

CORE SKILLS FOR MISSIONARY MATURITY

Focus: Responsibility, Accountability, Transparency, Evaluation

I. Introduction: Forming Missionary Disciples with Integrity and Maturity

In the dynamic journey of missionary formation, the goal is not merely to produce capable ministers, but **missionary disciples who are interiorly free, communally responsible, and apostolically credible**. This requires the development of **core human and spiritual competencies** that root one's identity in Christ and shape one's daily living in mission. Among these, the virtues and skills of **Responsibility, Accountability, Transparency, and Evaluation** are foundational.

These four dimensions are not administrative tools or external expectations alone—they are deeply **relational, spiritual, and vocational**. They reflect a person's capacity to:

- Own their life and vocation (Responsibility),
- Answer truthfully for their choices (Accountability),
- Live in the light with honesty (Transparency), and
- Constantly grow through reflection and feedback (Evaluation).

In the missionary context, these are not optional qualities. The demands of **intercultural ministry, pastoral leadership, community living, and prophetic witness** all require individuals who can be entrusted with responsibility, remain accountable to others and to the Word, act with integrity even when unseen, and welcome personal and communal transformation.

This guide provides practical strategies, assessment tools, discernment criteria, and formation structures that can help both **formandi** and **formators** cultivate these essential skills. It is rooted in the Claretian and broader ecclesial tradition of forming hearts that are both **burning with love and forged in truth**.

II. Definitions and Relevance for Missionary Life

1. Responsibility

Definition: Responsibility is the interiorized capacity to recognize one's obligations and carry them out with fidelity, initiative, and care. It involves not only doing what is assigned but also discerning what needs to be done for the common good, and responding proactively to needs, duties, and expectations. It presumes an integrated sense of self, commitment to vocation, and an understanding of one's role within a broader mission.

Spiritual and Formative Relevance:

- A responsible missionary sees his or her life as a **response to God's call**, not as a passive recipient but as a **co-creator** in the mission.
- Responsibility in formation means growing in **personal ownership of one's vocation journey**—not doing things simply because one is told, but because one embraces them as meaningful.
- In community life, it builds **trust**, prevents over-dependence on others (especially formators), and encourages **self-motivation**.
- It prepares the formandus to serve **freely and maturely**, even in isolated or demanding mission contexts.

"Each one must carry his own load." (Gal 6:5)

2. Accountability

Definition: Accountability is the capacity to acknowledge and answer for one's actions, choices, and use of time, resources, and freedom, particularly in reference to a relational or communal context. It involves living one's life transparently before others—especially superiors, formators, spiritual guides, and the community—allowing one's journey to be seen, guided, and evaluated.

Spiritual and Formative Relevance:

- For missionaries, accountability flows from the **spiritual reality of stewardship**—what is entrusted to us (vocation, time, relationships, mission) is not our own.
- It nurtures **humility**, as the formandus recognizes the need for feedback, correction, and dependence on others.
- Accountability safeguards against **abuse of power, secrecy, and self-deception**—risks that are particularly dangerous in leadership and missionary work.
- It is also key for **collaborative ministry**, where shared goals require mutual reliability.

“So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.” (Rom 14:12)

3. Transparency

Definition: Transparency is the cultivated virtue of openness, honesty, and vulnerability in communication and behaviour. It does not mean revealing everything to everyone but developing the wisdom to disclose appropriately in trusted relationships (e.g., with a formator or spiritual director). It requires self-awareness, courage, and a deepening sense of identity and freedom.

Spiritual and Formative Relevance:

- Transparency is grounded in the **truth of being loved unconditionally**—thus freeing the missionary from the need to hide or pretend.
- It combats isolation and duplicity, which are antithetical to authentic community and Gospel living.
- In formation, transparency builds **formative trust**—without it, the formator cannot accompany the real person.
- It is essential for **spiritual direction, team ministry, and pastoral presence**, where emotional honesty and congruence are critical.

“Whoever lives by the truth comes into the light.” (John 3:21)

4. Evaluation

Definition: Evaluation is the reflective and disciplined process of assessing one's growth, performance, motivations, and alignment with personal, spiritual, and communal goals. It includes both **self-evaluation** and **external evaluation**, understood not as judgment, but as a tool for awareness, learning, and continuous conversion.

Spiritual and Formative Relevance:

- In formation, evaluation is a process of **discernment**, not mere measurement. It helps the formandus and formator to clarify vocation, readiness for mission, and areas needing healing or growth.
- It cultivates **inner freedom and maturity**, especially when one is able to evaluate oneself honestly and welcome others' insights with grace.
- Regular evaluation affirms progress, renews motivation, and provides concrete direction in the long journey of becoming a missionary disciple.

- Evaluation is a **spiritual act of humility** and obedience—offering one’s life to be examined in the light of the Gospel.

“Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.” (2 Cor 13:5)

Interconnectedness of the Four Core Skills

These four skills are deeply interrelated:

- **Responsibility** without **accountability** can become isolated self-reliance.
- **Accountability** without **transparency** becomes superficial compliance.
- **Transparency** without **evaluation** can remain unfruitful vulnerability.
- **Evaluation** without **responsibility** risks becoming theoretical or performative.

When integrated, they shape the “**missionary disciple**” who is:

- Rooted in truth,
- Mature in relationships,
- Courageous in leadership,
- Humble in growth.

These core skills ultimately form a missionary who is **credible, trustworthy, and able to be sent** into the world as a witness of the Gospel in word, deed, and character.

III. Formative Objectives

The formative process aims not only to develop competencies but to cultivate virtues and habits rooted in a missionary spirituality. The following objectives serve as **benchmarks** for growth in responsibility, accountability, transparency, and evaluation, guiding the journey toward **missionary maturity**.

