

Hello and Welcome

to the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites, Community of Saint Joseph, Hampton, Virginia. The Visitor may be invited to a restricted visit, defined as a visit that does not include admission to any formation classes. Attending meetings over several months as a visitor will help a person discern his/her vocation to Carmel. Visitors are allowed to attend 3 to 6 discernment meetings. Love of Carmel is what brings people to visit a local community. It is a primary factor in discerning whether a person actually has a "vocation" as opposed to a simple attraction or interest. The visitor will be guided in discernment by the group leader and supported in this effort by Formation Director.

Thoughts on discernment:

Am I attracted to prayer?

Am I attracted to the writings of the Carmelite saints?

Do I desire to follow the Carmelite Rule and the OCDS Constitutions?

Am I able to attend the monthly meetings and complete the required readings and assignments?

Am I comfortable with what I hear about the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites and does it correspond to the desires of my heart?

After attending a minimum of three meetings, the Visitor may be invited by the local Council to apply to enter the initial period of introduction to the Order in the next available Aspirancy class. During the visitation period, there is no obligation or commitment on the part of either the Visitor or the Community. If invited to apply for admission to Aspirancy, the candidate must complete the application form and present the required documents. After completing the application process the applicant will be interviewed by at least two members of the Council. The interview shall include a review of the candidate's understanding of:

- a. the requirements for membership
- b. the obligations of an OCDS member
- c. discussion of the candidate's spiritual journey and what led them to Carmel

Upon approval of the Council, the applicant may be admitted to the period of Aspirancy

