop their attention to the values, high goals and radical decisions to serve other people like Jesus did.”²

REV. OLEKSANDR LEVYTSKYI, PH.D. – Faculty of Theology, Ivano-Frankivsk Academy of John Chrysostom; Ivano-Frankivsk, 41a Svitla st., Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine; e-mail: olevytsky@ukr.net; <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9235-3887>

¹ *Poslannya Svyatyyshoho Ottsya Venedykta XVI z nahody 50-ho usesvitnyoho dnnya molytvy za poklykannya* (17.12.2012), “Blahovisnyk Verkhovnoho Arkhiyepyskopa Ukrayinskoyi Hreko-Katolytskoyi Tserkvy” 17 (2013), p. 11.

² *Ibid.*, p. 12.

In this article we will analyze the process of formation of vocations as the basis of the institution of the priesthood. Some of the basic principles of vocation formation will be described. In particular, we will focus on the process of formation of the candidates for the priesthood in the context of decisions of synods and cathedrals, as well as decisions of the local bishops. We will emphasize the need to provide an adequate educational training for the future clergy due to the combination of training and education processes in theological seminaries. We will also discuss the process of formation of the future clergy through the family education and formation of the clergy among the peers.

The aim of the article is to explore the process of vocation formation as the basis of the institution of the priesthood.

2. STATEMENT OF BASIC MATERIALS

According to the established concept of the UGCC, the first stage in the formation of the priesthood is education of callings among the young people. The Church, as a community of worshippers, has been the main teacher. First of all, the clergy are responsible for the fulfillment of tasks in this sphere, but other worshippers should also contribute to the formation of vocations, both to priestly and monastic life.³ Thus, the main document of the UGCC on the priestly formation states: “the potential candidates to the priesthood should recognize their calling in the dialogue with the community of the Church.”⁴

Lord Jesus Christ calls to the priesthood Himself but this calling is formed in the environment of the Church, as well as for the Church.

Being aware of its role, the UGCC hierarchy has been carrying out a series of activities to encourage its worshippers to act together towards the formation of vocations to spiritual life and devotion to serving God. Most

³ *Poslannya blazh. Lyubomyra Huzara virnym UHKTS z nahody proholoshennya 2009 r. – Rokom khrystyianskoho poklykannya z osoblyvym naholosom na svyashchenychomu poklykanni* (31.12.2008), “Blahovisnyk Verkhovnoho Arkhiyepyskopa Ukrayinskoyi Hreko-Katolytskoyi Tserkvy” 9 (2009), p. 174.

⁴ Patriarshyy Synod Yepyskopiv Ukrayinskoyi Hreko-Katolytskoyi Tserkvy. 2009. *Napryamy pidhotovky kandydativ do svyashchenstva v Ukrayinskiy Hreko-Katolytskiy Tserkvi, uporyadnyky o. Svyatoslav Shevchuk i o. Bohdan Danylo*. Kyiv [henceforth cited as: Patriarshyy Synod], para. 8.

of them have found their practical dimension and action over the recent years. By its decision, the Synod of Bishops declared 2009 to be “the year of calling, with a special emphasis on the vocation to priesthood,”⁵ when a number of events were held for this celebration. In addition, the synod and the Head of the Church repeatedly addressed their messages to the worshippers, taking into account this topic. A special role was given to the prayer for calling. In the time of worship, the duty to pray by the whole community was introduced to the worshippers and they were encouraged to pray privately for calling. In one of the messages of Archbishop L. Guzar it was stated: “Each of you should always ask yourself whether you perform your calling adequately and godly and whether you sincerely try to help children and young people to recognize and realize their calling.”⁶ It is stated that the development and growth of the Church requires good spiritual leaders, such as appropriately trained and dedicated priests. The hierarchy invited all members of the Church to reflect on the sacred character and importance of the priestly calling to figure out what the church community can do to ensure that priests are exemplary clerics of God and serve for the common good of the whole Church and their people. At the same time, in the reflections on calling and priesthood, the Head of the Church drew attention to the understanding of the approach to the formation of vocations: “When we talk about calling, and most importantly, when we are asked to pray for the priestly calling, we usually think that our main and the only task is to ask our Lord to call enough number of candidates to a priestly state, or, in other words, to fill our seminaries. Entry into the seminary is certainly a very important element, as it begins to carry out a priestly calling, but it is far from resolving the entire question of vocation to the priestly state. First of all, it must be said that training at the seminary is preceded by other stages of this calling.”⁷ That is why the Synod of Bishops encouraged the members of the Church, as well as priests and deacons, to pray for the calling, first of all for those who entered this holy state to live and complete their vocation in it according to God’s will.

