

# *Congregation of the Holy Spirit*

## *The Path to Spiritan Life – Formation Process*



Formation for religious life and for some, priesthood, begins with the introduction of the candidate to religious community life. The context of our ministry is founded upon our common religious community life. Vocations to our community are seen as a gift from God and we take seriously the challenge of forming candidates in the Gospel and religious life while living and sharing our community life and ministry.

God called fishermen at the Sea of Galilee and he continues to call people today to live lives of service. Spiritan ministry is characterized by our commitment to the poor and those who have not heard the Gospel. This ministry is not easy but it is rewarding. To adequately prepare for challenging ministry Spiritan formation is divided into three major components.

### *Stage One: PreNovitiate*

In this stage of formation a candidate will begin to live our religious community life with a formation director and others who are discerning their vocation. A structured prayer life, regular classes on Spiritan spirituality, mission and history, history of religious life, and an

experience of ministry are part of the prenovitiate program. Candidates pursue classes for their degrees and candidates for the priesthood take the required philosophy classes for admission to the theology program. Laval House on the campus of Duquesne University serves as the Prenovitiate House of Formation.

### *Stage Two: The Novitiate*

The novitiate is the formal period of preparation when the candidate (novice) studies the Spiritan Rule of Life, Spiritan spirituality and history in preparation for professing the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience after a year of prayer, discernment and preparation.

### *Stage Three: Post Novitiate*

In the Theology Program, Candidates for the priesthood pursue their studies in the Masters of Divinity program at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. The now professed members continue to live and grow in living the Spiritan community life under the direction of an experienced formation director. In addition to the studies for the Masters of Divinity degree Clinical Pastoral Education and Overseas Training are part of the post-novitiate program. At each level of the formation program attention is given to the human, spiritual, intellectual, and ministerial development of the individual in the context of a supportive and challenging community. This discernment is the task of the individual and community, and it is a lengthy process taking between seven to twelve years, but it is always tailored to the individual.

Further information can be obtained from the Vocations Director.

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