

THE THEOLOGICAL CURRICULUM AND ITS CONSTRUCTION: VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL ASPECTS¹

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Abstract: The topic of this essay touches on the construction of a theological curriculum and its foundation based on the profile of the egress or of the future Lutheran pastor. The aim is to explore elements that deal with the composition and execution of a theological curriculum. Pastoral formation is known to have its main basis in its vertical dimension, that is, it is a gift coming from God. The problematic character is how to reconcile this vertical dimension of pastoral formation, with horizontal aspects and human responsibility in the formative process, which is also dependent on factors such as a well-built curriculum. This research is qualitative in nature and from the point of view of its objectives it is exploratory. As a technical instrument of investigation, the bibliographic research was used. The survey results show that overall curriculum construction and execution can achieve better consolidation through collaborative academic collegiate meetings of the faculty, continuing teacher education, and clear objectives of the desired pastoral profile that are present in the curriculum.

Keywords: Theological curriculum. Pastoral Formation. Teacher training.

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INTRODUCTION

Debating a theological curriculum is not the same as discussing the curriculum of another college course. The main reason is that in any other curriculum the discussion is basically horizontal, while in a theological curriculum, although there is a whole cognitive emphasis, there is a vertical dimension involved that is primary and fundamental.

Pastoral formation is a divine gift and the origin is in the grace of God. “For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think [...] Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who leads, with zeal;” (Rom 12:3-8). Even though there may be no direct mention of pastoral ministry, this Word of God in Romans leaves no doubt that we are what we are by the grace of God (1 Cor 15:10).

As obvious as it is important to remember God’s grace in the pastoral process of formation, one must also remember that this difference to the curriculum of any other course should not prevent us from deepening, discussing or even improving the theological curriculum and its end goal of preparing pastors. In other words, putting everything in God’s hands, as if everything depended on him, can be a vertical reductionist practice, in this case, and thus shirking human responsibility in the process of pastoral formation. By the way, denying our responsibility in this is neither a coherent nor logical action, for if it were so, we would not be seeking to perfect and find the best ways to train Lutheran pastors in the present century. The opposite is also true. Understanding pastoral formation as a result of a well-adjusted curriculum and well-designed academic planning only can be a horizontal reductionism.

Luther speaks of the preparation of pastors in the Preface to the Wittenberg Edition of 1539 German Language Writings. “[...] I want to show you a correct way to study theology, for I had practice in that” (LUTHER, 1960, p.285). The Reformer bases his pastoral and curriculum formative proposal on Psalm 119. “There you will find three rules, broadly presented throughout the Psalm. They are: *Oratio, Meditatio, Tentatio*” (LUTHER, 1960, p.285).

For Luther the formation of a pastor begins with looking at himself and discarding his own reason or understanding. One must fix one’s eyes on Scripture and discard any personal presumption. Self-sufficiency has no turn in the pastoral formative path. Formation begins by kneeling in one’s room and praying that the Father will grant the Spirit, and with the Spirit, enlightenment, direction, and understanding will come. The second step is meditation on the Word of God. This

is not just heartfelt ponderations, but carefully reading, repeating, and comparing God's Word. Listening to God's voice without tiring and never losing interest is the best curriculum for the continued formation and maturity of a theologian. And the third element is temptation, that is, to look at life as it is, full of curves and swings, in which the days of adversity may even surpass the days of prosperity (Ec 7:14). "This is the touchstone that teaches you not only to know and understand, but also to experience how right, true, sweet, lovely, powerful, and how comforting is the Word of God" (LUTHER, 1960, p.287).

This formative course will make it possible to confess with David that "the law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces". (Psalm 119:72). In addition, this practice will promote more understanding "[...] than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation" and more insight "[...] than the aged, for I keep your precepts" (Psalm 119:99-100). Following this path, there will be more and more teaching and writing, but there will also be greater dissatisfaction with yourself. Luther is presumed to be talking about always wanting to do better and not content with doing the job. When the desire to perfect yourself occurs, then you begin "to become a true theologian who can teach not only the young and imperfect Christians, but also the mature and perfect. For, indeed, the Christian church has all kinds of Christians: young, old, weak, sick, healthy, strong, energetic, lazy, simple, wise, etc.". (LUTHER, 1960, p.287).