1. To Internalize Responsibility as a Personal and Spiritual Vocation

Goal: The formandus increasingly understands and embraces responsibility not as an external demand, but as a personal, spiritual, and missionary calling.

Expected Outcomes:

- Sees responsibilities (spiritual practices, duties, studies, ministries) as part of one’s **response to God’s love and call**.
- Moves from **compliance to conviction**—no longer needing constant supervision.
- Recognizes that being responsible in small matters (punctuality, hygiene, service) forms the character necessary for larger missions.
- Initiates actions for the common good, even without being asked.

Spiritual Anchor: *“Well done, good and faithful servant.” (Mt 25:23)*

2. To Foster Accountability as a Path to Humility and Communion

Goal: The formandus develops the capacity and willingness to account for choices, behaviours, and use of freedom within a context of relational trust and integrity.

Expected Outcomes:

- Can explain the rationale behind key decisions (pastoral, relational, personal).
- Feels **comfortable receiving feedback** from formators and peers without defensiveness.

- Understands the value of **mutual accountability** in community and mission.
- Accepts correction as an opportunity for growth, not a threat to one's identity.

Spiritual Anchor: *"Give an account of your stewardship." (Lk 16:2)*

3. To Cultivate Transparency Rooted in Freedom and Truth

Goal: The formandus practices transparency not as mere disclosure but as a sign of inner freedom, integrity, and commitment to authentic relationships.

Expected Outcomes:

- Shares honestly in spiritual direction and formation dialogues.
- Acknowledges personal struggles and moral failings in appropriate settings.
- Avoids passive-aggressiveness, concealment, and manipulation.
- Cultivates **healthy vulnerability**—offering one's real self to the community, and receiving others in the same way.

Spiritual Anchor: *"You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (Jn 8:32)*

4. To Engage in Evaluation as a Way of Life-Oriented Discernment

Goal: The formandus learns to integrate self-evaluation and external evaluation as a normal part of the spiritual and missionary journey, using it to discern, adjust, and grow.

Expected Outcomes:

- Reflects regularly on personal growth, relationships, prayer life, and ministry.
- Participates actively and gratefully in feedback sessions and assessments.
- Develops a structured method for periodic personal review (e.g., monthly examen, journaling).
- Adjusts patterns of behavior based on insights gained from evaluation.

Spiritual Anchor: *"Examine everything; hold fast to what is good." (1 Thess 5:21)*

Holistic Formation Alignment

Each objective contributes to the **four pillars of missionary formation**:

Formation Pillar	Core Skill Integrated
Human Formation	Responsibility: growth in maturity and initiative.
Spiritual Formation	Transparency: honest self-offering in relationship with God.
Community Formation	Accountability: living truthfully in communion.
Pastoral-Apostolic Formation	Evaluation: discerning effectiveness and fidelity in mission.

Summary of Transformative Movement

From...	To...
Compliance →	Conviction
Passive dependence →	Proactive engagement
Fear of correction →	Openness to guidance
Hiding weakness →	Disclosing with wisdom
Sporadic reflection →	Integrated discernment

These formative objectives, pursued in community with accompaniment, nurture the missionary disciple to live with **freedom, responsibility, and rootedness**, ready to serve the Gospel wherever sent.

IV. Indicators of Growth in Core Skills

These indicators help both **formandi** and **formators** track developmental progress in a formative journey that is **relational, spiritual, and vocational**. Growth is seen not just in external behaviours but in **inner freedom, consistency, and intentionality** over time.

1. Responsibility

Key Question: *Do I take ownership of my tasks, choices, and vocation with maturity and initiative?*

Stage	External Behaviours	Inner Attitudes	Signs of Growth
Beginning	Needs frequent reminders for duties; often blames others or makes excuses.	Passive attitude; avoids consequences; waits to be told what to do.	Basic understanding of tasks; can be coached.
Growing	Completes tasks with reminders; makes some initiative; begins to own daily routine.	Recognizes personal role in community/mission; growing sense of agency.	Seeks to improve; begins to ask questions about purpose.
Mature	Manages responsibilities consistently and proactively. Takes initiative in solving problems.	Sees responsibility as a personal and spiritual vocation; acts with conviction.	Fulfils roles even under pressure; responds well to new challenges.

2. Accountability

Key Question: *Am I willing to account for my actions, decisions, and use of freedom in a spirit of trust and humility?*

Stage	External Behaviours	Inner Attitudes	Signs of Growth
Beginning	Reacts defensively to feedback; may lie or withhold truth; avoids responsibility.	Feels judged or threatened by authority; lacks self-awareness.	May acknowledge mistakes when pressured.
Growing	Begins to admit errors with guidance; responds better to correction; still inconsistent.	Starts to see accountability as support, not punishment.	Willing to explain choices; growing capacity to self-assess.
Mature	Seeks guidance when unsure; owns decisions and their impact; invites feedback.	Practices humility; understands accountability as part of trust and growth.	Builds trust; models openness to peers and younger members.

3. Transparency

Key Question: *Am I willing to live in the light, revealing my true self appropriately in community and formation?*

Stage	External Behaviours	Inner Attitudes	Signs of Growth
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Beginning	Hides struggles; gives “safe” or rehearsed answers in formation settings.	Fear of being misunderstood or rejected; shame or insecurity.	Struggles to open up even in private accompaniment.
Growing	Shares selectively in spiritual direction or with formator; discloses more when trust is present.	Gaining self-confidence; beginning to see truth as freeing.	Feels relief in honesty; notices relational improvements.
Mature	Practices appropriate, courageous self-disclosure; lives without duplicity.	Has integrated vulnerability and strength; values being known and loved.	Becomes a model of integrity and authenticity in community.