⁵ *Postanovy 42-yi sesiyi Synodu Yepyskopiv Kyievo-Halytskoho Verkhovnoho Arkhiyepyskopstva UHKTS. Lviv-Bryukhovychi 17-18 hrudnya 2008*, “Blahovisnyk Verkhovnoho Arkhiyepyskopa Ukrayinskoyi Hreko-Katolytskoyi Tserkvy” 8 (2008), p. 1.

⁶ *Poslannya blazh. Lyubomyra Huzara*, p. 174.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

In the process of recognition, the calling hierarchy distinguished the following stages: prayer, personal continuous communication with God, dialogue with the rector or confessor; joining the seminary and recognition of vocation during training and formation as well as the formation process itself in the seminary.⁸ The candidate for the priesthood must understand that he will not be able to recognize the calling on his own. Along the way he will be accompanied by the Lord and mentors devoted to the Church. Besides, it is impossible to hear and feel the calling without the practice of prayer. In the dialogue with the Dean, the confessor, the priest, responsible for the calling, or the bishop, a candidate for the priesthood can understand certain spiritual things, the essence of his calling and the tasks that await him, as the servant of God. Often, the devout experienced members of his family or the parish community can also help a young man to recognize the priestly calling. During the preparation to the seminary, which provides for the collection and submission of the relevant documentation on the personal and spiritual life of a person. Spiritual, intellectual and personal abilities of the candidate are confirmed through the entrance examinations as well as through physical and mental health checks. The decisive and most important stage in the process of admission to the seminary is blessing of the ruling bishop. The seminary program, which covers the universal human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral formations of the candidate, includes above all, the process of in-depth work on the religious nature of the individual. It should help the candidate for priesthood to defeat personal shortcomings and to begin an in-depth spiritual life.⁹ The Church leaders focus their attention on understanding of the calling itself and on realizing of the responsibility for the accepted gift and tasks. Every candidate must understand that to become a part of the priesthood one must be able to bear the ministry of Jesus Christ to God's people and the Church. The synod calls the above steps the essential elements in the perception of the religious calling.¹⁰

⁸ *Pastyrskie poslannya Synodu Yepyskopiv UHKTS z nahody zakinchennya Roku khrystyianskoho poklykannya z naholosom na svyashchenyche poklykannya* (19.12.2009), "Blahovisnyk Verkhovnoho Arkhiyepyskopa Ukrayinskoyi Hreko-Katolytskoyi Tserkvy" 9 (2009), p. 74.

⁹ *The Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests*. A statement of the U.S. Catholic Bishops, Washington 2001, p. 28.

¹⁰ *Pastyrskie poslannya Synodu Yepyskopiv*, p. 81.

In an interview, Bishop S. Shevchuk emphasized the important direction of education of the future priests in the UGCC, based on the modern conditions and needs of the Church: “When it comes to Ukraine, we need to understand that all the callings that God gives to the Church is a great responsibility. It is undeniable that upbringing in a monastery or seminary is the fulfilment of the duty and acceptance of the gift of calling that the Lord sends to his Church. It is necessary to nurture calling by directing it to the specific circumstances in which that calling is given to us today. For every gift of vocation is given in specific historical circumstances, in the context of the pastoral challenges in which the Church lives today. Therefore, missionary education today is one of the most important components of education, as such. After all, today our Church is a global Church, which lives all over the world. Therefore, whoever prepares for the priesthood today must understand that his calling will be carried out in the context of the global Church. This means that a seminary student who comes to the seminary today will probably perform his ministry far beyond that particular land, city or village where he was born.”¹¹ Moreover, education of the missionary spirit in candidates for priesthood is especially important due to the significant migration of UGCC worshippers from Ukraine to other states of Europe and North America. This is primarily due to the employment problem. Clerics must meet this challenge of the modern times and be with the worshippers wherever they need it.