However, if the inclination is to be satisfied with what has already been done and to be content with compliments before others, or even to seek compliments, as well as being bothered by what is being done, then it is "best to decorate your ears with golden bells and the people who see him will exclaim: "Look, look! There is that clever beast who can write such exquisite books and preach so extraordinarily well" (LUTHER 1960, p.288). Luther's emphasis is on honoring God through the humble recognition that He is the teacher and the one who leads continuing education through his Holy Scriptures (LUTHER, 1960, p.288). Nonetheless, even in this more vertical approach to pastoral formation, there is a personal and horizontal responsibility that cannot be overlooked in Martin Luther's proposal for theological formation.

Incidentally, in a context of debate about all Christians as theologians, Luther addresses the issue again from both the vertical perspective, as explained and emphasized above, and from the horizontal perspective. The constitution of a theologian occurs through the grace wrought by the Holy Spirit, temptation, experience, opportunity, constant and concentrated study of the text, and knowledge and practice of the sciences. This characterization shows the tensional character between the pastorate as a gift of God and the work and human formation (BAYER, 2007, p.14).

The main interest is in the last aspect addressed: knowledge and practice of the sciences. This aspect shifts the theological formative process to the more academic concept of theology and, therefore, also curricular. A theologian, or pastor, will only be able to exercise his craft by knowing and practicing the seven free arts, subdivided into trivium and quadrivium. Grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy (BAYER, 2007, p.20).

Interestingly, Luther emphasizes the grammatical, rhetorical, and dialectical competence of the biblical text in order to be instrumental in elucidating theological controversies (BAYER, 2007, p.21). Originally, one of the interpretations given to the idea that permeates this Classical Greece curriculum structure is the formation of the citizen, the inhabitant of the polis and the priority was the formation of character and personal development and not the formation of logicians and linguists (MACHADO 2002, p.137).

According to Machado (2002, p.138-139), the problem is that in the modern period there was a dichotomization between scientific knowledge and knowledge in the broadest sense, giving primacy to curricular knowledge. In this case, the curriculum ends up determining the contents, and the timetable organized the time for learning the subjects. The ultimate goals were, as it were, passing the college entrance exam and continuing to learn other subjects at the university. The point is that scientific development cannot live apart from the world of the people and be at their service, so that the sciences do not function as instruments of personal achievement. In this sense, the academic/curriculum theological engagement must have in view the people and their needs to hear, and to hear well, the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In this perspective, the purpose of the present work is to offer an investigation that involves five aspects, each one with its proper consequences. The first focus of the research is to review the literature about what has been written and what kind of approach has been taken regarding ministerial formation. The second step is to survey the bibliography on what has been investigated about curriculum construction, especially with regard to assumptions. The third approach concerns the pedagogical perspective of pastoral formation, in terms of teaching skills to be expected from a theology teacher. In the fourth part, the goal is to map a curricular structure that presents in its scope some categories that may point to what is expected of an egress from one of the Lutheran seminaries and that has competences to exercise the pastoral ministry in the 21st century. The fifth and final aspect of this study is to conduct a biblical/theological survey of a possible configuration of the competencies expected of a Lutheran pastor, emphasizing the qualifications found in the Word of God and commonly mentioned in ordination liturgies and pastoral callings.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REVIEW ON PASTORAL FORMATION

The main bibliographic source of pastoral theological formation in a context is concentrated in the proceedings of the First World Seminary Conference, sponsored by the International Lutheran Council, held in Brazil in 2001. The theme of the meeting was “Preparing Lutheran Pastors for Today”. Based on this main topic, ten other subtopics were developed, including curricular issues.

Kleinig (2006, p.11-32)³ developed the vertical dimension of pastoral formation, which is related to the principle developed by Luther, *oratio, meditatio and tentatio*⁴. The second thematic category was the interpretation of the Word of God in different cultural contexts. Ntsiname (2006, p.39-71) addresses issues related to the complexity and breadth of God’s Word and culture and their great challenges. The third thematic approach of the event was historical. Buss (2006, p.99-127) examines the historical changes in the pastoral office that have occurred over the years, focusing especially on the Reformation period, noting that the variations were mainly conditioned on the understanding of church doctrines and soteriology. Rast Jr. (2006, p.129-150) also maps historical changes in Pastoral Education, emphasizing the beginning of the encyclopedist movement, portrayed by the four areas of study of theology and theological education being shaped by cultural factors. It is noteworthy that “the main shift in theological education at this time [Rationalism] was to demand that theology justify its existence – and the way in which this was accomplished was by dividing theological education into a series of independent disciplines” (RAST JR., 2006, p.139).

