

OFS Initial Formation

DOCUMENTATION

Formation:

- Formation is the foundation of the Secular Franciscan:
 - Foundation consists of both process and content.
- The “end” of Formation is not *information* but *conversion!*
- The “goal” of Formation is a *personal life with Jesus!!*

Documentation:

The importance of proper documentation of Initial Formation:

We belong to a canonically established Order in the Church:

- We are under Canon Law:
 - Canon 303 - who we are as OFS
 - Canon 306 - profession
 - Canon 307 - how we profess
 - Canon 309 - how we administer
 - Canon 317.3 - Spiritual Assistants do not serve as leaders

As Formation Directors, along with our fraternity councils, we are responsible for the proper formation of our members. Study OFS USA Statutes, Article 19.

Documentation of a person's Initial Formation journey is our body of proof that we have done it correctly according to Canon Law and to the OFS Governing Documents.

Documentation:

- Who documents: fraternity Formation Director or a member of the Formation Team
- What to document: *EVERYTHING!*
- When to document: immediately after the occurrence so the documents are exact and up-to-date
- Where to document: on the *QOP Regional Initial Formation Attendance Sheet* which can be found on the Queen of Peace Regional website under FORMATION
- How to document: chronologically by date, subject, or book used

Queen of Peace Regional Initial Formation Attendance Sheet

- Why? - the standardization of a single form throughout our region will bring about:
 - Ease of use
 - Every step to Profession documented
 - Less questions of “How do we?” and “When do we?”
 - Complete documentation of the Initial Formation journey if a member transfers to another fraternity, even if they are ‘snow birds’ for a period of the year

QOP Regional Attendance Record:

Queen of Peace Region of the Secular Franciscan Order-USA

Initial Formation Monthly Attendance Record - Fraternity and Formation

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

****Note the date the aspirant attended formation sessions - whether it is the scheduled date or a make up class and fraternity meetings.**

****Note the date on the corresponding line of all other actions as they are completed.**

Documents needed:

Sacraments of Initiation:

Baptismal Certificate _____ (*current* including notations of First Communion, Confirmation & Marriage, *or* RCIA Certificate)

Annulment Decree _____ (*if needed after a divorce*)

Profession in another Order _____ Name of Order _____ Certificate of Release _____

Initial Interview Date _____ (*use the "Faith Inventory" for needed history/information*)

Orientation phase

Orientation Phase: minimum 3 months

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Formation												
Fraternity												

NOTES:

Interview Date

Ceremony of Introduction & Welcoming

Add the person to the fraternity database

(as an Inquirer)

Inquiry Phase

Inquiry Phase: minimum 6 months

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Formation												
Fraternity												

NOTES:

- Interview Date _____
- Letter to Council _____ *(written by the Inquirer)*
- Council vote _____ *(by voice)*
- Rite of Admission _____
- Noted in Register _____
- Update database _____ *(update to a Candidate)*

Candidacy - 2nd part

Notes:

Profession Retreat _____ *(retreat must include discernment process for Profession)*

Final Interview Date _____ *(by Formation Director and Spiritual Assistant)*

Letter to Council _____ *(written by the Candidate)*

Council vote _____ *(by secret ballot)*

Rite of Profession _____

Minister _____

Celebrant _____

Location _____

Noted in Register _____ *(update to Professed)*

Update the database _____

Return all confidential formation information to the Professed

Important things to remember:

- These documents contain important and confidential information about a person, we have the duty to secure their privacy. Documentation may be kept in a folder or binder until that person's Profession at which time the documentation can be returned to the person.
- *NEVER* keep original Church documents of anyone! Make a copy and give the originals back to the person.
- Using the “Faith Inventory” that a person fills out prior to the first interview can give you an overview to the person's personal and spiritual life up to that point. It should *never* be used as an application for formation, but must *always* be used with a personal one-on-one interview in a comfortable setting.

Resources:

- Statutes of the National Fraternity of the OFS in the USA, Article 19
- Current resources for Initial Formation are:
 - *The Franciscan Journey: Embracing the Franciscan Vision* by Fr. Lester Bach, OFM Cap.
 - The supplemental readings for *The Franciscan Journey*, found on the QOP regional web site www.queenofpeace.org
 - The *For Up to Now* Manual (FUN Manual)
 - The Franciscan Intellectual Tradition at <https://franciscantradition.org/> which contains all of the Francis of Assisi: Vols. 1-4 and so much more. Always check your resources!
 - Quotes or short readings from previous formation material, do not copy without copyright permissions.
- **NEVER** use out of print books or resources! First introduce factual books about St. Francis and then you can supplement with fiction and poetry later.
- Up-coming resources for Formation:
 - Three new OFS Initial Formation books are being written now! One for Orientation and Inquiry, one for Candidacy, and one for the Formators!!!