One of the regular meetings of the Commission of the Priestly Formation of the UGCC considered practical aspects of the formation of callings, where it was stated that parish, as the smallest church community, should be considered as one of the primary environments of the formation of callings.¹² At the lowest level, where a worshipper meets the environment of the Church and the face of a clergyman, where the deep knowledge of God and the Church takes place, a new calling may be born. By example of his life, the priest teaches about God, awakens the desire to respond to

¹¹ Intervyu z vl. Svyatoslavom Shevchukom: *Toy, khto syohodni hotuyetsya do svyashchenstva, povynen rozumity, shcho yoho poklykannya bude zdiysnyvatys u konteksti hlobalnoyi Tserkvy* (1.10.2010), http://osbmpt.at.ua/news/toj_khto_sogodni_gotuetsja_do_svyashchenstva_povinen_rozumity_shho_jogo_poklikannja_bude_zdijsnjuvatisja_u_konteksti_globalnoji_cerkvi/2010-10-01-207 [accessed: 18.05.2019].

¹² *Rol svyashchennosluzhytelya u formuvanni svyashchenykh poklykan. Brazyliya-Ivayi 27-30.08.2011*, in: *Materialy zasidannya Komisiyi svyashchenychoyi formatsiyi UHKTS*, para. 7.

the Christ's call to follow Him. By the intensity of his spiritual life, peace, patience, goodness, mercy, faith, mildness and restraint, he gives a true example of God's life, encouraging others to follow the Lord. With his ministry, the shepherd sows the grain of God's calling in the soul of young people. Among the practical actions, the Commission of the Priestly Formation proposes the following means of calling formation: to encourage children and young men to participate in service in the temple, in particular, in the performance of divine services, to read the Apostle, to participate in singing, to be grateful.¹³ Preaching, in particular during the divine services, as well as catechism, personal meetings, pilgrimages, summer camps, recollections, missions, visiting a seminary with willing candidates – all these should be considered as another plane of awakening of callings. The priest also feeds the calling with his personal spiritual experience of God, with the introduction into practice of a wider and a deeper prayer, and with the service of those in need.

Parish was also called the main centre of education of callings during the meetings of the regular session of the UGCC Cathedral. One of the speakers noted: "Parish plays an important role in the ministry of callings, which is an important stage of formation [...], and provides the best conditions for their holding. In the parish it is necessary to help young people to recognize their calling [...]" [Kovbych 2011, 25]. If the parish, as a community, as well as the priests who serve in it, really understand their role and tasks, then this vocation will develop as a good fruit of the Church, in the Church and for the Church. In the parish a worshipper benefits from the experience of church life from the very childhood. For him the parish becomes another community of persons, outside the family, which approves his path to discovery and knowledge of God. It is important for the calling to give a personal example of faith. It is often necessary to direct a young man in line with faith and calling, to invite to closer participation in parish life and service in the temple, participation in various parish groups or organizations [Solyuk 2011, 43-45].

At the regular meeting of rectors of the Greek Catholic Seminary in 2011, the Patriarchal Commission of the Priestly Formation proposed for consideration by the Synod another document that contributed to the integrity of the concept of priestly formation – "Guidelines for Pastoral Callings."

¹³ *Ibid.*, para. 8.

At the stage of its preparation, at the meeting of rectors, the topics on the role of the family, community, priest and bishop in the formation of callings, reflections on the recognition of callings, as well as the development of a draft document on the topic of pastoral callings were considered.¹⁴ These guidelines were subsequently approved by the Synod of Bishops and published as a document created by the Patriarchal Priestly Education Commission. In his opening remarks, the Chairman of the Commission, Bishop K. Novakovskiy, noted that certain instructions were provided for “a better understanding of one’s role in the education of vocations to the priesthood and life devoted to our Church.”¹⁵ Each member of the Church, according to the ministry to which he is called, is responsible for the prevention of the clergy shortages. The guidelines were set up to inspire bishops, priests, monks, Christian families with prayer and to help them to know and carry out God’s callings.

