



Lay Carmelite Office

Telephone: (845) 344-2474
E-mail: laycarmelitesel@carmelites.com

Guidelines for Formation of Temporary Professed Lay Carmelites

1. The Temporary Professed Lay Carmelite attends the monthly community meeting.
2. The Temporary Professed Lay Carmelite lives the life of a Lay Carmelite for a minimum of three years.
3. Formation to Final Profession is not automatic but is a time of discernment.
4. The Temporary Professed member will use a journal to write down any thoughts, reflections, questions for clarification or continued reflection that come up during the monthly meetings or life in general.
5. The journal is for private use only. It is up to the individual to share what is in the journal or not.
6. Each Temporary Professed will have a mentor, a contact person, who will be assigned by the Community Council.
 - a. The purpose of this mentor is to help the Temporary Professed as a guide and resource.
 - b. It is up to the Temporary Professed whether they wish to share what is specifically in their journal with their mentor.
 - c. Meetings between the Temporary Professed and mentor are once every three months. If they choose to meet more frequently, that is their choice.
 - d. The mentor will keep the Formation Director informed of any issues or concern that the Council might need to address relative to the journey to Final Profession for the candidate.

Purpose of this Level of Formation

1. Prevents someone in this final phase of initial formation to be on their own without personal guidance or direction.
2. It helps strengthen the local community because members of the community support one another through this mentoring program.
3. It reminds us all that formation is a process that is not automatic or an entitlement.
4. It assists the Formation Director and Community Council with the implementation of sufficient instruction and guidance for a candidate discerning Final Profession.
5. It assists the Temporary Professed to make an informed decision whether to apply for Final Profession after a minimum of three years of discernment.
6. It offers the opportunity for concerns to be addressed and acted upon efficiently.

Lay Carmelites through their promises become associated with the Carmelite Order and share in the spiritual benefits of the Order. Endowed as they are by the Holy Spirit with their own unique gifts, they share these gifts individually and collectively in a spirit of true communion with the entire family of Carmel, of which they form an integral part. Their mission is the mission of the Church and of the Order itself, to live the Gospel message and to bring Christ to others through their lives. (Carmel's Call pg 62, #2)

The members of the Order of Carmel seek to live in union with God and with our neighbor. We do this through a commitment to seek the face of the living God (the contemplative dimension of life), by developing a genuinely familial style of community, and through service in the midst of all the peoples of the human family. (the ministerial dimension of our life.) (Carmel's Call pg 63, #1)

Thoughts to Assist the Temporary Professed in Journaling

Keeping a journal becomes a means of making us more aware of our surroundings. In our performance-oriented world we tend to live either in the past or future, fretting over what was or planning on outcomes we can never predict. We lose touch with the present. Our journal helps us focus on the here and now... Recording one message, thought, word of the day, readies one to receive another. Writing down memorable thoughts from a meeting or a reflection that is going through ones mind enables you to hold on to those moments to see the mystery of God's working with your life. You begin to see where the Spirit is leading you from the passages you write and reread in your journal. You can see more clearly the way that you must follow. ¹

You discover the gifts, the challenges, the areas that one might wish to address to grow in union with God. As you continue to journal you can evaluate yourself and clarify how your progress is going toward your vocation. It can help you assess your situation more objectively. It is a tool for self-understanding. Journaling puts down on paper questions we have to seek answers for; some that only personal time in prayer will help. Such questions are:

- How am I doing with my commitment to prayer?
- Am I contributing my time and talents to my Carmelite community?
- Am I growing in my knowledge of my faith and Carmelite Spirituality?
- Am I addressing the areas of concern or struggle in my spiritual journey?
- Is Carmel the direction God is calling me to live?

Remember that we have a life time to seek and strive to be all that God wishes us to be. All He asks of us is to be faithful, not perfect. Perfection can only come when we gather together with Him in His Kingdom forever. So enjoy the journey. Be grateful that He has given us the gift of His never ending love and forgiveness. Amen. Alleluia.

¹Susan Muto & Adrian van Kaam; Am I Living a Spiritual Life?; Sophia Institute Press; pgs.56,57.