4. Evaluation

Key Question: *Do I regularly reflect on my growth and seek ways to improve in light of my vocation and mission?*

Stage	External Behaviours	Inner Attitudes	Signs of Growth
Beginning	Reluctant or dismissive toward feedback; sees evaluation as judgment.	Fixed mindset; lacks reflective habits; avoids self-confrontation.	Participates only when required.
Growing	Accepts evaluations; begins personal reflection through journaling or spiritual guidance.	Shifting toward growth mindset; becomes more open to learn.	Begins to connect evaluation with formation goals.
Mature	Engages in self-review regularly (journaling, examen, review of life); seeks constructive feedback.	Sees evaluation as grace; integrated into rhythm of life and discernment.	Helps others evaluate lovingly; contributes to a culture of feedback.

Cross-Indicators of Integration

When these skills are truly being integrated, you’ll begin to observe **patterns of inner freedom, relational integrity, and vocational readiness**. For instance:

- A **responsible** formandus also begins to **hold others gently accountable**.
- A **transparent** person becomes a **safe space for others to be honest**.
- One who **evaluates themselves well** becomes naturally **more responsible**.
- **Accountability** becomes easier when a person **no longer hides behind masks**.

Practical Use for Accompaniment

Formators can use these expanded indicators:

- During **quarterly assessments** to provide developmental feedback.
- As part of **individual accompaniment** conversations.
- In guiding **self-assessments** or community reflection sessions.
- To tailor growth plans when there is **resistance or stagnation** in a particular area.

Each skill can also be made the **focus of a monthly theme**, allowing formandi to deepen it through specific practices, journaling, and communal sharing.

V. Practical Formation Strategies

Developing Responsibility, Accountability, Transparency, and Evaluation

These strategies aim to form **habits of the heart and mind**, integrating interior growth with external practices. Each strategy has a clear purpose, suggested frequency, and examples of how to implement it.

1. Weekly Responsibility Tracker

Purpose: To develop **self-monitoring habits**, foster initiative, and help formandi become more aware of how they fulfil their commitments.

Tool: A simple **Responsibility Log** or digital form.

Structure:

- List daily personal, communal, and apostolic responsibilities.
- Mark whether each was completed (Yes/No/Partially).
- Reflect on what helped or hindered responsibility.
- End with a short prayer or intention for the coming week.

Example:

Responsibility	Completed?	What Helped/Hindered	Intention
Morning prayer at 6:30	Yes	Prepared night before	Stay faithful when tired
Kitchen duty	No	Forgot the schedule	Be more attentive
Ministry visit	Yes	Enjoyed the interaction	Deepen pastoral love

Use in Formation:

- Review weekly with the formator or peer in accompaniment.
- Celebrate growth; challenge inconsistencies.

Variation: Use colour-coded scores (green, yellow, red) to track consistency over time.

2. Accountability Circles

Purpose: To normalize mutual support and create a culture of **shared responsibility and fraternal correction**.

Setup:

- Small groups of 3–4 formandi meet **bi-weekly or monthly**.
- Each person shares:
 1. A commitment made.
 2. How it was followed through.
 3. One area they need accountability for next time.

Guidelines:

- Use a set format: “What I committed to... What happened... What I learned.”
- Others respond with encouragement and a question—not advice or judgment.
- Close with a prayer of accountability and commitment.

Example Sharing: “Last time I said I would be more punctual to community prayer. I did well 4 out of 5 days, but overslept on Thursday. I realize I need to sleep earlier. I’ll work on that this week.”

Formative Value:

- Builds trust and peer mentoring.
- Practices being answerable without shame.
- Helps integrate intention with action.

3. Transparency Journal

Purpose: To cultivate **emotional honesty, self-knowledge, and appropriate vulnerability**, especially in preparation for spiritual direction or personal dialogue with a formator.

Method:

- Use a guided journal with weekly prompts such as:
 - What am I struggling to reveal or admit to myself or others?
 - Where did I feel I wore a mask this week?
 - What truth am I afraid of?
 - Who needs to know this part of my story?

Example Entry: “I’ve been avoiding speaking to my formator about my discouragement in ministry. I feel I should always appear strong, but I realize it’s dishonest. I want to name this in our next meeting.”

Integration Tips:

- Encourage journaling as part of **weekly spiritual direction prep**.
- Reflect on key journal themes during **monthly reviews** or retreats.
- Emphasize confidentiality and freedom—journal is not for grading.

Spiritual Anchor Practice: End each entry with a “prayer of exposure,” offering the hidden parts of the self to God.

4. Monthly Self-Evaluation & Reflective Check-In

Purpose: To help formandi reflect regularly and **track interior and behavioural growth**, using structured questions and prayer.

Tool: Monthly Self-Evaluation Template

Suggested Structure:

1. What am I most grateful for this month?
2. In what areas have I grown in responsibility?
3. When did I receive or resist feedback?
4. Was I transparent in formation conversations?
5. What did I learn from evaluations this month?
6. What is God inviting me to focus on next?

Example Use:

- Conducted during **personal monthly recollection** or as a **1-on-1 check-in** with a formator.
- Accompanied by 10–15 minutes of **prayerful silence or Lectio Divina**.
- Responses are summarized and revisited in quarterly reviews.

5. Role Rotation in Community Life

Purpose: To provide real-life **practice of responsibility, leadership, and evaluation** within a formative environment.

How it works:

- Each formandus takes on a rotating leadership role (e.g., liturgy coordinator, house maintenance, hospitality head).
- Responsibilities are clear, documented, and time-bound (e.g., one month).
- Each person prepares a short evaluation/report at the end:
 - What went well?
 - What was difficult?
 - What did I learn about myself and leadership?

