

## Formation for the Newly Professed

1. The time for those who are Newly Professed (the Order does not specify a time period, but the general consensus seems to be approximately 1 year or so post-Profession) to meet is varied according to the Fraternity, the number of Newly Professed, and the availability of those facilitating the process. So, some of the options could be:

- Meet once a month (1- 2 hours)
- Meet every other month (2 – 3 hours)
- Meet quarterly (½ – a full day)



This is in addition to participating in the Fraternity's monthly Gatherings/Meetings which include ongoing formation for everyone. It is important that the Newly Professed continue to attend Regional events whenever possible.

2. Working collaboratively with the Formation Team is imperative so that the relationships which have developed will continue to grow and mature because of the shared vocation.

This means that different Team members could facilitate the different sessions using the gifts and talents which God has given them. One of the Formation Director's duties is to ensure that formation happens during the Formation sessions, but he/she does not and probably should not be the one who facilitates/leads every session.

3. Always have a tentative plan for the Formation process which has been discussed with the Formation Team. Do not be rigid in following the plan; there must always be room for the Holy Spirit to guide the process.

4. Utilize different teaching techniques:

- Dialogue
- Small group discussions
- Questions and answers (Asking questions which solicit information and not questions which can be answered by simply saying yes or no.)
- Asking the Newly Professed to give personal examples of lived experiences on the topic being discussed, etc.

A very **ineffective** method is that of always giving a lecture! The goal of all formation is the interaction among all of the participants. No one person should be talking the majority of the time. All persons involved must be engaged in the process. Remember, everyone in the group has something to offer. The members of the Formation Team are FACILITATORS and not lecturers!

5. The methods used during the formation process should be varied:

- PowerPoints, videos, DVDs, audiocassettes, YouTube, etc.
- Discussions (e.g., discussing a book which is determined by the group)
- Role-playing
- Bringing in items to be shown, discussed, etc.

6. Always be aware that the Formation Team is assisting the Newly Professed in discerning the ways in which God is calling him/her to embrace the Secular Franciscan vocation more fully.

## Outline of a Newly Professed Session

A. It is always a good idea to begin every session with Prayer.

It is very appropriate to ask if anyone has a particular prayer intention he/she would like remembered during this prayer time.

Prayers which St. Francis authored are highly recommended, like the *Prayer Before the Crucifix*. Note: St. Francis did not author the *Peace Prayer*, but it does reflect Francis' convictions.



B. Having the Newly Professed engaged in the formation process is vital:

- Ask if there are any questions concerning the last session.
- Solicit any questions they may have about the Secular Franciscan Order.
- Invite them to share their faith journeys since the last time they were together.

C. Materials to be covered or considered during the Newly Professed formation process:

- Have each Newly Professed person answer the Post Profession questionnaire (found in the *Regional Formation Resource Kit*)

E-mail allows the person time to ponder the questions before answering. This is a wonderful way to evaluate the Fraternity's formation process and to obtain some insight into the possibility of the person joining the Formation Team in the future.

- *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order* (looking at the *Rule* in light of Profession)
- *FUN Manual* topics, if not previously covered
- Materials from the *Regional Formation Resource Kit* (especially: Newly Professed Formation which includes topics to explore and reflective questions)
- *General Constitutions*, if not previously covered (as found in *Essential Documents*)
- *National Statutes*, if not previously covered (as found in *Essential Documents*)
- *Regional Guidelines* (revised in March 2017)
- Maybe use a Formation Text like *What it takes to be an O.F.S. Franciscan* (Bach)

D. At the conclusion of the time together, end with Prayer. This is a great opportunity to delve deeper into different prayer forms:

- *Lectio Divina*
- Meditation
- Franciscan Crown Rosary
- Guided Journey with Francis of Assisi (in the *Regional Formation Resource Kit*)
- *Liturgy of the Hours*
- *The Office of the Passion*