This document pays special attention to the above-mentioned aspects of the birth of callings in parishes. It is noted that it is the role of the parish priest that is an important component in the ministry of vocations. A priest, plays a special role in the formation of callings through a good word and example of his life. Every clergyman is called to be a living icon of Christ the Good Shepherd. Joyfully accepting all the difficulties of his ministry, the priest must present a true, sincere and attractive way of sacred life. The parish community as a place of living faith becomes a meeting point for children and young people and promotes a new calling. A particular, a primary task of a priest and parish priests in the field of pastoral vocations is personal and collective prayer with their parishioners for calling to spiritual state. Besides, the priests should encourage children and young men to participate actively in church services. It is also their task to take actions and influence through the sacrament of confession and spiritual guidance (PKSV 3). Every priest nourishes the calling through his prophetic ministry: careful preparation of the sermon and the explanation of the Holy

¹⁴ *U Brazyliyi vidbuvayetsya zustrich rektoriv dukhovnykh seminariy UHKTS* (29.08.2011), http://ugcc.org.ua/news_single.98.html?&L=4&tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=5861&cHash=605dd3d22795680d4581d51f5608e003 [accessed: 4.04.2019].

¹⁵ Patriarsha komisiya svyashchenychoho vykhovannya. Napryamni plekannya dukhovnykh poklykan v UHKTS. 15.07.2012, Nyu-Vestminster [henceforth cited as: PKSV], <http://dds.edu.ua/ua/articles/2/duhovna-svitlytsa/povchannja/1109-napriamni-plekannja-svaschenychyh-poklykan-2012.html> [accessed: 20.06.2019], no. 2.

Scriptures; spiritual and catechetical sciences; regular meetings with young people; visiting of families of their parish; organization of pilgrimages, missions and summer camps; meetings with seminarians, young priests, monks, nuns and other young people, as well as through the charity, helping disabled, lonely and elderly people, orphans and people with special living needs; honest, reasonable and moderate management of parishes; ability to involve people in cooperation in various areas of the parish life (PKSV 3).

The Church, as a community of worshippers in which the calling is born, must direct its pastoral care to vocations and the formation of these callings to priestly and monastic life. Clergy and monks should take one of the leading places in all activities, related to the formation of callings, and should contribute to their renewal and improvement. The Church must constantly remind of the principles of dignity and duties of a priest if it wants the God's calling to be heard and correctly understood [Mudryy 1998, 255].

A bishop as a chief coach and pastor of the Church on places and certain territories, in addition to other duties is responsible for taking care of pastoral callings and training of the clergy. At one of the meetings of the UGCC, Priestly Formation Commission identified the following practical measures that should be taken by the diocesan bishop to fulfil his duty of pastoral calling properly: to take care of preaching on the subject of spiritual callings, especially in the time of pastoral visits to parishes, various educational and training institutions; to ensure that the subject of vocations is covered in the process of catechization; to define the periods or days of the year devoted to the in-depth preaching and prayer for calling; to organize the pilgrimage tours on this topic; to organize the meetings of the altar wives of their diocese; to hold various cultural, artistic or sport events to gather young people and to talk about calling. For the permanent pastoral work in the field of callings it is possible to create a special diocesan commission, to appoint in his diocese a promoter of vocations.¹⁶ All actions of the diocesan bishop in these directions should be permanent. The diocesan bishop should be active and he must ensure that every effort is made, and concrete measures have been taken to promote the development of callings [Andriyishyn 1998, 264-65].

¹⁶ *Rol yeparkhialnoho yepyskopa u formuvanni poklykan. Brazyliya-Ivayi 27-30.08.2011*, in: *Materialy zasidannya Komisiyi svyashchenychoyi formatsiyi UHKTS*, para. 9.

According to the guidelines defined by the patriarchal commission, the task of the Bishop who is responsible for education of callings for priestly and monastic life is to pray for calling and to encourage his Church to pray, to preach and promote to preaching about spiritual calling, especially during the canonical visits. To facilitate priestly callings regardless of the actual needs of the diocese. One month a year to devote time to reflections and work on spiritual calling, to organize a youth pilgrim's journey dedicated to vocation. To take care of calling through the media, encouraging spiritual ministry in the Church. Once a year to devote a meeting with the clergy of the diocese to the topic of spiritual callings; to cherish the respect for the spiritual state (PKSV 1). The Diocesan bishop must establish a commission for spiritual callings in his diocese and appoint a diocesan promoter of callings to chair that commission. It should include the representatives of the seminary, diocesan clergy, institutions dedicated to life and laity. The bishop must constantly seek and cherish the calling by the example of his own life and his episcopal ministry in the diocese.