Example: John was assigned as liturgy coordinator. He struggled with planning in advance but grew in delegation. In his report, he noted a new appreciation for balancing creativity and structure.

Community Integration:

- After each rotation, hold a **brief peer feedback session**.
- Let formators guide reflection on **virtues exercised** and **areas of tension**.

6. “Light and Shadow” Circle (Transparency Practice)

Purpose: To create safe, sacred spaces for **communal honesty and grace**.

How it works:

- Once a month, community members gather for 45 minutes.
- Each person shares one “light” (a grace or victory) and one “shadow” (a struggle or area of weakness).
- No discussion or advice—just listening and prayerful presence.
- Ends with a prayer for healing and growth.

Rules:

- Confidentiality is sacred.
- Sharing is voluntary.
- Focus is on **truth-telling and empathy**, not performance.

Benefits:

- Builds trust.
- Normalizes imperfection.
- Encourages healing through community presence.

7. Evaluation Sunday (Community Culture of Feedback)

Purpose: To integrate evaluation into the rhythm of life as a **positive, communal tool for growth**.

How it works:

- Once a month, the community gathers for a 60–90-minute group reflection.
- Led by formators or senior formandi.
- Reflect on:
 - What went well in the house/mission this month?
 - What didn’t work, and why?
 - How can we improve as a formation community?

Methods:

- Use **post-it walls**, **silent reflection**, or **group facilitation**.
- Keep tone constructive, future-focused, and communal.

Spiritual Integration:

- Begin with Scripture and prayer.
- End with a communal act of commitment or blessing.

8. The “Mission Mirror” Exercise

Purpose: To foster **mission-focused evaluation and responsibility**.

When: After a pastoral experience, community outreach, or apostolic exposure.

Steps:

- Each participant answers:
 1. What was my role, and how did I fulfil it?
 2. How did I represent Christ and the Claretian charism?
 3. What did I learn about myself, my gifts, and my limitations?

Formator’s Role:

- Help formandi connect experiences with **vocation discernment and deeper conversion**.
- Affirm responsibility; challenge passivity or superficiality.

Closing Integration Strategy: Weekly Commitment Cards

Each formandus writes:

- One area of **responsibility to focus on**.
- One person they will be **accountable to**.
- One step toward **greater transparency**.
- One way they will engage in **evaluation**.

These cards are reviewed at the end of each week, optionally shared in small groups or privately with a formator.

VI. Assessment Tool**A. Purpose of Assessment in Formation**

Assessment in missionary formation is not merely about performance review—it is a **discernment process**. It aims to:

- Identify growth and areas needing support.
- Encourage reflective ownership of one’s formation.
- Promote formative dialogue between the formandi and the formator.
- Facilitate integration of personal, relational, spiritual, and apostolic dimensions of missionary life.

B. 3-Level Assessment Approach

To capture a holistic picture of the formandus’ growth, we recommend a **three-tiered assessment structure**:

1. Self-Assessment (Monthly or Bi-Monthly)

Purpose: To promote self-awareness, accountability, and spiritual reflection.

Tool: Personal Reflection Questionnaire

Scale: 1 (Never) – 5 (Always)

Statement	Rating (1–5)	Reflection Notes
I take full responsibility for my daily schedule and duties.		
I acknowledge my mistakes without blaming others.		
I inform my formator of challenges before they escalate.		
I am open and honest in spiritual direction.		
I evaluate my thoughts and actions regularly.		
I seek and welcome feedback from my formators and peers.		
I initiate conversations when misunderstandings arise.		
I fulfill my promises and follow through with tasks.		
I bring unresolved issues into prayer and discernment.		
I use formation spaces (journaling, check-ins, reports) intentionally.		

Reflection Prompt:

- Which statement challenged me most? Why?
- What is one step I can take this month to grow in these areas?

2. Peer Feedback Tool (Quarterly or as part of Small Group Sharing)

Purpose: To nurture a culture of shared formation and mutual growth through safe, respectful feedback.

Tool: Peer Observation Grid

Skill Area	What I Observe in You	What I Admire	Suggestion for Growth
Responsibility			
Accountability			
Transparency			
Evaluation			

Instructions:

- Use “I” language: “I notice...”, “I appreciate...”, “I wonder if you could...”
- Share feedback in a facilitated, respectful context.
- Always offer affirmation along with challenge.

Example Entry: “I observe that you are always punctual and organized (responsibility). I admire your consistency. I suggest growing in delegation when leading group activities so others can participate.”

3. Formator’s Evaluation Tool (Quarterly or Semi-Annually)

Purpose: To provide a clear, compassionate, and structured formative evaluation of the formandus’ development.

Tool: Formator's Observation and Rating Grid

Scale: 1 (Rarely), 2 (Sometimes), 3 (Often), 4 (Consistently), 5 (Exemplary)

Core Skill	Indicators	Rating	Comments/Examples
Responsibility	Fulfils duties without reminders; takes initiative in house life or ministry.		
	Demonstrates reliability in small and large tasks.		
Accountability	Acknowledges errors and poor decisions openly.		
	Is willing to be corrected and applies feedback.		
Transparency	Speaks honestly in formation settings.		
	Discloses struggles in appropriate, trusting relationships.		
Evaluation	Engages in reflective practices (journaling, recollection, personal review).		
	Adjusts behaviour based on feedback and discernment.		

Final Comment by Formator: What are this formandus' most noticeable growth points? What is a primary area that needs focused accompaniment?

C. Community-Based Discernment Tool (Optional, Bi-Annual)

Purpose: To discern readiness for next stages of formation (e.g., apostolic stage, vows, leadership roles).

Facilitated by: Formation team or community council.