The fourth thematic aspect under analysis was leadership from a cultural perspective and its consequences in the pastoral office. Shimodate (2006, p. 151-164) emphasizes multifaceted characteristics of leadership in terms of people’s social and cultural differences. At the core of the discussion, among other elements presented, is the role of the pastor and the laity in the church and their implications for missionary strategies.

The fifth topic was related to essential ingredients in the confessional training of a Lutheran pastor. Klän (2006, p.165-195) reaffirms the Holy Scriptures as the primary source of doctrine and the Lutheran Confessions as expositi-

3 All the authors mentioned in this bibliographic review have their studies published in the book of the First World Seminar Conference, organized by Professor Paulo Moisés Nerbas. The reference of the work is in the final part of this article.

4 In another study, Kleinig (2002, p.5-16) addresses the issue by diagnosing possible gaps in the theological formative process and proposing that a theological curriculum should be emphatically built upon the word of God, the mutual pastoral care, and the spiritual formation of the future pastors.

tors of the Word of God, but also as a guiding document in promoting ecumenical responsibility.

The sixth category of analysis of the Conference was the conceptualization and practice of pastoral authority. Grothe (2006, p.201-214) makes a conceptual survey of authority in Holy Scripture and in parallel literature, making subsequent application to the office of the Ministry, especially in the mission of forgiving sins.

The seventh thematic aspect addressed the role of Psychology in a pastoral training seminary. Salminen (2006, p.215-227) speaks of the possibilities and limits of psychology from the perspective of the relationship between God and people. The emphasis is on knowing and recognizing emotions in students' lives so that they are competent to recognize different emotions in others. Perhaps in connection with this psychological aspect, as well as the first that dealt with prayer and meditation, the eighth theme was the progress of students' devotional life. Just Jr. (2006, p.229-244) emphasizes biblical stories as a devotional source, but also daily liturgical offices as an instrument of shaping devotional life.

The next topic was about curricula. Seibert (2006, p.245-268) emphasizes the need to impose clear purposes on curriculum design and execution. One of the points considered in this assumption is that "theology cannot be restricted to academia". You must be academic and practical. "[...] it must accompany the missionary front" (p.265). In this sense, the design of a curriculum is conditioned to what it is intended to achieve and, therefore, it is necessary to draw a profile of the desired and needed Lutheran pastor in the 21st century and, from this definition, make the exercise of curriculum construction relevant and significant.

The ninth work was on the challenge of "non-traditional" or "non-seminary" training such as extension or distance education. Rutt (2006, p.293-316) highlights pedagogical implications of nontraditional teaching, challenges to traditional programs, disadvantages and problems of this type of educational modality, strengths and weaknesses. Finally, the tenth work focused on the requirements concerning biblical languages. Salzmann (2006, p.317-338) argues that in order to understand language correctly, one must know it. Ideally, in this sense, each pastor should know the original languages in order to be able to do his own translation of the biblical text, but realistically, each theologian should have the minimum competence to use supporting material produced by other scholars.

The historical mapping presented indicates that there are indeed several factors that need to be considered in pastoral training and consequently

in the discussion and elaboration of a curriculum. The gap may be in the absence of clear proposals for the next steps that should be taken to advance the insertion of these elements into a theological curriculum aimed at training pastors. The benefits of this material are to subsidize reflections and curricular constructions.

CURRICULA

The second aspect to be addressed is the curriculum issue. Young (2002, p.54) states that at the basis of a curriculum are the assumptions one possesses about knowledge. The first question is whether knowledge is seen in a fragmented way, i.e., whether there is a separation between school knowledge and knowledge of everyday life. The second point is about curriculum structuring: it favors more disciplinary and content development or focuses on improving practical and social skills.

A Curriculum separated from everyday reality is a feature of almost all educational curricula. The main idea raised by Young (2002) is that there are two types of curriculum: the island model and the hybrid model. The first emphasizes, as explained above, the differences between the types of knowledge, that is, the knowledge of the academy has no continuity with daily life knowledge. In this case,

[...] the continuous production and acquisition of new knowledge places limits on the possibilities for innovation in the curriculum, in particular with regard to crossing the boundaries of subjects, to integrate theoretical knowledge with know-how and practical skills. Not surprisingly, therefore, that the principle of insularity can be invoked as the foundation for sustaining deeply conservative doctrines in defense of the *status quo* of the curriculum (YOUNG, 2002, p.55).

