From the Editor

To train their candidates and members, seminaries and convents adopt carefully planned formation programs that serve their respective charisms. These programs are intensely put into operation during the initial stages of formation. As the candidates approach the perpetual-profession stage or ordination, the more formal formation could turn into an "on-the-job" training through apostolate or missionary work. Nevertheless, prior to their exposure to *formal* training, candidates have already embodied in themselves dispositions through the "silent," but powerful, *informal* and common process of socio-cultural formation. The latter produces deeper and more ingrained qualities in the individual since this involves the sustained primary formation that starts early at home and further refined or adjusted in the neighborhood and other public spaces.

The formal and informal domains of formation and development would have their respective formators who may be referred to as the "more knowledgeable others" (MKO; Lev Vygotsky's term for "a teacher, parent, or peer, with a higher skill set and helps a learner to understand things that s/he cannot acquire by one's own abilities"). In a shared popular culture, the MKOs are the elders and, sometimes, one's peers. (It is more complex in advanced societies since media celebrities, popular personalities, or a highly educated self's insights and conscience could be regarded by many people as MKOs.) In convents, seminaries, or vocation formation houses, the MKOs are the novice masters, spiritual directors, or academic mentors. The MKOs, in turn, will have to rely on formation traditions or on masters of spiritualities, as well as take into account the wide-ranging influence of society and culture on

every person's bio-psychosocial development. Thus, the concept of formation cannot sidestep the informal or the more hidden and implict aspects of human development.

The person's inner bio-psychological goings-on are difficult to fathom but important factors to consider in formation. This is shown in the article of Ferdinand D. Dagmang ("God-Talk as a Means of Healing: A Spiritual Rebirth Through Novel Writing and Auto-Analysis") who discusses how he dealt with trauma through novel writing and academic analysis. The novel writing afforded him the opportunity to re-experience and come to grips with a previously unconscious and largely untreated interior pain caused by various internal and external factors. The academic writing involved framing his personal history with the classic stories of Teresa de Ávila, Juan de la Cruz, and Thérèse de Lisieux. In the process of dealing with trauma, he was also able to affirm the abiding presence of the Divine Therapist. The article ends by acknowledging the salvific regard of Jesus whose own narrative of suffering may theologically chart other stories of suffering.

Ben Carlo N. Atim's work, "The Human Will in Meister Eckhart's Understanding of Deificatory Event," is about a certain recurrent issue in spirituality: the fate of the human will in the context of the deificatory event. He makes use of various authors (Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Heidegger, among others) to argue that the human will is not lost in the process and realization of deification.

In the article "The Monster Underneath: Subversion and Ignored Realities in Literature in the Age of Imposed Normalcy," Veniz Maja V. Guzman touches on some hidden socio-cultural elements that shape individuals. She discusses Michel Foucault's panopticon

and the functions of fairy tales and modern fiction in order to show how societes, in their effort to maintain or defend social formation and development, would define and produce their respective versions of who is normal and not-normal (the Other). This formative classification of individuals into normal and not-normal pre-empts and could upset carefully planned formation programs.

Ferdinand D. Dagmang