

Handbook Of The  
Overseas Training Program /  
Cross Cultural Training Program  
(OTP / CTP)



Vietnam Province

Approved by the Provincial Council: August 5, 2015

## RATIONAL AND NATURE

“...supervised apostolic ministry is highly recommended for seminarians. Where it is feasible and seems suitable, this experience can be spent profitably in another country or culture. In this way they can strengthen their vocation, test their abilities and become familiar with their future work. (SVD Cons. 516.)

Overseas/Cross-culture Training Program (OTP/CTP) in Vietnam is a design to provide future missionaries with an early orientation into the language and culture of Vietnam as part of formation. It is hope that, under the supervision, this program will enrich the OTP/CTP student in his formation and commitment to his missionary vocation and eventually volunteer to serve the people of Vietnam.

The length of OTP/CTP in Vietnam is TWO years including: Vietnamese language / culture studies and pastoral praxis. The first year involves language program, then a year of pastoral ministry. The second year consists of an in-depth, supervised ministry experience. It is not an exposure program. The ministerial experience must be a long-term placement of twelve months.

A student is welcome to apply for a three-year program when he feels the need for a two-year language studies.

# Handbook of the OTP/ CTP in the Vietnam Province

## I. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### A. Goals:

1. To strengthen the student's vocation, test his abilities and so become familiar with his future work.
2. To provide the student with opportunities for Vietnamese culture experience and ministry so that he can gain deeper insights into his missionary vocation.
3. To deepen a sense of identity and value in the student's goal to contribute in the Vietnamese Church's mission.
4. To heighten the sense of international mission awareness and promote a fruitful exchange of experiences.

### B. Objectives

1. To deepen the student's readiness and availability for mission work in a cross culture setting.
2. To share with the student the Vietnamese cultural and religious values, development and approaches to formation and ministry in the Vietnamese context.
3. To help the student cope with language study and acculturation in the Vietnamese setting.
4. To enable the student to gain insight and knowledge of the missionary role with realistic dimensions.
5. To develop positive attitudes of self-criticism, theological reflection, professional competence and deepening self-awareness in relation to the missionary life.
6. To deepen one's personal faith and commitment to Christ, to the Church and the people of God in Vietnam and elsewhere.
7. To integrate the student's sense of identity as religious missionary with his talents, skills, knowledge and attitudes.

## II. REQUISITES

### A. From the Sending Province

1. A letter from the OTP Director or the Provincial stating the approval of the OTP student to participate in the OTP / CTP in the Vietnam Province.

### B. From the Student

1. The student's formal statement of his goals and expectations for the Vietnam OTP/CTP,
2. A brief two-page biography, indicating any specific talents, interests or desired.
3. A clerical student should at least have finished first year theology. A brother student should sufficient mastery of his particular skill/competence.
4. Good physical health. Good mental and psycho-emotional maturity. And his vocational commitment should be clear to the SVD.
5. Motivation to learn and grow in ministry.
6. Ability to reach out and take initiatives.
7. Ability for self-discipline, self-disclosure and self- evaluation.

### C. From The Director

1. Formulate local policies for the OTP/CTP program and participants in consultation with the Provincial Council and the Formation Team.
2. To clarify lines of authority and accountability for the supervisors and participants of the program.
3. To maintain contact with the OTP/CTP Director of the sending province/region.
4. To visit each OTP/CTP student in his placement site and oversee the affectivity of the program.
5. To participate in sessions when evaluations and contracts are made between the student and on-site supervisor.
6. To send the OTP Director of the sending country copies the student's formal paper works and Relatio / Evaluation.

### E. From The On-Site Supervisor

1. The on-site supervisor is a vital key in the formation of the OTP/CTP. To adequately accompany the student's formation, at least one supervisor is needed. The supervisor should have the ability to facilitate direction, reflection and evaluation on the student's ministry and religious life. He is a role model for both ministry and religious life. The responsibilities of the supervisor are to be done in collaboration with student.
2. Upon arriving to the Pastoral Site, the on-site director and the student should meet to formulate the initial contract and timetable. The draft should be prepared and written by the student himself and to be finalized with the help of the OTP Director. The purpose of this contract is to clarify and specify the mutual expectations and agreements between the student and his on-site director, and later with his supervisor to be fulfilled during the course of the OTP/CTP experience.
3. There are two areas which are critical to the newly OTP/CTP student namely, language and culture. Learning and adaptation to a different language and culture are vital in any missionary endeavor. It is the student's witnessing to his following Jesus in his seriousness of learning the language. Adapting to a new country is far more than just formal language and culture studies. The student's first months should be accompanied by the director to help him deal with cultural stress and eventually learn to function more or less comfortably in his new environment. This is the beginning step to enculturation.