The argumentative basis of insularity lies in the view that there are no classifications in the type of knowledge and that it goes beyond customs and examples, history and society. The guiding principle of hybrid curriculum design emphasizes the unity and continuity of forms and types of knowledge. It is a social constructivist view of knowledge that perceives the learning process occurring through social, historical and cultural interaction. There would also be more practical reasons being taken into account in defending the hybrid cur-

riculum. Perhaps the “principle of hybridity has begun to arouse interest of educational policy makers, as it seems to converge on the new goals of social inclusion and responsibility policy” (YOUNG, 2002, p.55). But it is not only social pressure that exerts force on this second model. “In both cases, the social and economic arguments for a sensitive curriculum that can underpin new types of skills and knowledge that transcend disciplinary boundaries and current academic/vocational divisions are opposed to traditional academic curriculum insularity”(YOUNG, 2002, p.56). In other words, the hybrid model suffers from market pressures and sociopolitical priorities in its elaboration, while the island model has a more conservative and traditional orientation.

Where is the ideal or the break-even mark? Young (2002) believes that it is necessary to find a basis that can avoid both the disciplinary and traditional (island) curriculum, which he considers to be “unhistorical”, with the uncertain and unstable hybrid curriculum, considered to be “non-pedagogical”. Young’s main argument (2002, p.77) is the principle that knowledge has social and historical construction, but is not subordinate to the process of historical and social construction. This means that “[...] we produce knowledge from knowledge”.

While recognition of the social character of knowledge and the neglect of its objective reality may lead to relativism or dogmatism, a focus on its objective reality without recognition of its social character may become little more than a justification of *status quo*. A future curriculum needs to treat knowledge as a distinct and non-reducible element in the historical process in which individuals strive to overcome the circumstances in which they find themselves (YOUNG, 2002, p.77).

This means recognizing the importance of the objective character of knowledge, not only as a historical process, because the acquisition of new knowledge and the development of science are conditioned by the objectivity of knowledge. By the way, one of the factors that made hybridism take shape in curriculum building was the economic pressure to reunite theory with practice. However, this did not allow the construction of new knowledge and its application to the curriculum was compromised (YOUNG, 2002, p.78). Thus, “new knowledge and new curricula are generated when researchers or students acquire and develop existing knowledge and concepts from specific disciplines and fields in order to understand or transform the world” (YOUNG, 2002, p.78).

Along the same lines, Perrenoud (2002, p.16-17) questions teacher education as distant from the reality to be found by future graduates. For

him, teaching classes at the university and passing on theoretical knowledge does not guarantee to know the “profession from within”, just because one exercised the office for a while or visited interns. Sometimes training courses take a prescriptive view of the profession and not a view from its reality. “[...] In order to make practices evolve, it is important to describe the conditions and limitations of teachers’ real work. This is the basis of every innovation strategy” (PERRENOUD, 2002, p.17) that can be applied to pastoral formation.

A first conclusion or reflection that can be made is that the pastoral formation process, from an academic and curricular perspective, needs to dedicate and invest time to research the practices and the human reality; to study the human being in his microcontext, with his daily dilemmas and anxieties, the rejection that can be submitted, the family problems they face at home and in society. Approaching these and other issues from the macro perspective, that is, seeing everything through the lens of original sin, can generate a shock of reality that is complex to overcome, but can be alleviated when looking more closely at who is the human being to whom the designs of God are being preached and what is his/her specific life circumstances.

Thus, knowing the biblical text is not sufficient for effective Christian testimony. The task of bridge builder demands a knowledge of our neighbors around us. Tools from modern academic disciplines, which are also a product of God’s creative hand, must be used to understand the world around us (KOLB, 2010, p.15).

It must be recognized that other knowledge will not bring absolute information or objective truths, for social scientists are influenced by their worldviews, ideologies, and presuppositions. However, modern scholars of psychology, sociology, or anthropology, as well as other sciences, can offer us the means to grasp contemporary thinking categories and point us to the ways in which people usually walk. “This knowledge is useful and necessary for analyzing why life is not working for the person whom we are witnessing to, as well as for formulating the message of God’s gift of life in Christ to that person” (KOLB, 2010, p.15).

In this sense, the most appropriate way of dealing with the curriculum is the appreciation of the objective or academic character of knowledge, with a view to building and expanding to new knowledge, but without losing sight of the social human reality and its cry for contemplating certain subjects, whether they are common sense or other sciences, so that these may receive proper treatment at the academy which in turn has relationships with teaching skills.