By continuing the realization of his task in supporting, recognizing and cultivating the callings for the priesthood, the bishop must constantly take control over those vocations that are approved and verified in the seminaries. The bishop, in whose jurisdiction the seminary is, is responsible for the decisions concerning the acceptance of the candidates in the seminary according to the criteria defined by the Synod of Bishops and approved by the seminary charter. He shares his responsibility in this regard with the Rector of the Seminary and other members of the Admission Commission, who are appointed by his decree. At the same time, he must respect their opinion and their decision.

The Second Vatican Council shifted responsibilities to bishops to control the formation and education of the candidates for the priesthood through the implementation of their duties. The seminary rules require to devote separate periods and days for more in-depth and intensive spiritual exercises, reorganization and adaptation of the system of seminary education to the harmonious complement of philosophical and theological subjects.¹⁷ Implementing these guides, the UGCC hierarchy has repeatedly discussed

¹⁷ Sacrosanctum Concilium Oecumenicum Vaticanum II, *Decretum de institutione sacerdotali Optatam totius* (28.10.1965), AAS 58 (1966), p. 713-27 [henceforth cited as: OT], no. 12, 14.

the role of the diocesan bishop in the formation of clergy in different planes. A number of orders of legal nature have been accepted, and a message of hierarchy that highlights the aspects of the bishop's role in this mission of the Church has been published. A bishop must be an expression of the will and action of the Spirit of God, he must be involved in the formation of future priests. His presence among the worshippers, and in particular among the seminarians, should strengthen the pastoral character of the formation of candidates for spiritual state and give them a sense of responsibility for the life of the Church. The presence of the bishop, that was mentioned earlier, is not only about his personal presence, but it should also receive his continuation in the appointed mentors: a rector, a priest, educators and teachers. Together they are responsible for the formation and therefore their permanent connection with the bishop becomes mandatory [Bertone 1984, 476]. According to the UGCC Clergy Formation concept: "He is the one who authentically recognizes the inner call of the Holy Spirit. The Bishop must perceive future priests as brothers and friends, because they are also called to participate in Christ's priesthood and ministry" (Patriarshyy Synod, para. 12).

Caring for the training of the candidates for the priesthood, the Synod of Bishops of the UGCC asked the diocesan bishops to attend the seminary frequently, especially when it comes to those to be initiated.¹⁸ Future priests must have a living example and the presence of their principal mentor, like the apostles were together with the Lord and witnessed everything that Christ said and taught. In addition, the Bishop has to try his best to find the capable candidates who could become seminary teachers after the proper training. To this end, each bishop has to send the capable persons to foreign studios, to receive scientific degrees and profound knowledge in various disciplines of sacred sciences.

Among the other practical instructions, it is the duty of the bishops to take into account the recommendations of the rectors of the seminaries and to respect the decision of the rector concerning candidates for the priesthood.¹⁹ This emphasized the important role of mentors and educators who know the seminary students better, so their thoughts have to be listened to.

¹⁸ *Rishennya i Postanovy Synodu Yepyskopiv Ukrayinskoyi Hreko-Katolytskoyi Tserkvy*, 14-21 zhovtnya 1996 r., Lviv, para. 13.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 14.

The bishop, who is the founder of the diocesan or inter-diocesan seminary has the main duty to monitor the process of preparation of candidates. He is responsible for taking care of the appropriate staffing and financial support of the institution. The Rector and the community of the clergy and educators should not deal with the financial support of the seminary in order not to be distracted from their main tasks. Every diocesan bishop who sends to the seminary a candidate for the priesthood of his diocese, is responsible for covering all the funds necessary for his education and maintenance (Patriarshyy Synod, para. 14). The bishops are also instructed to promote the exchange of seminarians and priests from Ukraine to enrich the pastoral experience and spiritual rapprochement with the mother Church.²⁰ This is due to the fact that for many years the UGCC in Ukraine was isolated from its worshippers in the diaspora due to the Soviet regime and the official liquidation of the Uniate Church on the territory of the USSR. Many generations of worshippers and candidates for the priesthood grew up without close connection and contacts, so after the Uniate Church came out of hiding, there was a very different pastoral situation among the worshippers all over the world.

