



The Way of Life

The Rule and Life of the Secular Franciscans is this: to observe the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by following the example of Saint Francis of Assisi who made Christ the inspiration and the center of his life with God and people.

COME and SEE

**Padre Pio Fraternity
Secular Franciscan Order
Oct. 27, 2024
The Catholic Community of St. Francis of Assisi
11401 Leesville Road
Raleigh, North Carolina 27613**

**Padre Pio Fraternity
Secular Franciscan Order
“Come and See”
Oct. 27, 2024**

Opening Prayer	Fr. Hugh Macsherry, OFM, Spiritual Assistant
Opening Song (See last page for lyrics)	Pianist: Marianne Norris, OFS Guitarists: Dave Abel, OFS, and Michael Hancock, OFS Song leader: Char Witosky, OFS
Welcome and Overview	Sharon Winzeler, OFS, Padre Pio Minister Ellen Ferrone, OFS, Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Regional Minister
Being a Spiritual Assistant to the OFS	Fr. Hugh Macsherry, OFM, Spiritual Assistant
Personal Reflections on the Franciscan Journey	Fraternity Members: Zubair Simonson, OFS Maureen Copan, OFS Eyram Klu, OFS
Our Apostolate at Oak City Cares	Alma and Richard Hammer, OFS
Social and Light Refreshments Please enjoy some food and drink and spend time talking with our fraternity members.	All
Formation: 1. Franciscan Four Pillars 2. Orientation Phase 3. Inquiry and Candidacy Formation Phases 4. Orientation Dates and Location	Gladys Whitehouse, OFS, Formation Director
Questions and Answers	Sharon Winzeler, OFS, Minister Gladys Whitehouse, OFS, Formation Director
Closing Prayer Blessing	

Get to know us!

Feel free to ask us any of these questions or ones you may have:

- What is a Secular Franciscan?
- Do you have a favorite Franciscan saint?
- Describe Franciscan Spirituality in one or two sentences.
- What acts of service are you involved in?
- What is your favorite part of being in a Fraternity?
- How would you describe St. Francis to me?
- What attracted you to join the Secular Franciscans?
- What is unique about the Franciscan family?
- How did you discern becoming a Secular Franciscan?
- Tell me how you knew you were called to this vocation.
- What is the most important thing I should take away from today?

Secular Franciscan Order (OFS)

Overview of Initial and Ongoing Formation Process

The Secular Franciscan formation process is a continuum, that is, each stage flows into the next. Aspects that are essential in the first phase, Orientation, will be essential to the second phase, Inquiry, the third phase, Candidacy, and into lifelong Ongoing formation of professed members.

OFS formation is not a group class or course in which one “graduates” from one phase to another. Rather, it is a personal journey into Franciscan spirituality, Catholic teachings, and the OFS gospel way of life exemplified by St. Francis and St. Clare. The process focuses on being FORMED into the likeness of Christ. It is a time of communal discernment between those discerning a vocation to the Secular Franciscan Order, the Fraternity and the Holy Spirit.

ORIENTATION. (6 months)

The Orientation phase of formation is critical. Formation resources used during Orientation provide ample time for dialogue and sharing since this is the ideal time to discern a Secular Franciscan vocation. The time frame is six months and includes study of the lives of Sts. Francis and Clare, an introduction to the Rule and a brief history of the Secular Franciscan Order, Franciscan apostolic activity, and the Franciscan prayer experience, including the Liturgy of the Hours and the Franciscan Crown Rosary.

INQUIRY (12 months)

The Inquiry phase, as the first formal period of initiation, is a time of discernment and choice of the Franciscan life. During this time, the Inquirer participates in the life of the Fraternity and comes to understand the OFS way of life. At the same time, the Fraternity comes to know the Inquirer better, so that it can discern how best to respond to the Inquirer’s request to become part of the Fraternity.

The Inquiry Phase begins with *The Ceremony of Introduction and Welcoming*. This is ritual or service that promises the support of the Fraternity on the journey that the Inquirer is about to undertake. During this phase, which is twelve months, the Inquirer, assisted by the Formation Team, seeks to determine honest responses to these basic questions:

- What is a vocation, and how am I called?
- What is Gospel life, and how am I called to live it?
- What is a vocation to the Secular Franciscan Order, and am I called to live that way of life?

CANDIDACY (24 months)

During Candidacy, considered the most important stage in the initial formation process, focus is on the *Secular Franciscan Rule* which supplies the path, the approach, and the guide. Therefore, considerable emphasis is placed on reading, understanding, digesting and incarnating the *Rule*. The living out of the *Rule* is crucial in preparing for Permanent Profession since it provides the structure for growing in the spirit of penance and ongoing conversion within the context of the Franciscan Fraternity.

Candidacy begins with the Rite of Admission into the OFS, the public acceptance by the Order of the Candidate’s request and intention to live the gospel life in the manner of St. Francis as contained in the *OFS Rule* which has been approved by the Catholic Church.

During Candidacy, the entire Fraternity participates in and nurtures the growth and development of the Candidate’s evangelical living of the *OFS Rule*. It is important that the Candidate be given opportunities to experience, interiorize, integrate and live out the gospel values presented in the *OFS Rule*. The time frame is an extended period lasting 18 to 24 months. The Candidacy phase concludes with the Rite of Profession (Permanent Commitment) into the Secular Franciscan Order.

ONGOING FORMATION

The purpose of Ongoing Formation is to support the professed members' commitment and to strengthen their Franciscan vocation of lifelong daily conversion. Those who are engaged in Initial Formation (Inquiry and Candidacy) are expected to participate in monthly fraternity gatherings and ongoing formation.

All fraternity members meeting on the fourth Sunday of the month for continuing formation, prayer, and fellowship.

As stated in the Secular Franciscan General Constitutions (Article 44.1): *"Begun by the preceding stages, the formation of the brothers and sisters takes place in a permanent and continuous way. It should be understood as an aid in the conversion of each and everyone and in the fulfillment of their proper mission in the Church and in society."*

Secular Franciscan Order, National Formation Commission

OFS



It's our Order's abbreviation after our names or in other writing and refers to Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis, the official—Latin—name of our Order. In English, we're still the **Secular Franciscan Order**.

Contact Information:

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Websites: National Secular Franciscan Order: <https://www.secularfranciscansusa.org/>

Padre Pio Fraternity: <https://ofscentralnc.org/>

Brothers and Sisters of St. Francis Region: <http://www.bssfsfo.org/>

Opening Song

CANTICLE OF THE SUN

CHORUS

The heavens are telling the glory of God, and all creation is shouting for joy.
Come dance in the forest, come play in the field,
and sing, sing to the glory of the Lord.

Praise for the sun, the bringer of day. He carries the light of the Lord in his rays.
The moon and the stars, who light up the way, unto your Throne.

CHORUS

Praise for the wind that blows through the trees, the seas mighty storms, the gentlest breeze
They blow where they will, they blow where they please, to please the Lord.

CHORUS

Praise for the rain, that waters our fields, and blesses our crops, so all the earth yields.
From death unto life, her mystery revealed, springs forth in joy.

CHORUS

Praise for the fire, that gives us his light, the warmth of the sun to brighten our night.
He dances with joy, his spirit so bright, he sings of You.

CHORUS