

## Topics for the Newly Professed

When we look at the Secular Franciscan formation process, it is important to see it as a continuum, that is, each stage flowing into the next. Aspects that are essential in the first phase, Orientation, will still be essential in the second, Inquiry, the third, Candidacy, and into the specialized program for Newly Professed as well as Ongoing Formation of Professed members.



“The Fraternity has the duty to give special attention to the formation of the newly professed and of the temporarily professed, to help them become fully mature in their vocation and develop a true sense of belonging.” [*General Constitutions* Article #44.2]

### Areas/topics for the Newly Professed to explore:

1. Read and discuss a chapter a month from *What it takes to be a Secular Franciscan* by Lester Bach, O.F.M. Cap., each dealing with a different topic (there are 15 chapters and a Prologue);
2. Read an original source on Francis;
3. Read the Writings of Francis;
4. Read a writing of Francis that correlates to a particular topic (Formation Director/Team/Newly Professed may choose it ahead of time) and present the topic from Francis’ perspective and one’s own personal perspective;
5. Discern which articles of *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order* best speak to a specific topic and discuss;
6. Read the 26 articles of *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order* and discuss in light of Profession;
7. Discuss how a specific aspect of Franciscan spirituality is present in one’s own life or how to try and make it present;
8. Select and discuss articles from the *General Constitutions* and *National Statutes* in order to deepen personal knowledge of the Order’s governing policies;
9. Uncover the tenets of Franciscan spirituality; and
10. Reflect on the teachings of the Catholic Church.

[Adapted from the National Formation Commission four-part statement on the process of Secular Franciscan formation in the United States, March 2001, revised 2005 by Deacon Dave & Thérèse Ream, O.F.S., Revised July 2017]

## Personal Reflection Questions for the Newly Professed:

- What are the positive experiences that you have had since Profession?
- How has your vocation grown since Profession?
- What difficulties have you experienced since Profession?
- What new surprises have you discovered since Profession?
- How were your expectations of Profession met?
- How has your family incorporated your vocation into their lives?
- What does it mean to be a Professed Secular Franciscan?
- How are you giving witness to your Catholic faith?
- How are you giving witness to your Franciscan way of life?
- In what apostolate(s) are you involved?
- How are you going to keep in contact with your Sponsor?
- How has your prayer life changed since your Profession?
- What new insights have you gained about your Catholic Faith since Profession?
- What new insights have you gained about your Secular Franciscan vocation since Profession?
- What article(s) from *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order* touch(es) your heart?
- What article(s) from *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order* do you find challenging?
- What do you find easy to follow in *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order*?
- What do you find difficult to embrace from *The Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order*?
- What recommendations would you offer the Formation Director/Team to improve the formation process?