THE PEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVE OF PASTORAL FORMATION: TEACHING SKILLS

In this sense, the third approach proposed for this investigative work concerns the pedagogical perspective of pastoral formation, in terms of teaching skills to be expected from a theology teacher.

Teachers in general have been confronted by a complex web of situations that require reflections on their role as learning mediators or co-builders. One of the important items to consider in this context is the vast amount of information available to students and, in the midst of all this, how to make the teaching and learning process relevant becomes a significant challenge (LE PAGE, BRANSFORD, DARLING-HAMMOND, 2005, p.10).

One of the models used to highlight three possible areas in which a teacher should move to improve his teaching are: knowledge, competences and disposition. Knowledge about students and how they learn and develop their learning, especially taking into account their individual history and social context; to be familiar with the curriculum content and its goals, in order to understand the content taught and the skills to be learned in light of its ultimate purpose; and the third possible area is to develop an understanding of the teaching/learning process in light of the content and of the students who are taught and who learn. In short, the focus is on the interactional perception of teachers, students, content, and social realities that influence learning practice (LE PAGE, BRANSFORD, DARLING-HAMMOND, 2005, p.10).

Regarding knowledge about students, we must first remember the social and human importance in the teaching process. While “conventional wisdom” pointed to schools as making no difference in students’ lives, other studies provide other results: “More recent evidence, based on other data types and different analytical methods, suggests that schools provide and promote noteworthy changes and contributions about what children learn and the impact teachers have on their lives ”(LE PAGE, BRANSFORD, DARLING-HAMMOND, 2005, p.13). This is no discovery, for the wisdom of common sense affirms the strength of the teacher’s influence upon the student.

The subject here is the theological and adult learning curriculum, but the point is the claim to highlight the figure of the teacher as a constituent part of the curriculum and its scope in the lives of its students. Although there is no concrete data, a connection can be made with God’s words in Acts 20:28: “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the

Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood”. Perhaps it is an aggression to the text, but this does not mean that one cannot look at these words of God with the lens of the teaching/pastoral responsibility that implies constant improvement, including the knowledge of the reality of the students.

In this sense, it is worth noting that the student’s context, socioeconomic profile, family education and other family factors are elements that interfere with the learning process. However, it is noteworthy that some studies indicate that the quality of teachers also has a high degree of impact (LE PAGE, BRANSFORD, DARLING-HAMMOND, 2005, p.14). By the way, Luther (1995, p.308) emphasizes this teaching qualification: “To teach and educate children well, we need specialized people”, as well as investing money in education (LUTERO, 1995, p.305). In this perspective, Le Page, Bransford and Darling-Hammond (2005, p.15) understand that the academic ability of teachers makes a difference in the formative life of their students. Thus, research has led to the discovery that “[...] each additional dollar spent on better qualification for teachers is compensated in the achievement of improvements in student performance than less instructional uses of school resources” (LE PAGE, BRANSFORD, DARLING-HAMMOND, 2005, p.15).

Speaking of qualification, teaching skills and professional training of teachers, Tardif (2016, p.31-41) lists a series of teachers’ knowledge regarding the problem of teaching knowledge. The first of these concerns the knowledge of the educational sciences and pedagogical knowledge, intended for the scientific and scholarly formation of the teacher, or the initial and continuing formation of teachers. As for pedagogical knowledge, the main idea is to appropriate some teaching techniques. The second knowledge is the disciplinary knowledge. In this case, the training incorporates knowledge about the various disciplines offered by the university. The third knowledge is the experiential knowledge, linked to daily work and knowledge of its environment. It incorporates practical knowledge, seen individually and collectively. This collective or cooperative aspect is still seen as a “black box” (THURLER, 2002, p.95). When it exists, collaborative action between teachers seems to contribute to improving student learning. When it does not occur, it is difficult to prescribe a simple formula by which it could be established. The point is that among the skills of teachers’ professional development is also the initiation to collaborative exploration.

