

Phases of Formation

(2005)

ORIENTATION PHASE

- **Content for this phase (OVERVIEW):**

- an understanding of discernment and vocation (cf. *To Cling with All Her Heart to Him* by Benet Fonck, OFM, page 5)
- brief review of Catholic doctrine and Christian morals
- prayer life and apostolic activity
- phases of Secular Franciscan formation and expectations
- life of St. Francis (may be in novel form)
- branches of the Franciscan family
- Rule and brief history of the Secular Franciscan Order
- an understanding of some of our Franciscan symbols
- a Franciscan prayer experience

Rite: Ceremony of Introduction and Welcoming (cf. *Ritual*, pages 9-10)

INQUIRY PHASE

- **Suggested content for this phase:**

- a deeper understanding of discernment and vocation to the SFO
- agents of formation (cf. *Guidelines for Initial Formation*)
- lives of Sts. Francis and Clare (more scholarly version)
- writings of Sts. Francis and Clare
- history of the Secular Franciscan Order, including evolution of its Rules
- organizational structure of the Secular Franciscan Order
- introduction to the *SFO Rule*, *General Constitutions* and *Ritual*
- introduction to Sacred Scripture and how it impacts the life of a Secular Franciscan (Lectio Divina)
- the Catholic Church in light of the Second Vatican Council (especially *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*)
- the *SFO Rule* in light of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*
- an understanding of lay/secular spirituality
- an introduction to praying the *Liturgy of the Hours*
- other Franciscan prayer experiences

Rite: Rite of Admission (cf. *Ritual*, pages 11-17)

CANDIDACY PHASE

- **Suggested content for this phase:**
 - the *Prologue to the SFO Rule (the Volterra Letter)*
 - a detailed study of the 1978 *SFO Rule*
 - Sacred Scripture, especially the Gospels, and the opportunity to experience, interiorize and integrate Gospel values
 - Franciscan spirituality
 - Secular Franciscan apostolic life
 - a detailed study of the *SFO General Constitutions*
 - lives of Secular Franciscan saints and other Franciscans
 - Franciscan traditions and stories (e.g., Crown Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Greccio, Gubbio, etc.)
 - writings of Sts. Francis and Clare
 - introduction to Franciscan sources, including an understanding of the purpose of a medieval legend
 - continued experience in praying and leading the *Liturgy of the Hours*
 - other Franciscan prayer experiences
 - a detailed study of the *SFO Ritual*, especially the Rites of Profession

Rite: Rite of Profession or Permanent Commitment (cf. *Ritual*, pages 18- 26) or
Rite of Temporary Commitment (cf. *Ritual*, pages 27-29)

ONGOING FORMATION

- **Suggested content for this phase:**
 - the *Prologue to the SFO Rule (the Volterra Letter)*
 - a detailed study of the 1978 *SFO Rule*
 - writings of Sts. Francis, Clare, and Bonaventure
 - Franciscan history
 - papal encyclicals, apostolic letters and statements
 - pastoral statements from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
 - official documents and statements of the Franciscan family
 - *SFO Ritual* and *General Constitutions*
 - international, national and regional statutes

Rite: Ceremony on the Anniversary of Profession (cf. *Ritual*, pages 30-32)