

# Aspirancy

Preparation for reception of the ceremonial Brown Scapular

Goal: Aspirancy is the time to present an overview of what it means to live out and understand the charism and spirit of Carmel as a lay person. This includes an introduction to the Order's history and traditions, its legislation and its spirituality within the context of the Catholic Church and the local OCDS community. Aspirancy should assist the candidate and community in the discernment of a vocation.

Duration: Twelve Sessions in a year.

Requirements:

- Participate in monthly meetings of the community
- Participate in monthly aspirancy classes
- Begin a regular time of daily meditative prayer
- Begin to pray at least part of the Liturgy of the Hours
- Participate in daily Mass as far as possible

Outline of Study

Overview of Carmelite spirituality and charism

- Description of Carmelite charism
- Inspired by the teachings of St. Teresa of Jesus
- Introduce centrality of the practice of mental prayer

Nature of OCDS vocation

- Daily life
- Community life
- Identity of Secular Carmelite
- Role of Mary
- Apostolate

Discernment Process

- Mutual discernment – individual and community
- Explanation of discernment process
- Length of process (6 years discernment in total until Definitive Promise)

## Overview of Carmelite Prayer

- Vocal prayer
- Liturgy of the Hours
- Mental prayer/meditation/discursive prayer
- Contemplation as understood in the Teresian Carmel

## Liturgy of the Hours Instruction

- History of the Liturgy of the Hours
- Nomenclature
- Practice of the Liturgy of the Hours

## Organization of the Order/OCDS Legislation

- Organization of the Order
- Rule of St. Albert
- OCDS Constitutions
- OCDS Provincial Statutes of the Washington Province

## Spiritual reading/Scripture/Church documents

- Scripture
- Writings of the Carmelite saints
- Church documents

## History of the Order

- The Carmelite Order
- The Teresian Carmel
- The Secular Order

## Saints of the Order

- Doctors of the Church
- Other saints of the Order

## The Ecclesial Dimension: The Teresian Carmel Within the Church

- Carmel is a call within the Christian life
- o The call to all to live a life of holiness according to the Gospel
- o The call to some to follow a specific vocation within the Church (clergy, religious or laity)
- o The call to some of the laity to follow a vocation within a particular Order (such as the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites)
- Carmel's mission in the Universal Church (Const. 26)
- Apostolic activity is the fruit of prayer

As a candidate completes Aspirancy, she/he must write a letter requesting to move on to the next stage of formation and be interviewed by at least two Council members. The Council must then decide whether to admit the candidate to the next period of formation. If the decision is made to move forward, the Council will then invite the candidate to participate in the Rite of Admission to Formation and to receive the ceremonial Brown Scapular.

## **Resources**

Welcome to the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelite (ICS)

The Carmelite Tradition: Spirituality in History by Steven Payne, OCD. (Liturgical Press, 2011)

Carmelite Spirituality in the Teresian Tradition (ICS)

Christian Prayer: The Liturgy of the Hours, "General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours"

Lectio Divina and the Practice of Teresian Prayer (ICS)

Awakening to Prayer (ICS)

Journey to Carith: The Sources and Story of the Discalced Carmelites (ICS)