And, finally, the curricular knowledge. Teachers should be familiar

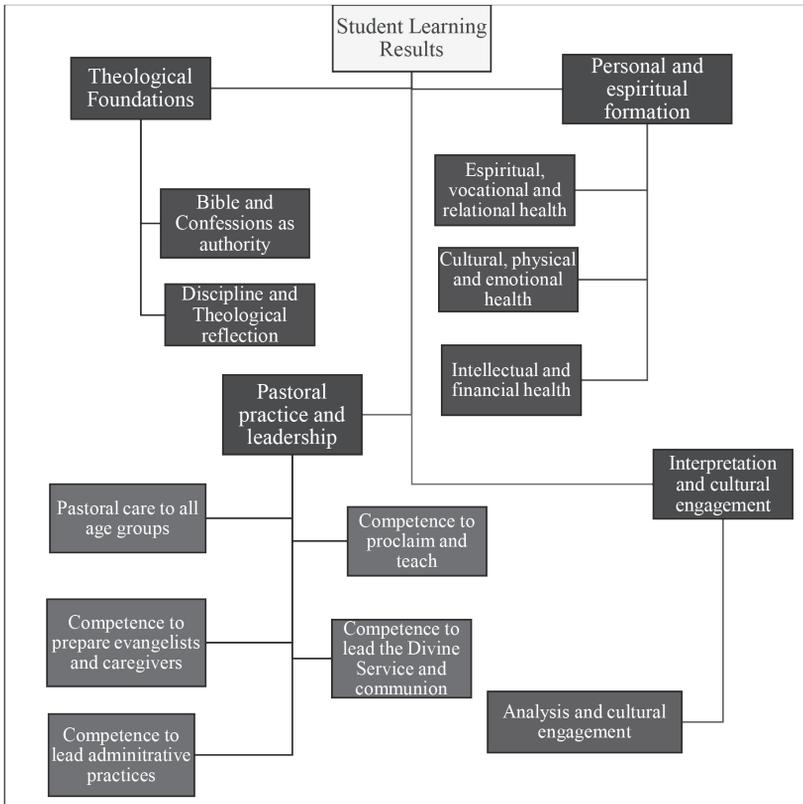
with and appropriate knowledge related to the “[...] objectives, content and methods by which the educational institution categorizes and presents the social knowledge defined and selected by it” (TARDIF, 2016, p.38). In other words, teachers align their practice with the goals in broad and institutional terms and, despite the obviousness of this conclusion, it can be refined through academic and collaborative collegiate meetings of teachers.

Therefore, teachers should be prepared to exercise their office for both practical teaching and learning alternatives, as well as for developing knowledge and willingness to know their students, learning theories and their contextual reality. In addition, it is also appropriate to develop a curriculum view of their particular pedagogical action in order to effectively align their disciplinary content with the institution’s overall pedagogical planning. It is advisable to have a broad view of the assessment processes, selection of materials, tasks and activities for the students, so that all this fits in and is aligned with the needs of the students and the intended profile of the pastor. This, in turn, needs to be in line with the institutional target and the needs of the communities.

CONCORDIA SEMINARY - SAINT LOUIS, USA CURRICULUM

The fourth element of approach proposed for this paper is the description of a curriculum structure of one of the main pastoral training institutions, Concordia Seminary, of Saint Louis, United States. In its academic catalog, there is an interesting example to be mapped regarding the formative proposals and the profile of the egress. Ministerial formation programs “[...] prepare men to serve as pastors in parish, missionary, and other ministerial settings within the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod” (ACADEMIC CATALOG, 2019, p. 18). As for pastoral formation programs, the main one is the Master of Divinity, whose purpose is to serve the church in its need to have pastors who administer the Word and the Sacraments. As for the goals, the program “[...] trains and equips students with the knowledge, attitudes, and skills required for the pastoral ministry of the Lutheran Church (ACADEMIC CATALOG, 2019, p.18). As for the proposed objectives and results, the curriculum is built to achieve some results and will be exposed in the concept map below (ACADEMIC CATALOG, 2019, p.18). Remember that in all items there is a common emphasis on the evangelical and Christocentric aspect of pastoral action.

Conceptual Map 1 – Graphical Representation of the learning objectives of Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis



Source: Own elaboration based on Academic Catalog (2019, p.18-19)

The data from Conceptual Map 1 show a very summarized construction of what is intended for a pastor trained in a Lutheran Seminary. There is a well-balanced emphasis on the candidate’s cognitive and personal training aspects. However, when looking at Table 1 below, it is possible to detect a very intense focus on the vicarage period as a promoter of personal and spiritual formation.