### III. TIME TABLE

This timetable will cover the whole period of two to three years until the student's departure back to his home province.

#### A. General Orientation

1. Upon arrival in Vietnam, the student will be introduced and be familiarized about the country, surrounding places and transportation, other SVD communities and institutions nearby.

## B. Formal Language And Culture Program And Evaluations

1. Date of start of formal language program and date of completion. Date of preliminary evaluations of student's progress (After 6 months; end of the language studies).

## C. Duration Of Orientation For Incoming OTP/CTP Students

1. The OTP student will have two – four weeks of orientation.

## D. Placement Orientation

1. Theologate and the Main House in Nha Trang.
2. Visit and stay in SVD's parishes and communities.
3. Tour around the surrounding environment.

## E. Ministry

1. Begin the pastoral experience at the beginning of the second year.

## F. Annual Retreat

1. It should be at least 5 days of which the student can choose to make it privately or together with the local community. After the retreat, an extension of at least two days may be devoted to common reflection and relaxation.

## G. Quarterly Recollection

1. This will be done together with the local community.

## H. Local Workshops

1. Possible seminars or workshop a student may take for his personal development and formation.

## I. Evaluations

1. Midterm language evaluations

2. Final language evaluations
3. Mid-year and end of year pastoral ministry evaluations.

#### J. Supervisory Sessions

1. At least twice a semester.

#### K. Written Reports And Reflections

1. At least once a semester.

#### L. Vacation And Tours

1. Vacations are to be scheduled depending on the language program and ministry situation.
2. OTP/CTP students are encouraged to visit SVD pastoral places and communities throughout Vietnam.

#### M. Return To Home Province

2. Date of departure for home should be projected and schedule in advance at the end of

### IV. FINAL ARRANGEMENTS

Since Vietnam Province's priority is formation and is mostly subsidized by the Generalate, the sending province kindly cover all possible expenses for the in-coming OTP/CTP student, including personal needs and monthly allowance.

#### A. Expenses Of The Sending Province

1. Intercontinental travel to and return from the receiving region, including processing of travel documents.
2. Language, culture and in-service studies (includes tuition, books, board and lodging, travel expenses to and from the school)
3. Medical expenses.
4. Monthly Allowances.

## V. PRAXIS

A. Ministry: This is the main content of the OTP/CTP. Ministries in Vietnam are:

1. Ministry in our parishes.
2. Teaching English to the local confreres.
3. Formation work among our seminarians.
4. Specialized ministries:
  - Aborigines in the West and the Highlands
  - Urban poor and the migrants
  - Justice and Peace such as HIV/AIDS patients

It is to be considered that the student's transfer or residence to his pastoral placement is an extension of the formal language program. It is here that he swims into contact with the people he will eventually serve, by listening to and speaking with them in the local language. It is also expected that the student would acquire a good grasp of the background and present situations of the placement so he can be in a better position to serve the local people.

The student's spiritual growth is the threshold between his professional competence in the ministry and his vocational identity as religious missionary.

The demands of pastoral work must therefore be regulated by an ample time which he should spend for prayer life and reflection.

B. Supervision: The main concern of the field ministry is experiences of the student in the course of his stay in the pastoral placement. There are four aspects which these experiences are to be reflected upon:

1. Professional skills: How to do it? How are they performed?
2. Professional identity: Who am I? How do I feel?
3. Vocation: Is this for me, an SVD missionary to be?
4. Theological reflection: Where / Who is God in all of this?

The supervisor plays a key role in helping the student reflect on his experiences against these four aspects so that they become learning and formative opportunities for him. He accompanies the student move to a greater understanding of himself: who he is, what he believes, and why and how he functions. The supervisor helps him recognize the needs and the questions that will send him back to classes for research.

C. Evaluations: The purpose of evaluation is to enable the student to grow professionally in the ministry and to acquire skills for self-assessment so that the process becomes a natural and integral part of the student's confidence in ministry. Evaluations then become a continuing process so that it helps the student grow into the ministry in terms of his knowledge, attitude and skills. Written evaluations are to be done in the following schedules:

1. Preliminary Evaluations (3 months into the language studies).
2. Midterm Evaluations
3. Final Evaluations

Missionary service is what realizes our vocation and constantly stimulates it. Readiness to serve identifies us as disciples of the Lord Jesus: for his life is our life; his mission, our mission. (Cons. 506)