

# Dei Verbum Biblical Pastoral Course

## Location

The **Dei Verbum Biblical Pastoral Course 2012** is conducted in **Centro Ad Gentes**, the house of ongoing formation of the Divine Word Missionaries [SVD] at Nemi, a small, splendidly picturesque village some 40 kilometres from the city of Rome and perched in the steep mid-ranges of the Alban Hills, overlooking a placid crater lake. The house is in fact nestled in the slopes just above this village and is girdled about with forest. Though small, Nemi is steeped in history as some of the ancient Roman emperors frequented the area. Incidentally, Castel Gandolfo, where the better-known summer residence of the Pope is situated, is not far from the place.

## The Purpose of the Course

“All the preaching of the Church must be nourished and regulated by sacred Scripture” (DV 21). This course is designed to provide its participants with an informed biblical dimension to their ongoing formation in pastoral ministry. As the title itself – *Dei Verbum* Biblical Pastoral Course – lucidly denotes, the programme takes its cue from the Dogmatic Constitution of Vatican II on Divine Revelation (*Dei Verbum*), which relocates the word of God from the margins to the very centre of the

faith life of the ecclesial communities and their missionary mandate. Quite appropriately, the Constitution (DV 25) cites in this connection the discerning words of St. Jerome, “Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ”. In fact, Pope Benedict XVI in *Verbum Domini* affirms, “Throughout its history, the People of God has always found strength in the word of God, and today too the ecclesial community grows by hearing, celebrating and studying that word” (VD 3).

The Society of the Divine Word (SVD), endeavours to contribute in a small way to the clarion call of the Council to diligently prepare the leaders in particular – priests, religious as well as laity (DV 23, 25) - to respond adequately to this renewed exalted status accorded to the Bible, through which “the Father who is in heaven meets His children with great love and speaks with them” (DV 21).

## Areas of Focus

***The course concentrates on five major areas with a view to achieve this objective:***

1. The curriculum attempts to provide a reasonably systematic exposition of and a modestly in-depth theological reflection on some select books and themes of the Scriptures. Organized within a time framework of three months, the overall blueprint of the course, however, reflects a bird's eye view of the content and unity of the whole Bible, the ever unfolding sacred tradition of the Church and the unremitting dynamism and efficacy of the Word of God in history.

2. As the Council itself earnestly desires, the inward listening to the Word of God must go hand in hand with attentive study. The daily common liturgical functions, Bible sharing in groups, and practice of *lectio divina* and other methods as tools for reading, prayer, meditation and contemplation, are incorporated into the scheme so as to facilitate a healthy fusion of the two dimensions. In addition, a week-long guided retreat is part of the schedule. “Let them remember that prayer should accompany the reading of sacred Scripture, so that God and man may talk together” (DV 25).
3. What is learned and interiorized during the course is ultimately destined for the local Church that the participants represent, so that they may, on return, “increasingly feed her sons [and daughters] with the divine words” (DV 23). Hence imparting of some pastoral skills forms an integral part of the course.
4. In keeping with the universal character of the Church, the organization of this leadership training in biblical pastoral ministry lays particular emphasis on the international and multi-cultural nature and composition of the group, which is clearly borne out in the choice of location, the selection of participants, the continental, cultural and intra-disciplinary diversity of resource persons, and the accentuated multi-ethnic dimension of community building exercises and live-in experience.
5. A written project, which is to be handed in toward the end of the course, is an essential component of the programme. The participants each are expected to present subsequently a

synopsis of it to the whole group. This work not only integrates the knowledge, skills, experiences and insights gained during the course, but also sets them in the context of their own local life situation.

#### For whom the Course is intended

The course is intended for anyone who is devotedly engaged in biblical ministry - priests, religious, and laity - both men and women. Although it is not a prerequisite for admission, those with some specialized experience in this area have naturally an advantage over the others. However, the understanding is that after the course, the participants will be actively involved in this ministry in a focused manner, since its specific aim is the formation of the ministers of the Word.

#### Conditions for Acceptance

- A good command in English.
- A bachelor's degree or its equivalent.
- The age limit for admission is set at 60 years.
- **Dei Verbum course** is not a renewal course or aimed at those on sabbatical. It is primarily a course the training of leaders for biblical pastoral ministry at the service of the local Church. Acceptance, therefore, requires the formal recommendation of a bishop, a major religious superior, or director of a Catholic Church institution who wants to make effective use of the participant's training for future ecclesial ministry.

#### Money Matters

The total cost of tuition, board and lodging for the course is **three thousand five hundred Euros (€3,500)**. A limited number of partial scholarships (up to €1,500) are available, but these are earmarked for those most in need. The deserving cases are determined after having studied all the applications.

**Deadline for Registration:**  
May 15, 2012

**Address all correspondence to:**

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## DEI VERBUM BIBLICAL PASTORAL INSTITUTE



**Course for  
Ministers of  
the Word of God**

**Nemi (Rome)**

**Sept. 05 – 30 Nov., 2012**