The personality and the role of a bishop is a key feature to the entire territory of the diocese, as a small Church. The Bishop, in his person, associates the Seminary Community with the Diocese, and makes an important contribution to the development of unity with the Universal Church. In addition, he formulates the essence and purpose of the seminary (Patriarshyy Synod, para. 13). The structure and functioning of the seminary depends on him, as the legislator of the diocese. All these aspects the Bishop defines in the statute of this institution. During each academic and educational year he must be informed of the practical state and atmosphere that prevails in the seminary, among its pupils and educators [Czerwik 1993, 429]. It allows to amend the charter or the structure of the educational institution in case of necessity.

The Second Vatican Council calls the family the first seminary (OT 2), pointing out that it is here, in the primary environment, where the calling for the priesthood of the future candidate is formed. Despite this, the UGCC Synod of Bishops, in its concept of the formation of priests, noted: “The process of preserving of callings begins at home, in the Christian family

²⁰ Ibid., para. 15.

and in the Christian community. Parents are called upon to encourage their sons to respond with courage to God's calling for the priestly or monastic ministry" (Patriarshyy Synod, para. 16).

A family is the primary source of education and no other organization could replace what a person receives in the family. Therefore, the task of Christian parents is to lay the foundations of morality and Christian values in their children from the very birth and to encourage them to communicate with God. Thanks to the initial Christian formation of children, there is a primary formation of callings, which later develops into the next stages.

In the recommendations and proposals of the Commission of the Priestly Formation of the UGCC, among the practical measures for the formation of vocations in the family, it is proposed to carry out the following: pray with children, give an example of Christian life, actively participate in the life of the parish community, let their children to serve God, support their children who feel the God's call so that they can respond to it.²¹ Relatives should not create any obstacles to the development and establishment of their child's calling. Otherwise, the truth that calling to priestly or monastic life is another great gift of God, especially for the people who are called, as well as for their families, can be lost [Kushka 2004, 114-15].

The role of a family in the formation of callings is indispensable, because education of callings begins at home, in a Christian family. The Christian families, that are strong in love and prayer for God, become a fertile ground for the growth of callings for priestly and monastic life. Family is the very place where children learn for the first time to know and love God, listen to His words and answer His call. For the rise of callings in the family, it is important that parents be an icon of God's love for their children; teach children to pray at home; take an active part in liturgical and parish life together with their children; often perform the holy sacrament of confession and Eucharist; give an example of virtuous life; learn the truth of the Christian faith and teach their children; teach their children to be generous, sacrificial and willing to rely on God's grace; speak positively to children about the greatness of service in the Church (PKSV 4).

By their daily life a family should cherish the priestly calling through the example of respect for Christian values. The example of one's own

²¹ *Rol rodyny u formuvanni svyashchenykh poklykan. Brazyliya-Ivayi 27-30.08.2011, in: Materialy zasidannya Komisiyi svyashchenychoyi formatsiyi UHKTS, para. 12.*

parents has a primary importance in the process of formation of a human and a person, having influence on their whole life, as well as in any specific calling, in particular in the Church and for the Church [Kovbych 2011, 25]. Adults should speak about priestly and monastic life with great respect, without judgment and ridicule, even if they have the examples of ailments of such persons, because such words affect the soul and consciousness of a child [Solyuk 2011, 42], discouraging children even to think later about devotion to God in one or another calling. In his message His Beatitude L. Guzar said: “The awakening and growth of priestly calling is facilitated by a good Christian family, which is like a cradle or a greenhouse for new spiritual callings. In the family of worshippers, the priesthood is treated with respect. Even when it goes about an unworthy priest, they talk about him with pain, not with anger [...]. There is no chance that a priestly calling will be a subject of excitement in the families for whom money is the greatest value, or in which kinship is the most important concern for parents.”²²