Discernment Questions:

- Does the formandus demonstrate responsible freedom and emotional maturity?
- Can this person be trusted to carry out tasks without supervision?
- Is he/she open to being known, corrected, and formed?
- Does the formandus evaluate his/her journey honestly and maturely?
- Would I feel confident sending this person into a mission community?

Rating Scale: ✓ Yes / ~ Partially / ✗ No

Use: These responses help shape the accompaniment plan and readiness decisions.

D. Synthesis: Personal Growth Profile

At the end of each cycle (quarterly or semesterly), compile insights from:

- Self-evaluation
- Peer feedback
- Formator assessment

Create a **Growth Profile** with the following structure:

Domain	Summary Insight	Strength	Growth Area	Suggested Action
Responsibility				
Accountability				
Transparency				
Evaluation				

E. Formative Discernment Integration

- **During annual reviews**, use the Growth Profile to help discern:
 - Readiness for further mission engagement.
 - Suitability for leadership roles.
 - Capacity to live Claretian missionary life with integrity and inner freedom.
- **During crises or challenges**, revisit these assessments for:
 - Diagnosis of underlying formation gaps.
 - Adjustments in accompaniment style or expectations.
- **In ongoing accompaniment**, use indicators to name, affirm, and bless emerging maturity in the vocation journey.

VII. Discernment Criteria

Discerning the Readiness and Depth of Integration in Missionary Formation

Discernment is not merely assessment; it is a **prayerful, relational, and spiritual process** that seeks to **read the signs of God's work** in the life of the formandus. The core skills of **responsibility, accountability, transparency, and evaluation** are **not ends in themselves**, but indicators of deeper inner formation, freedom, and vocational alignment with the **missionary life**.

These criteria assist the formator or formation team in identifying **authentic growth, stagnation, or warning signs** that may affect the individual's **readiness for further stages of formation**, leadership roles, or long-term commitment.

A. Signs of Integration and Maturity

These are positive markers that suggest the formandus is **internalizing the core values**, demonstrating **consistency and freedom**, and growing into **missionary maturity**.

1. Responsibility

- Demonstrates consistent reliability without needing external motivation.
- Makes informed decisions and owns their consequences.
- Volunteers or steps up in times of need, with no expectation of recognition.
- Practices good time management and prioritization of values.

Discernment Insight: This person shows signs of **ownership of their vocation**, and their actions reflect someone who is ready to be entrusted with missionary responsibility.

2. Accountability

- Freely admits mistakes, faults, and limitations without excessive defensiveness.
- Is open to fraternal correction, seeing it as an opportunity for growth.
- Can receive feedback from both peers and authorities without resentment.
- Initiates dialogue to clarify misunderstandings or repair ruptures in relationships.

Discernment Insight: A person who understands that accountability is **not shame-based**, but part of **communal maturity and spiritual humility**.

3. Transparency

- Lives with internal coherence—what they say, do, and believe are aligned.
- Shares struggles appropriately in spiritual direction and formation dialogue.
- No longer feels the need to hide, perform, or manipulate how they are seen.
- Able to express vulnerability without losing a sense of self-worth.

Discernment Insight: Transparency indicates a **freedom to be seen**, a trust in the formation process, and a desire to grow in truth.

4. Evaluation

- Regularly reflects on their life journey, both successes and failures.
- Is able to identify patterns, motivations, and areas for growth.
- Uses evaluation tools meaningfully (journaling, review of life, supervision).
- Applies insights from evaluation into behavioural change or vocational decisions.

Discernment Insight: Evaluation here is not about introspection for its own sake, but about fostering **conversion and mission clarity**.

B. Signs of Partial Integration or Growing Edges

These are **in-between** indicators—signs that the formandus is **on the path**, but still inconsistent, reluctant, or unaware of deeper movements. They require **gentle accompaniment and challenge**.

Core Skill	Signs of Partial Integration	Formative Needs
Responsibility	Performs well when supervised, but lacks initiative or follow-through.	Needs help connecting daily tasks to deeper vocational identity.
Accountability	Accepts feedback but struggles with taking ownership; blames context or others.	Requires development of interior authority and emotional maturity.
Transparency	Selective sharing; open in some contexts but guarded in others.	Needs trust-building and freedom from fear or shame .
Evaluation	Engages in evaluation passively; struggles to apply insights.	Needs guided reflection tools and formation in discernment language .

Discernment Tip: These are opportunities for deeper growth—don't rush the formandus, but help them see how these patterns affect their capacity for mission and community life.

C. Warning Signs / Areas of Serious Concern

These indicators may suggest that the formandus is **resisting formation**, hiding significant issues, or not yet ready to embrace the **missionary call with integrity**. These require careful discernment, possible intervention, and pastoral accompaniment.

Core Skill	Warning Signs	Implications
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Responsibility	Consistently avoids duties; makes excuses or denies faults; dependent and passive.	Risk of unreliability in mission; lacks self-governance.
Accountability	Habitual blame-shifting; refuses correction; uses manipulation to escape responsibility.	Indicates lack of humility and transparency; may resist authority.
Transparency	Lives a dual life; conceals major issues (e.g., addictions, relationships, doubts).	Suggests fear, shame, or unhealed wounds; a threat to community integrity.
Evaluation	Rejects all forms of evaluation; resists self-awareness or introspection.	May be unfit for discernment-based formation or collaborative ministry.

Discernment Action: These require **serious accompaniment, possible psychological or spiritual interventions**, and prayerful consideration of whether to **delay, suspend, or redirect** the formation journey.

D. Integrated Vocational Discernment Questions

These questions assist formators, councils, or discernment teams in synthesizing the above observations:

1. Does this person demonstrate an **interiorized sense of mission** through their daily responsibilities?
2. Is there evidence of **freedom and humility** in accepting formation guidance?
3. Does this individual practice **truthful communication**, or are there persistent masks or manipulations?
4. Is there an active engagement with formation tools for growth (journaling, reviews, feedback sessions)?
5. When conflict, failure, or crisis arises, does the formandus **respond with courage, reflection, and openness**?

