PART ONE: Pre-Profession Check List
CLOSING OUT THE CANDIDACY PHASE
RITE OF PROFESSION IN THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER

Readiness for profession in the Secular Franciscan Order is _never_ determined solely by the amount of time that one has been a Candidate. Readiness is determined by discernment, both on the part of the Candidate and on the part of the Council. This discernment is ongoing throughout the time of initial formation but is of particular importance during the final phase of initial formation.

_“The period of Candidacy, which begins with the Rite of Admission, shall consist of not less than eighteen (18) months and not more than thirty-six (36) months”_ (National Statutes 19.2b).

When a Candidate has completed the time of initial formation (Candidacy), he or she begins the final discernment process. As _part of this process_, and prior to making a request for profession, the Candidate should attend a _Discernment Retreat_ (preferred) or a Day of Recollection (Reflection). During this retreat a review and reflection on the _Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order_ is particularly helpful. If the Candidate, after consultation with the Director of Formation and Spiritual Assistant, discerns a readiness and a desire for profession, the following steps are taken:

1. The Candidate submits to the Minister of the Local Fraternity a request to make his or her Profession.

2. Upon reception of a request for profession, it is recommended that the Fraternity Council undertake a review of Articles #37 – 44 of the _General Constitutions of the Secular Franciscan Order_, as well as the Preface (pages 2 – 8) and Chapter Three (pages 18 – 26) in the _Ritual of the Secular Franciscan Order_. Do not lightly forego this suggestion as it gives the Council a solid foundation from which to proceed.

3. The Council arranges for the pre-profession interviews. Each Candidate will have two interviews: one by a member of the Fraternity Council, although this is usually not the Formation Director, and one by the Local Spiritual Assistant. In the absence of a Local Spiritual Assistant, please ask the Regional Spiritual Assistant how best to proceed.

4. The Fraternity Council meets to evaluate the Candidate’s request. The Council takes into consideration a report given by the Formation Director, their own knowledge of the Candidate, the written request of the Candidate and the recommendation of those who have conducted the interviews. The Fraternity Council decides by secret ballot on the admission to profession, gives its reply to the Candidate, and informs the fraternity (cf. _General Constitutions_, article #41.1).

Only after the above steps have taken place and after a Candidate is accepted for profession should decisions as to the place, date, and time for the _Rite of Profession_ be made.

**Newly Forming Groups:** If the Candidate(s) is in a Newly Forming Group, the above steps are taken by the Council of the Sponsoring Fraternity. **Emerging Fraternities:** If the Candidate is a member of an Emerging Fraternity, the above steps are taken by the Council of the Emerging Fraternity, which then makes a recommendation to the Sponsoring Fraternity’s Council for acceptance to profession.

[Adapted from For Up to Now Reference Material, by Deacon Dave & Thérèse Ream, O.F.S., Revised July 2017]