The Synod of Bishops of the UGCC drew the families' attention to such aspects of their role in the formation of callings: “A calling, or an invitation to the priesthood, comes from our Heavenly Father. However, the soil in which the grain of calling is sown, is a Christian family, the home Church, which is open to God in everyday life. In order to have a calling to priestly service, the Christian family has to be conscious in their mission and task and be in the unity with the Blessed Trinity.”²³ Through the daily prayer, listening to the Word of God, and by the example of their own righteous lives, parents teach their children to communicate with the Holy Trinity at home, at school, or at leisure. Raising children is the primary duty of parents. A good Christian education, which is a consequence of a proper family life, helps children to understand the God's plan to create and save, guarantees the full development at the universal human, psychological and spiritual levels to them, and prepares children for the responsible adult life. This lays the foundations for the close unity with God, which can lead to the birth of vocation. At the same time, it should be understood that God's calling is not a choice of profession or work, but an answer to the call, that comes from the Heavenly Father. Parents should contribute to the formation of a good Christian basis for their children, help children to get oriented

²² *Poslannya blazh. Lyubomyra Huzara virnym*, p. 174.

²³ *Pastyrskie poslannya Synodu Yepyskopiv*, p. 82.

in their life calling, and to support the child in the case of expression of a calling to a priestly or monastic life [Adamiak 1997, 187].

Another important environment for the formation of callings among the youth during the growth period is the ambience of peers. It is important that parents encourage and support the participation of their children in children's and youth church groups or organizations established on a Christian basis, in particular, those operating at temples or the Church as a whole. In such an environment, children and young people can be claimed in life with God. Peer groups, despite various shortcomings, remain a priority place for youth and children to meet and communicate [Duda 2011, 13]. In the circle of their peers or age groups, young people begin to show themselves, try new opportunities, forces, find their place and importance for someone and for God. In such societies, young people form their vision and experience of independent social relations. A youth group becomes the very circle of people with whom children or young people begin to identify themselves, it becomes a place where the youth can find themselves and grow to openness and comprehensive love. Such groups are essential for young people who grew up in families where there was a lack of warmth and love. In the Christian group and society (Patriarshyy Synod, para. 17) young people can find the deep meaning of their lives and learn to live in harmony with the values that give meaning and foundation to their life.

A person by the nature is a social being. By God's providence, people begin their life path, walk through and complete it in different human communities. Apart from the Christian family and parishes, there are the following communities: Christian schools, societies and organizations, operating at churches (PKSV 5). All of them affect the formation of callings in their own way. The Church and parish groups offer to the future candidates for priesthood and monastic life the experience of being in the community, raise children and young people in Christian values, ideals, patterns of behavior, relationships and life.

CONCLUSIONS

The concept of the formation of clergy in the modern practice of the UGCC is concentrated in several main groups: decisions of the Synod of Bishops, special documents such as "Directions of training of candidates for

the priesthood,” Program of evangelization and missionary education of the candidates for the priesthood in the seminaries of the UGCC, “Guidelines for Pastoral Callings,” messages of the UGCC hierarchy etc. Special commissions for the education and formation of the clergy, theological education, as well as separate sessions of the Patriarchal Cathedral devoted to the formation and training of future priests have made their contribution to the development and formation of this concept.

An important stage in the question of clergy remains the work on calling to spiritual state. According to the Church, the whole community of worshippers, first of all the clergy themselves, in particular, the bishop and parishes are responsible for the work on spiritual formation. At the same time, education of vocations takes place primarily in Christian families.

The UGCC concept on the issues of proper preparation of the clergy is built in accordance with the guidelines specified in the following documents of the Catholic Church: documents of the Second Vatican Council, Roman bishops and the Apostolic See, rules of the common law. Human, spiritual, pastoral and intellectual formation are the main points of the UGCC hierarchy concept that correspond to the aspects of preparing of people for the priesthood. Appropriate programs of clergy education in the UGCC, in particular studios and formation in seminaries have been developed. All the concepts are based on the documents and norms of the Catholic Church. The main feature of the concept in the Ukrainian Church remains the emphasis on spiritual formation, in particular, the pastorship of migrants, missionary activity in general, which is due to the modern state of the Ukrainian society: migration, the territories of central, eastern and southern Ukraine, where faith and the Church are going through the stage of formation, the process of reevangelization and revival of Christianity is taking place.

REFERENCES

- Adamiak, Elżbieta. 1997. “Rola rodziny w formacji kapłana.” *Ethos* 10, no. 2-3:183-90.
- Andriyishyn, Yosyf. 1998. “Dukhovne formuvannya svyashchenykv.” In *Dokumenty Patriarshoho Soboru Ukrayinskoyi Hreko-Katolytskoyi Tserkvy. 1996. Persha sesiya, zhovten*, 262-65. Lviv: Svichado.
- Bertone, Tarcisio. 1984. “«Optatam Totius» e Nuovo Codice di Diritto Canonico.” *Seminarium* 24:469-86.
- Czerwik, Stanisław. 1993. “Osoby odpowiedzialne za formację kapłańską.” *Ateneum Kapłańskie* 85 (120): 427-41.

- Duda, Nazar. 2011. "Rol molodizhnykh orhanizatsiy v plekanni poklykan." In *Materialy pyatoyi sesiyi Patriarshoho Soboru UHKTS pro bohoposvyachene zhyttya*, 13. Brazyliya-Prudentopolis 31.08-04.09.2011.
- Kovbych, Volodymyr. 2011. "Osnovna formatsiya." In *Pyata sesiya Patriarshoho Soboru pro bohoposvyachene zhyttya v UHKTS. Materialy soboru*, 25. Brazyliya-Prudentopolis 31.08-04.09.2011.
- Kushka, Petro. 2004. "Pytannya poklykan do svyashchenychoho y chernechoho zhyttya." In *Dokumenty yeparkhialnykh soboriv UHKTS, 2001-2002 rr.*, vol. 2, 114-15. Lviv: Afisha.
- Mudryy, Sofron. 1998. "Poklykannya i formuvannya svyashchenykyv u Khrystoviy Tserkvi." In *Dokumenty Patriarshoho Soboru Ukrayinskoyi Hreko-Katolytskoyi Tserkvy. 1996. Persha sesiya, zhouten*, 240-61. Lviv: Svichado.
- Solyuk, Dzhenes. 2011. "Parafiyalna spilnota yak seredovyshche plekannya poklykan do bohoposvyachenoho zhyttya." In *Pyata sesiya Patriarshoho Soboru pro bohoposvyachene zhyttya v UHKTS. Materialy soboru*, 43-45. Brazyliya-Prudentopolis 31.08-04.09.2011.

Vocation Formation as the Basis of the Institution of the Priesthood

Summary

The study explores the process of vocations formation as the basis of the priesthood. The article presents the basic stages of development of a vocation to the priesthood. The particular attention should be paid to the emphasis on the formation of candidates for the priesthood in the context of the provisions of synods and councils, as well as the approval of local bishops. It is necessary to highlight the need to provide appropriate formation education for future clergy by combining teaching and education in a seminary. A separate issue is the process of forming the future clergy through upbringing in a family and forming them in the environment of peers.

Key words: religious vocation; formation; spiritual formation; minister

Formacja powołań jako podstawa instytucji kapłaństwa

Streszczenie

Artykuł analizuje proces formacji powołań jako podstawy kapłaństwa. W artykule zostały przedstawione podstawowe zasady powołania do kapłaństwa. Nacisk kładziony jest na formację kandydatów do kapłaństwa w kontekście decyzji synodów i soborów, a także aprobaty biskupów lokalnych. Podkreśla się potrzebę zapewnienia odpowiedniej edukacji formacyjnej przyszłym duchownym poprzez połączenie nauczania i wychowania w seminarium duchownym. Osobnym zagadnieniem jest proces formowania przyszłego duchowieństwa poprzez wychowanie w rodzinie i formowanie ich w środowisku rówieśników.

Słowa kluczowe: powołanie religijne; formacja; formacja duchowna; kapłan

Informacje o Autorze: KS. DR OLEKSANDR LEVYTSKYI – Wydział Teologii, Iwano-Frankowska Akademia Jana Chryzostoma; adres do korespondencji: Ivano-Frankivsk, 41a Svitla st., Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraina; e-mail: olevytsky@ukr.net; <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9235-3887>