E. Spiritual Markers of Readiness

Look for signs of **contemplative discernment**, not just performance:

Indicator	Description
Dolity to the Holy Spirit	Is this person open to being led, corrected, and transformed?
Desire for Authenticity	Does he/she seek to live truthfully, even when it's hard?
Capacity for Missionary Communion	Can this person live and serve well with others in community?
Missionary Clarity	Is this person aligning their gifts and desires with the needs of the Church and world?
Love of Formation	Does he/she value the process, or merely endure it?

F. Summary Discernment Categories

For each of the four skills, the formator or team may summarize the discernment as follows:

Core Skill	Summary	Action Plan
Responsibility	Integrated / Partial / Deficient	Sustain / Accompany / Intervene
Accountability	Integrated / Partial / Deficient	Sustain / Accompany / Intervene

Transparency	Integrated / Partial / Deficient	Sustain / Accompany / Intervene
Evaluation	Integrated / Partial / Deficient	Sustain / Accompany / Intervene

This grid can guide decisions regarding:

- Readiness for the next formation stage.
- Need for intensified accompaniment.
- Suitability for long-term missionary life.

VIII. Community and Mission Exercises

Embodied Practices for Interiorizing Core Skills in Missionary Formation

Formation is not complete without action. To internalize responsibility, accountability, transparency, and evaluation, the formandus must engage in **structured, real-life exercises** within the community and in the context of mission. These exercises offer space for **practice, feedback, reflection, and transformation**.

A. Community-Based Exercises

These are designed to be carried out within the house of formation, emphasizing **relational living, service, and responsibility** in everyday settings.

1. The Stewardship Rotation Project

Objective: Develop responsibility and accountability through communal roles.

Method:

- Assign rotating roles (e.g., liturgy coordinator, meal planner, house maintenance lead, reader animator).
- Each role comes with clearly outlined expectations, timeframes, and outcomes.
- At the end of the rotation, the individual gives an oral report and receives peer and formator feedback.

Integration Points:

- Evaluate how the formandus initiates, delegates, and handles difficulties.
- Encourage journaling: “How did I serve the community? What challenged me?”

2. Transparency Circles

Objective: Practice transparency in a structured, safe environment.

Method:

- Monthly small group circles (4–6 persons) with a facilitator (could be a formator or peer leader).
- Sharing themes: “What am I struggling with lately?”, “Where have I seen God?”, “What do I hesitate to share?”
- Ground rules: confidentiality, non-judgment, deep listening, no rescuing.

Integration Points:

- Facilitators observe emotional honesty, listening skills, and spiritual openness.
- Follow-up in spiritual direction and personal accompaniment.

3. Peer-to-Peer Accountability Partners

Objective: Foster habits of daily reflection, check-ins, and fraternal correction.

Method:

- Form pairs or triads to check in weekly using a structured format:
 - My major decisions this week
 - One success, one failure
 - One thing I need to be held accountable for
- Partners pray for each other daily.

Integration Points:

- Develop humility in receiving feedback.
- Cultivate a culture of shared responsibility, not control.

4. Community Evaluation Forum

Objective: Practice communal evaluation in a respectful, open setting.

Method:

- Quarterly community forum (guided by the formator or moderator).
- Evaluate one aspect of community life: e.g., prayer atmosphere, respect for silence, financial stewardship, conflict resolution.
- Each member contributes both affirmations and suggestions.

Integration Points:

- Observe tone, ownership of language (“we” vs. “they”), and willingness to implement change.
- Use “What went well / What could be better / What we commit to” format.

B. Missionary-Apostolic Exercises

These exercises root the core values in real-life mission experiences, testing integration in pastoral contexts.

1. Ministry Debrief and Evaluation

Objective: Cultivate the habit of reflective evaluation in apostolic settings.

Method:

- After every major mission exposure or pastoral assignment (e.g., weekend youth animation, parish mission, hospital visit), conduct a guided debrief:
 - What did I learn about the people?
 - What was life-giving? What was draining?
 - Where did I feel God was present?
 - What will I do differently next time?

Integration Points:

- Helps the formandus link missionary activity with personal growth.
- Encourages articulation of the interior movements experienced during ministry.

2. Pastoral Project with Shared Leadership

Objective: Integrate responsibility and accountability in team-based mission planning.

Method:

- Form small teams to carry out a pastoral project (e.g., organize a catechesis series, social outreach, digital evangelization).
- Roles are clearly divided and rotated.
- Weekly check-ins for accountability and adjustments.
- Post-project group evaluation and individual reflection.

Integration Points:

- Evaluate how conflicts were managed, roles fulfilled, and decisions made.
- Encourage reflection on self-leadership and servant-leadership dynamics.

3. Pastoral Logbook / Field Journal

Objective: Promote evaluation as a habit of missionary discernment.

Method:

- Each formandus maintains a field journal during apostolic assignments.
- Entries should include: key experiences, interpersonal interactions, mistakes made, graces received, and how responsibility was exercised.

Integration Points:

- Formators and pastoral mentors review journal periodically.
- Used as material for spiritual direction or formational dialogue.

4. Cross-Community Service Exchange

Objective: Test maturity and adaptability by serving outside one's comfort zone.

Method:

- Assign formandi to another formation house or apostolic community for 1–2 weeks (if feasible).
- Give a new role and observe how they integrate into another communal and apostolic rhythm.

Integration Points:

- Examine responsibility in unfamiliar settings.
- Evaluate openness to feedback from new peers or leaders.
- Debrief experience to surface learning and inner shifts.

