

***Franciscan Journey* chapter 1 notes**

Orientation in the OFS

Orientation is the first phase of formation in the Secular Franciscan Order. (Orientation, Inquiry, Candidacy, Profession). Purpose is to learn the Rule of the Secular Franciscans and to discern through reflection, dialogue, and prayer whether you have a calling to profess the Rule.

The journey of formation lasts a lifetime.

Conditions for admission are:

- to profess the Catholic faith,
- to live in communion with the Church,
- to be of good moral standing,
- to show clear signs of a vocation.

Read and meditate on Scripture, on the life and writings of St Francis, and on Franciscan spirituality.

Profession is the solemn ecclesial act by which the candidate, remembering the call received from Christ, renews the baptismal promises and publicly affirms his or her personal commitment to live the Gospel in the world according to the example of Francis, and following the Rule of the OFS.

Profession incorporates the candidate into the Order and is by its nature a perpetual commitment.

***Franciscan Prayer* - Ilia Delio OSF, page 109**

The heart thrives on the life-giving spirit of love. The heart is created to be the home of the Spirit of the Lord through whose life-giving power relationship with God becomes reality. To surrender the "heart" is the fundamental act of following Christ.

The Saint – Earlier exhortation, Chapter I, - pp. 41-42

We are spouses when the faithful soul is joined by the Holy Spirit to our Lord Jesus Christ. We are brothers to Him when we do the will of the Father who is in heaven. We are mothers when we carry Him in our heart and body through a divine love and a pure and sincere conscience and give birth to Him through a holy activity which must shine as an example before others.

Deus Caritas Est – Pope Benedict XVI – Paragraph 19

The Father, moved by love, sent his only-begotten Son into the world to redeem us.

The Spirit is that interior power which harmonizes our hearts with Christ's heart and moves us to love our brethren as Christ loved them. The Spirit is also the energy which transforms the heart of the ecclesial community.

The entire activity of the Church is an expression of a love that seeks the integral good of man. Love is the service that the Church carries out to attend to man's sufferings and needs.

Mark 2:15–17 (RSV2CE)

And as he sat at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were sitting with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many who followed him. And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

How does this text call for embracing important Franciscan values?

New Collegeville Bible Commentary – If we realize that Mark is intent upon presenting Jesus to us as God's Wisdom incarnate, then we can hear these words, not as those of an ordinary religious leader, but as the speech of Wisdom herself—Wisdom seeking out the foolish sinner.

Ignatius Study Bible – Pharisees, who regarded sinners and tax collectors as inappropriate company for the religious Jew. They clung to Old Covenant standards of holiness that required Israelites to separate themselves from all sources of uncleanness, including fellowship with Gentiles. Jesus exemplifies New Covenant holiness, which extends mercy to everyone in imitation of the Father.

Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture – Does this saying mean that Jesus did not come to call the morally upright? Is he excluding the scribes and Pharisees from his call? The answer is clear in light of the biblical testimony concerning who “the righteous” are. In the fullest sense of righteousness, “None is righteous, no, not one” (*Rom 3:10 RSV*; see *Ps 14:1–3*). All are sinners. The only difference is that some admit their lack of righteousness and some do not, thus refusing Jesus’ messianic invitation and his medicinal grace. Jesus is recasting the people’s whole understanding of the messiah. His mission is not to vindicate those who keep the law, and condemn the rest; rather, it is to offer the healing of which all people are in need: healing from the devastation of sin. Even sins of pride and judgmentalism are among the sicknesses he came to heal.

Navarre Bible – The Fathers of the Church see this calling by Jesus as an invitation to repentance and penance. St John Chrysostom (*Hom. on St Matthew, 30:3*), for example, explains the phrase by putting these words in Jesus’ mouth: “I am not come that they should continue sinners but that they should change and become better.”

FUN Manual Section 7 “Vocation God’s Call”

Vocation is God’s call – a request to come. God wants every person to turn from sin and to be transformed by his love. We are called by God’s design and grace.

Through God’s love:

- The Father created.
- The Son became one of us and redeemed us.
- The Holy Spirit inspires us and dwells within us.

God calls us. We have the freedom to choose how to respond.

The gift of vocation is also a call to be an instrument to bring others to God and for the benefit of others. Accepting God’s call includes an offering and a surrender in giving ourselves back to God.

Willing = ready to do whatever God asks of us.

Surrender = yield control to God who loves us.

Francis lived a gospel life – reminds us of Christ and leads us to him.

Franciscan charism – Looking at Christ through the eyes of Francis.

Discernment – making a decision about something that is not clear, the process of coming to understand whether God is calling you to a Franciscan lifestyle:

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| - Begin with prayer. | - Minority – understand that we are servants, not superior to anyone else. |
| - Intense Eucharistic spirituality. | - Abandonment to God – complete trust in him. |
| - Strong fraternal communion. | - Daily conversion. |
| - Simplicity. | - Transformation. |
| - Poverty. | - Peacemaking. |
| - Humility. | |