Table 1 – Distribution of credits in the pastoral formation of Concordia Seminary

Area	Personal and pastoral Formation	Exegetical Theology	Biblical Languages	Historical Theology	Practical Theology	Systematic Theology
Credits (98)	15 (12 of the vicarage period)	12	12	9	24.5	13.5
Percentage of total	15.3%	12.2%	12.2%	9.1%	25%	13.7%

Source: Own elaboration based on Academic Catalog (2019, p.25)

The data from Table 1 and from the perspective of a macro view – it would be necessary to investigate each of the teaching plans for a more accurate view of this – indicate that there seems to exist, in relation to the proposed objectives, a slight imbalance in favor of biblical languages, to the detriment of the personal and pastoral formation which is intended during the vicarage period.

A BIBLICAL/THEOLOGICAL MAPPING OF THE PROFILE OF A PASTORAL MINISTRY CANDIDATE

In conclusive and reflective tones, this last section intends to address the theme of pastoral formation and theological curriculum by means of a biblical mapping in the New Testament, to visualize a desired profile for a pastor “according to the heart of God” (Jer. 3:15). The most representative and explicit texts of pastoral ministry are in letters from the apostle Paul: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus, especially. However, there are other elements that can be inferred for the composition of the pastoral profile, both in the Gospel texts and in other New Testament epistles, as shown in Box 1 below.

It is noteworthy that the Pastor’s Installation Liturgy also ends up contemplating aspects of the Lutheran pastor’s profile. In addition to direct mention of Pauline texts to Timothy, the liturgy presents other very relevant competences. In addition to the duties of a pastor, such as preaching and teaching the Word of God and ministering the Sacraments, it is also within his competence “to instruct children and youth, admonish sinners, help the weak in faith, seek the lost, comfort the afflicted, support the needy, visit the sick, comfort the downcast [...]” (CULTO LUTERANO, 2015, p.205).

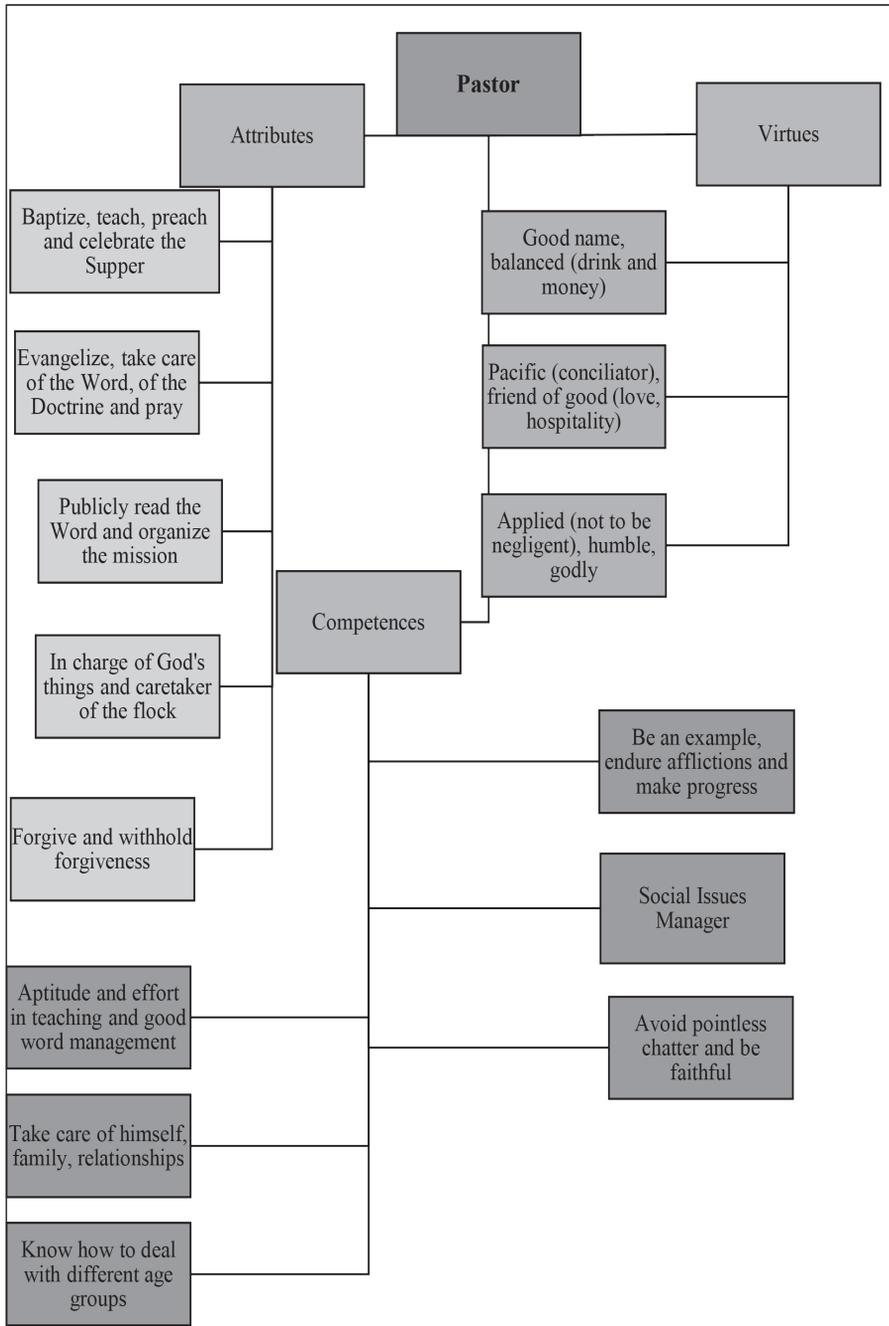
Another valid research tool on the curricular reflection of pastoral formation may be the visit of the seminary faculty to the vicarages. One of the evaluation items concerns pastoral formation based on reality and vicar data. In the visits made in 2019, two aspects were noted: there should be an emphasis on more specific preparation and skills in dealing with different age and social groups, as well as planning and implementing programs or projects.

