

Rivendell Community

Goals for Formation

Admission to Postulancy:

- Receive packet of information; read Companions' Rule and other materials
- Complete application and request admission as a postulant
- Preliminary agreement that inquirer is a suitable postulant
- Agreement by a chapter (in consultation with Guardian) to admit
- Mentor or formation director assigned
- Postulancy formation material given

During Postulancy (Six months; may be extended)

- Maintain regular contact with mentor/formation director
- Work through Postulancy study and reflection
- Gradually put in place provisions of the Rule
- Become acquainted with the Community via a local chapter, or correspondence, visit, etc.

Goals for Postulancy: Before admission to the Novitiate, Postulant will develop

- Reflection on and personal adherence to the central goals of the Rule, as love of God and love of neighbor
- Personal affirmation of the desire to give oneself wholly, unconditionally and continually to God, and to seek and grow in holiness of life
- Affirmation and reflection on the role of prayer in one's life
- Reading and study of the Rule and Constitution
- Consideration and discussion of how Community life will affect and interface with family and other commitments
- Practical understanding of prayer and hospitality; familiarity with the work and goals of the Rivendell Community
- Familiarity with the Community's ethos, including the image of "Rivendell"
- Familiarity with the practices of the Rule sufficient to undertake them, including:
 - Praying Morning and Evening Prayer; should be able to pray these offices privately, to participate in them according to the custom of the Chapter, and to officiate. Included are use of the Daily Office Lectionary, and familiarity with options for recitation of the Psalms
 - Understanding of the liturgical year; familiarity with use of liturgical calendars, and appropriate celebration of feasts, seasons, and days of special devotion
 - Practical familiarity with at least one or two approaches to silent prayer
 - Familiarity with the local Chapter and some participation in its life, if possible
 - Establishment of a spiritual direction relationship; exploration of one's vocation in the Community with the director
 - At least one sacramental confession during Postulancy

Admission to the Novitiate:

- At least six months after admission to Postulancy; may be extended, either by the request of the Postulant or on the recommendation of the formation director or mentor, Chapter, and/or Guardian. Postulant will have participated in at least one Community gathering (i.e., General Chapter or Retreat)
- Background check to be completed and on file
- Postulant will have discussed Community membership with spouse and parish priest, if applicable.
- Mentor or formation director and spiritual director recommend Postulant for admission.
- Postulant, Chapter and Guardian agree that sufficient progress has been made in the goals of Postulancy, and that proceeding to the Novitiate appears to be vocationally appropriate.
- Opportunity is given for Chapter consideration, as prescribed in Constitution; should a decision be made against recommending admission as a Novice, the recommendation (whether for continued Postulancy or for other vocational avenues) to be conveyed in writing, and with care, respect and consideration for the person involved.
- New Novice makes initial commitment, and receives small Cross, at a Community gathering
- Novice undertakes the full Rule (though without vows), takes her/his place as an active member of Chapter, and works on goals for the Novitiate, in consultation with mentor or formation director
- Novices have voice but no vote in Chapter; they should attend and participate in General Chapter.

Second year Novitiate

- After one year, Novices may make first promises and receive the regular Companions' Cross
- They continue study in the areas listed below, including discernment of their particular vocation and role in the life of the Community.
- They may vote on all matters except changes in the Constitution, and may hold offices other than Companion in Charge and Guardian, which are reserved for fully professed Companions.

Goals for Novitiate: During this period, the Novice will develop

- Deepened intention toward holiness and availability to God; reflection on how these will be expressed for oneself at this point in one's life
- Practical understanding of one's role in the Community
- Study, reflection and practice of eucharistic living
- Regular, faithful praying of the Daily Office; familiarity with several reasons for praying it, with both personal and communal motivations; recognition of this as part of one's work for the life of the Church and the world
- Deepened, embodied understanding of the rhythms of sacred time; development of practices for celebrating the seasons, feasts and days of special devotion
- Regular practice of silent prayer; familiarity with several forms or approaches, and discovery of approaches which are viable and fruitful for oneself; these might include, for example
 - Lectio divina
 - Other forms of Scriptural meditation
 - Centering prayer
 - Journalling
 - Free conversational prayer
- Use of psalms and/or classical/traditional prayers

- Approaches to recollection and availability to God in daily life, e.g., “sacrament of the present moment,” practice of the presence of God, Jesus prayer
- Regular patterns of study and of spiritual reading
- Articulation and practice of some form(s) of hospitality, personally and/or through the work of a Chapter
- Appreciation of narrative theology, story, the journey motif; familiarity with *The Lord of the Rings* and other stories as resources for spiritual metaphor
- Reading and reflection from reading list of other seminal books (stories, spiritual classics, etc.)
- Active role in the life of the Rivendell Community; contribution to its life and work according to one’s gifts, circumstances and interests (generally to include some regular financial contribution, great or small, as well as offering one’s areas of expertise, talents and interests)
- Familiarity with current work and goals of Rivendell
- Approaches and practice of intercession
- Faithful use of a spiritual direction relationship
- Regular use of sacramental confession
- Familiarity with one’s own typical patterns of sin; strategies for resistance and active repentance
- Familiarity with the classic Christian virtues, and their practice
- Reflection on the role of Church and religious life in the world, and in one’s work
- Engagement with the needs, longings, and sufferings of the world in ways congruent with one’s vocation; through prayer, compassionate service, social justice ministries, and/or prophetic witness
- Consideration of and continuing re-formation of one’s lifestyle in the light of the evangelical counsels
- Capacity and willingness to practice transparency and provocation to holiness within Community life, and to respect and honor others’ practice of these virtues

Profession as a Rivendell Companion

- After completion of the Novitiate period, with the consent of General Chapter, the Novice may make the Community’s vows. Vows are made annually, for at least four years.
- Study, practice and growth in the aspects of formation listed continue and deepen throughout life.
- Continued seeking of growth in prayer, in availability to God and conversion of life, in capacity and willingness for following the way of the Cross, and in joy, faith, hope and love.