

Celebrant's Copy of *Rite of Profession* within the Mass

Before the Celebrant is about to begin, a member of the fraternity reads from the ambo.

Secular Franciscan: We are assembled as a community to take part in the Eucharistic Sacrifice. In this celebration of the Eucharist N.N. are (is) going to make their (his/her) profession of the Gospel life in the Secular Franciscan Order. In doing so, they (he/she) make(s) present again and renew(s) the promises of their (his/her) Baptism and the commitment of their (his/her) Confirmation.

While giving thanks to the Father through Christ for all the gifts we have received from him, we have a special reason for gratitude today: the gift of his grace which he has given to those (the one) about to be professed to live in the world according to the spirit of the Beatitudes, and also the gift of his grace which he has given to the whole community by adding (a) new member(s) to the fraternity.

The permanent commitment to the Gospel life publicly proclaimed today during this celebration reminds us of something which is also made present every day in the Eucharist: After the example of Christ and in union with his own act of thanksgiving, we are to present ourselves before the Father as living sacrifices of praise given for the life of the world.

Entrance Rite

Minister and Candidate(s) may follow the Book of Gospels in the procession.

Liturgy of the Word

After the reading of the Gospel the Celebrant and the people sit. Minister and Formation Director go forward.

Director of Formation: Would the candidate(s) for profession in the Secular Franciscan Order please come forward, namely N.N.

Candidate: I am ready and willing (or Present).

Minister: N.N., God has consecrated you with water and the Holy Spirit. What do you now ask of God, the Church and the Franciscan Family?

Candidate: We (I) ask to be admitted to profession of the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order and to make a permanent commitment to the Gospel life. The experience during our (my) time of formation has strengthened us (me) in the conviction that the Lord is calling us (me) to observe the holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ by following the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi.

Minister: The fraternity accepts your petition and is united with you in your prayer. May the Holy Spirit confirm in you the work he has begun.

The community acknowledges its assent with applause.

Homily

The Creed, even if part of the rubrics for the day, is to be omitted because a Profession is in itself a special creedal statement.

After the homily, questioning. [People go forward: Candidate(s), Minister, Formation Director, 2 witnesses and people presenting symbols.]

Celebrant: Before this fraternity and the other members of the People of God gathered here, I ask you to express your will.

Do you wish to embrace the Gospel way of life by following the example and words of St. Francis of Assisi, which are at the heart of the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order?

Candidate(s): Yes, this is what I want.

Celebrant: You have been called to give witness to the Kingdom of God and to build a more fraternal world based on the Gospel, together with all people of goodwill. Do you wish to be faithful to this vocation and to practice the spirit of service proper to Secular Franciscans?

Candidate(s): Yes, this is what I want.

Celebrant: You have been made members of the People of God by your Baptism, and strengthened in Confirmation by the new gift of the Spirit, in order to proclaim Christ by your lives and your words. Do you wish to bind yourselves more closely to the Church and to work intently to rebuild the ecclesial community and fulfill its mission among all people?

Candidate(s): Yes, this is what I want.

Minister: The local fraternity is a visible sign of the Church, a community of faith and love. Together with all the members, you now pledge yourselves (self) to spend your efforts to make the fraternity a genuine ecclesial assembly and a living Franciscan community.

Celebrant: Prayer for Divine Grace

Then the Celebrant prays for divine help saying:

Let us pray.

All may kneel or remain standing. And in a manner customary to the community, a special time of prayer is observed, using perhaps one of the following:

- a) a period of silence,
- b) an invocation of the Holy Spirit,
- c) a shortened or adapted form of the litany of Franciscan saints, or
- d) a common prayer, particularly composed for the occasion or similar to the following:

O Lord our God,

your grace has led these your servants

to live their faith more fully

in the context of this world

by coming to profess the Gospel

according to the life and rule

of the Secular Franciscan Order.

By the power of your Holy Spirit

may they give witness

to the life and teachings of your Son

to all the world.

Grant that they may be continually united to Christ

through the gifts of their lives,

in order that the Church may be rebuilt

and her mission be fulfilled

through Christ our Lord All: Amen

Then the Celebrant may conclude by saying in these or similar words:

Lord, watch over these, your servants.

May the Spirit of your love penetrate their hearts,

so that your grace will strengthen them

to keep their commitment to the Gospel life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. All: Amen

Profession or Commitment to the Gospel Life

Candidate approaches the Minister and puts his/her hands in the Minister's hands.

Candidate:

I, N.N. by the grace of God, renew my baptismal promises
and consecrate myself to the service of his Kingdom.

Therefore, in my secular state I promise to live all the days of my life
the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Secular Franciscan Order
by observing its rule of life. May the grace of the Holy Spirit,
the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and our holy father St. Francis,
and the fraternal bonds of community always be my help,
so that I may reach the goal of perfect Christian love.

Minister:

Thanks be to God! As Minister of this fraternity, I accept your profession
and receive you into this fraternity of _____
of the Secular Franciscan Order. Your membership in the fraternity
is a cause of great joy and hope for all the members of the community
and for the whole Church.

Candidate and Minister drop their hands.

**Celebrant: I confirm your commitment in the name of the Church.
Our seraphic father himself encourages you in the words of his
Testament: “May whoever observes all this be filled in heaven with
the blessing of the most high Father, and on earth with that of his
beloved Son, together with the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, and all
the powers of heaven and all the saints.”**

Presentation of Symbols of Profession

Formation Director hands each Candidate the **Holy Gospels**.

Minister: Christ, the gift of the Father's love, is the way to him, the truth into which the Holy Spirit leads us, and the life which he has come to give abundantly. By your lifelong profession to go from Gospel to life and life to the Gospel, may you continually encounter the living and active person of Christ.

Person to present San Damiano Crucifix:

May you conform your thoughts and deeds to those of Christ and build a more fraternal and evangelical world by fulfilling your vocation as a "(brother) (sister) of penance."

Person to present Candle: (this is optional)

By your profession you are the light of Christ in the world. Your light must shine before all so that they may see goodness in your acts and give praise to your heavenly Father.

Person to present Ring: (this is optional)

You have been made a living member of the Church in Baptism; you have been united more intimately with the Church by profession. Through this special covenant of union, may you be a faithful witness and instrument of her mission among all people.

Everyone returns to their seats for the Universal Prayer.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Presentation of the gifts may include the Minister and the newly Professed.

Recessional

Minister and newly Professed may follow the servers out in procession.

[Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order, pp. 18 – 26.]