Chart 1 - Assignments, competencies and virtues of Pastoral Ministry according to New Testament passages

Text	Assignments	Competences	Virtues
1 Tm 3.2-7	To teach	Ability to teach Take care of family (wife and children), finances, relationships and drinking excesses	Good name, moderate, sensible, modest, hospitable, peaceful (conciliator), balanced;
1 Tm 4.6-16	Teaching and public reading of Scripture, care of the doctrine	Reject superfluous matters, be an example for Christians, make progress, take care of yourself and of the teaching.	Exercise godliness, application (gift)
1 Tm 5.1-4		Knowing how to deal with different age groups, managing widow issues, honoring those who need care	
1 Tm 5.17-19	Teaching and preaching	Effort to preach and teach	
2 Tm 2.14-26		Handle the word well, avoid useless talk, unfounded discussions, aptitude for teaching	Escape the passions of youth, be peaceful, patient
2 Tm 4.1-5	Preach the Word, all the time, play the role of evangelist	Endure afflictions, perseverance	
Tt 1.5-9	Organize missionary work and be in charge of God's things	Being attached to the Word and the teaching	Good name, humble, balanced, not drinking too much, peaceful and a friend of what is good;
Mt 28. 19-20	Baptize and teach		
Jo 20.23	Forgive and retain sins		
At 6.1-8	Take care of prayer and the Word	Manage social assistance (interpret the social context)	
At 20.28	Care for the flock	Caring for himself	
1 Co 4.1-2	In charge of the mysteries of God	Be faithful	
1 Co 11.23	Responsible for the Lord's Supper		
2 Co 5.20	Ambassadors of Christ		
1 Pe 5.2-3	Shepherd the flock	Model for the flock	Spontaneity

Source: Own authorship with selected data from biblical texts (2019)

Conceptual Map 2 – Synthetic view of the attributes, competences and virtues desired in a Lutheran pastor



Source: Own authorship with data extracted from Table 1

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The first consideration of the above table and summary in concept map 2 is that the teaching and practice of justification by faith is indispensable in the discussion of the Pastoral Ministry. There is no way to fit the profile recommended by God without remembering this truth, which is part of the vertical dimension of the pastoral formation process. However, to paraphrase Luther, once we know that we are justified by the grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ, then we have the authority to think, build, and implement ideas and programs in pastoral formation (LUTERO, 2008, p.30-35). In this sense, the second consideration at the end of this paper is that the curricular construction of a course does not only require the distribution of credits and the most appropriate titles for the subjects. First, it is necessary to define what profile is idealized for a Lutheran pastor, having as its main reference the word of God and especially the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. As a second step for curriculum consolidation, pedagogical alignments are needed, which materialize through collaborative faculty meetings. Confessional and contextual aspects can and should be incorporated into this discussion as long as they do not impose limits on a proper pastor's action after God's own heart.

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