C. Liturgical-Spiritual Integration Exercises

These exercises allow for the **internalization of the core skills in a prayerful and contemplative manner.**

1. Liturgical Commitment Rites

Example: On the feast of a Claretian missionary or biblical model of integrity (e.g., St. Paul, St. Joseph), formandi write and offer a “Commitment to Responsibility” prayer in the liturgy.

2. Examen for Community Life

Example: Once a month, community does a shared Ignatian-style examen:

- “When did I take responsibility today?”
- “When did I avoid accountability?”
- “Where was God calling me to be transparent?”
- “What feedback am I resisting?”

3. Psalms of Evaluation

Example: Use Psalms 139, 26, 15 as meditative texts for evaluating one’s heart before God, especially before key transitions or evaluations.

Integration with Formation Schedule

These exercises can be mapped across the **formation year**:

Time Frame	Focus Exercise
Monthly	Peer Accountability + Transparency Circle
Quarterly	Community Evaluation Forum + Ministry Debrief
Yearly	Pastoral Project + Service Exchange
Ongoing	Journaling, Examen, Role Rotations

IX. Role of the Formator in Developing Core Skills

The **formator** is not merely a supervisor or administrator but a **companion in discernment**, a **witness of integrity**, and a **facilitator of transformation**. Their role is crucial in nurturing the core interior attitudes and relational capacities that allow missionary formandi to live with **freedom, authenticity, and vocational clarity**.

1. Witnessing the Virtues in Action

“Your life must speak before your words.”

The formator’s **personal embodiment** of responsibility, accountability, transparency, and evaluative thinking is the most powerful formation tool.

- **Responsibility:** Shows commitment to the mission and community life, even in small daily details.
- **Accountability:** Openly shares limitations and receives feedback from peers and superiors with humility.
- **Transparency:** Models appropriate disclosure, especially when things go wrong.
- **Evaluation:** Reviews programs and relationships openly, modelling a growth mindset.

Practical Tip: Invite formandi occasionally into your own discernment or leadership decisions (e.g., “I struggled with this decision. Here’s how I prayed through it.”)

2. Creating a Culture of Trust and Truth

“Formation does not happen in fear. It grows in freedom and love.”

A formator must cultivate an atmosphere where:

- Mistakes are opportunities for growth.
- Vulnerability is respected, not punished.
- The truth is always spoken with compassion.

This psychological and spiritual safety is **essential** for transparency and accountability to take root.

Key Practice: Normalize feedback in both directions — formator to formandus, and vice versa.

3. Fostering Gradual Ownership and Initiative

“Don’t do for them what they can do for themselves.”

Many formandi enter formation with habits of dependence. The formator must:

- Allow them to experience the consequences of forgotten responsibilities (e.g., missed prayer or chores).
- Gradually increase their freedom while holding them accountable.
- Avoid over-functioning or rescuing.

Suggested Strategy: Use “Responsibility Maps” — assign clear tasks to each formandus with increasing complexity as they grow.

4. Practicing Reflective Dialogue and Evaluative Accompaniment

“The formator listens beneath the surface.”

One-on-one accompaniment is the privileged space for developing these skills. The formator:

- **Listens for patterns:** e.g., repeated excuses, blame-shifting, superficiality.
- **Names the issue gently:** “I noticed you often speak in generalities when we discuss your struggles.”
- **Helps the formandus reflect** on their role in situations.
- **Teaches tools:** e.g., journaling, examen, feedback frameworks.

Framework for Conversation: “What happened? What did you feel? What did you do? What will you do differently next time?”

5. Tailoring Accompaniment to the Stage of Growth

Each formandus is at a different point. The formator must discern:

Stage	Needed Style	Example
Early	Directive + Encouraging	“This is your task, and this is why it matters.”
Mid	Coaching + Clarifying	“How do you want to take responsibility for that situation?”
Advanced	Challenging + Empowering	“What would full transparency look like here?”

6. Using Evaluations as Growth Moments, Not Punishment

“The goal of evaluation is clarity, not condemnation.”

Formators help formandi **reframe evaluation** as a spiritual exercise:

- Set clear expectations early.
- Use a combination of **self-assessment, peer feedback, and formator input**.
- Focus evaluations on observable behaviour, not labelling the person.

Best Practice: Include reflective journaling before evaluations: “What do I fear most about being evaluated?”

6A. Promoting Personalised Formation: Helping the Formandus Become the Principal Agent of His Own Formation

Evaluation bears lasting fruit only when it leads the formandus to take personal ownership of his formative journey. One of the fundamental goals of Claretian formation is therefore **personalised formation**, whereby the formandus gradually becomes the primary agent of his own human, spiritual, intellectual, community, and apostolic growth.

Personalised formation is much more than observing rules, fulfilling external expectations, pleasing formators, or striving for perfection. Nor is it simply acquiring knowledge about the Congregation or the history of the Institute. Rather, it is the progressive interiorisation of the Gospel and the Claretian missionary vocation until they become the guiding principles of one’s life.

The Constitutions remind us that the missionary vocation is a gift to be freely embraced and continuously renewed. Consequently, the formator’s task is not merely to organise formation activities but to accompany each formandus in making the formation process his own. The formandus gradually learns to integrate:

- his interior life with apostolic activity;
- prayer with mission;
- personal freedom with evangelical obedience;
- individual initiative with community discernment;
- personal growth with fidelity to the Claretian charism.

As this integration deepens, formation ceases to be something imposed from outside and becomes an interior response to God’s call. The formandus no longer acts merely because he is supervised but because he increasingly desires to live as a missionary disciple in the spirit of St. Anthony Mary Claret.

