

Information on our Way of Formation

The Way to Religious Life: Vocation – Contacts – Admission – Postulancy – Novitiate – Juniorate – Final Profession

Whoever feels to be called to be a Brother of Mercy of Mary Help of Christians has to be ...

- ⇒ a member of the Roman Catholic Church
- ⇒ baptised and confirmed
- ⇒ fully qualified professionally
- ⇒ free of impediments (marriage, debts, obligations to provide support, previous convictions etc.)
- ⇒ of good psychological and physical health.

Whoever feels to be called to be a Brother of Mercy of Mary Help of Christians is ...

- ