

CTP/OTP PROGRAM OF THE SLOVAK SVD PROVINCE

INTRODUCTION

The Slovak Province continues with OTP/CTP programs. From 1950 to 1990, the SVD in Slovakia was prohibited by the former government. Our Province has been struggling for more than 10 years to get it established. For this reason and the lack of experienced personnel in this area we could not practice the OTP/CTP program. But in 2001 our province was started with this OTP/CTP program. In these last fifteen years we have got a positive experience with the program so far and with the OTP students coming from outside. So now we want to accept as many OTP/CTP students as we are able to accompany well.

OBJECTIVES

The Slovak Province sees CTP/OTP as

- a chance to internationalize our SVD communities;
- a chance of learning to live with people from different cultural background;
- a chance to highlight the sense of international mission awareness, to promote mission interest in Slovakia and a fruitful exchange of experiences;
- an opportunity to prepare candidates for effective cross cultural mission in various pastoral ministries in Slovakia.

The objectives for the students of the CTP/OTP in the province are:

- learning the Slovak language;
- openness to acculturation and a supervised pastoral experience after their language studies;
- growing in a missionary vocation through concrete experiences away from their country, culture and family;
- strengthening and maturing in their vocation in the Society of the Divine Word;
- broadening their understanding of Church and its missionary mandate;

CANDIDATES FOR OTP/CTP

The Slovak province offers the OTP/CTP for confreres in temporary vows from any Province of our Congregation provided that the confreres:

- are not in serious doubts about their vocations, doubts about their faith and morality,
- are physically healthy and emotionally and psychologically balanced,
- are firm in their vocational commitment,
- have an ability for learning language and a natural openness for cultural adaptation in Eastern Europe with its new challenges in the society and in the Church,
- have already finished at least one year of theology,
- are recommended by the provincial superior of the sending province; the provincial superior of the sending province informs the provincial superior of Slovakia of the expectations, talents and concerns of the candidate for OTP in Slovakia

PROGRAM

1. Responsible for the program: Fr. Thomas Tulung, SVD (OTP/CTP Director-Slovakia)
2. The length of OTP/CTP: Two years
3. An OTP student will spend the first year of his OTP program in Bratislava, living with the scholastics. During the first five months he will have an introduction into the Slovak culture and the language studies with a private teacher. During the other five months he will continue studying the Slovak language at the Comenius University in Bratislava. Also, during the first year, he will have opportunities to get to know the various areas of pastoral work of the SVD in Slovakia. As a part of the acculturation program, trips to the most interesting places and meetings with important personalities in Slovakia will be organized.
4. After the language course, the student will have three weeks of vacation. Then, he will be asked to spend the rest of his vacation either participating in the SVD's activities like "Mission holidays", where he will meet a lot of young people or participating in life and work of one of our parishes.

5. The second year of the OTP/CTP will be mainly pastoral. The pastoral area must be suitable to the formative process of the OTP student. The main areas of our program are:
- a) - Missionary animation (be part of a team that goes to parishes and schools; a participation in a sort of programs related to missionary themes; broadcasting on the radio and television when invited, summer activities with the youth called “mission holidays”, etc.)
 - b) - Participation in life and work in our SVD parishes (the parish setup offers the possibility of teaching catechesis, Biblical apostolate, liturgical services, youth group ministry, involvement in social work, justice and peace work etc.)
 - c) - Pastoral ministry with University students (the SVD’s are well-known for their pastoral work at UPC (University Pastoral Centre) in Bratislava; there are possibilities to do the work of evangelization in many ways; there is a team of catechists giving catechesis to university students and young people (RCIA); retreats for students; sharing the God’s word in small groups (Renew program); liturgical activities; helping with the preparation for marriage and family life; masses for students; different cultural programs etc.)
 - d) - Responding to new challenges in the society (Justice and Peace group, pastoral work with ethnic minorities, especially Gypsies, homeless people, etc.)

DIRECTION, REFLECTION, AND EVALUATION

Direction: The student together with his on – site supervisor of the assigned parish or the pastoral placement, set goals and timetables and clearly establish the specific job responsibilities. The on - site supervisor provides in-service training and supervision of pastoral ministry.

Reflection: The on – site supervisor arranges a meeting with the OTP participant every two weeks to reflect on his pastoral experience as a learning situation. The material for these meetings would be based on the participant's written summary of his personal experiences.

Evaluation: An ongoing reflection and written evaluations are essential parts of the OTP/CTP program.

More detailed evaluation is written twice a year.

The evaluations are done in writing separately by the participant and the supervisor and then shared and discussed. The written copies are forwarded to the OTP director, then the copies are forwarded together with a report of the director to the provincial concerned and to the formator of the sending province.

OTHERS

The OTP/CTP director nominated by the Provincial is responsible for the realization of the program. He keeps contact with the candidates and their provinces. He arranges the work regarding a visa application and all the documents needed.

Expenses: The sending province will take care of the travel expenses in coming and going back to the country of origin of the OTP/CTP student. The Slovak province takes care of all the expenses of the student, while doing the OTP in Slovakia.

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