The Aim of Personalised Formation

Personalised formation seeks to help the formandus:

- develop a sincere and responsible ownership of his vocation;
- freely evaluate his daily formative experience with honesty;
- apply personally what he receives through classes, accompaniment, prayer, ministry, and community life;
- integrate human, spiritual, community, intellectual, and apostolic formation into one unified missionary identity;
- cultivate habits of lifelong formation that continue well beyond perpetual profession or priestly ordination.

In this way, the formandus comes to understand that formation does not end with initial formation but remains a permanent attitude of openness to conversion throughout missionary life.

The Role of the Formator

The formator accompanies this process by progressively shifting from directing every aspect of formation to fostering mature responsibility.

Rather than solving every problem or giving immediate answers, the formator increasingly asks questions that awaken personal reflection:

- “What is the Lord inviting you to learn from this experience?”
- “How have you taken responsibility for this situation?”
- “What concrete step will you take next?”
- “How does this experience help you become a Claretian missionary?”

Such accompaniment helps the formandus move from dependence to responsible freedom, from external compliance to interior conviction, and from merely following a programme to consciously embracing a missionary way of life.

Best Practice: Monthly Self-Formation Day

One practical way of fostering personalised formation is to designate **one day each month (for example, the first or last Saturday) as a Self-Formation Day.**

On this day, the ordinary community schedule is simplified. Holy Mass and common meals remain community moments, while the rest of the day is entrusted largely to the responsibility of the formandus. Each formandus prepares his own timetable beforehand, including:

- personal prayer;
- spiritual reading;
- study;
- apostolic preparation;
- physical exercise;
- household responsibilities;
- personal evaluation;
- recreation;
- silence and reflection.

The objective is not to provide a “day off” from formation but to offer a practical opportunity to exercise mature freedom and personal responsibility.

During these days the formator intentionally refrains from excessive supervision, allowing the formandus to demonstrate how he manages his time, fulfils commitments, and balances the different dimensions of formation.

At the end of the day—or during the following accompaniment meeting—the formandus reflects on questions such as:

- What choices did I make today?
- How faithfully did I follow my plan?
- What helped or hindered my discipline?
- Where did I experience God’s presence?
- What does this reveal about my readiness for missionary life?

The formator then accompanies the reflection, not to judge performance, but to help the formandus recognise patterns of growth, areas requiring greater freedom, and opportunities for deeper conversion.

Indicators that Personalised Formation Is Taking Root

A formandus who is gradually taking ownership of his formation will increasingly:

- assume responsibilities without constant reminders;
- evaluate himself honestly before being evaluated by others;
- seek accompaniment proactively;
- integrate feedback into concrete changes;
- show initiative in prayer, study, community life, and ministry;
- understand formation as preparation for lifelong missionary discipleship rather than simply for vows or ordination.

Ultimately, personalised formation enables the formandus to become a missionary who lives responsibly not because someone is watching him, but because he has interiorised the values of Christ and the Claretian vocation. Such missionaries are prepared to serve faithfully in any mission, guided by the Holy Spirit, sustained by community, and committed to lifelong growth.

7. Building Structures for Practicing Core Skills

“Formation structures should teach internal freedom, not external compliance.”

The formator should:

- **Design community life intentionally:** rotations, service projects, peer sharing.
- **Integrate regular feedback loops:** weekly check-ins, monthly self-assessments, group reviews.
- **Ensure continuity:** link daily practices to long-term growth plans.

Integration Example: Link pastoral evaluation to personal responsibility by asking, “How did your work in the field reflect your values?”

8. Facilitating Fraternal Correction and Peer Accountability

“The formator doesn’t do it all; they enable the brothers to form one another.”

Formators should:

- Train formandi in how to give and receive fraternal correction.
- Monitor how peer accountability partners function.
- Intervene when fear, manipulation, or judgment replaces sincere concern.

Tip: Use role plays in house meetings to teach “how to correct with charity.”

9. Ongoing Self-Formation of the Formator

“You cannot accompany others to depths you have not gone yourself.”

Formators should regularly engage in:

- **Supervision:** with other formators or mentors.
- **Retreat and spiritual direction.**
- **Personal evaluation:** “Am I growing in responsibility for my role? In transparency with my team?”

Summary Table: Role of the Formator

Function	Description	Tools
Witness	Model integrity and growth	Consistency, humility

Guide	Foster spiritual reflection and self-awareness	Accompaniment, journaling
Facilitator	Build learning environments	Role rotations, group circles
Evaluator	Offer clear, loving feedback	Review tools, feedback forms
Animator	Encourage personal initiative and ownership	Pastoral projects, goals check-ins
Discernment Partner	Help clarify readiness for vows/mission	Criteria, spiritual insight

Conclusion: Forming Missionaries Who Reflect Christ's Integrity

The formation of mature missionaries requires more than knowledge or religious zeal—it demands **interior transformation and responsible freedom**. The capacities to be responsible, accountable, transparent, and evaluative are signs of an integrated missionary identity: one who **stands in truth, walks in communion, and lives for mission**.

When a formandus learns to take personal ownership, welcome correction, live with honest vulnerability, and embrace continual growth, he becomes not only a credible witness of the Gospel but also a **brother and servant in mission**. These qualities ensure that his life will not contradict his preaching, that his leadership will be marked by integrity, and that his community living will be life-giving rather than burdensome.

For the formator, the task is sacred: to **walk patiently**, to **model faithfully**, and to **discern wisely**. In fostering these four core skills, the formator is helping to shape men who can be entrusted with the mission of the Church—men whose **interior consistency becomes a source of fruitfulness in the world**.

As St. Paul says, *"It is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy"* (1 Cor 4:2). May this guide serve as a helpful companion on the journey toward becoming **trustworthy stewards of the mission** entrusted to us.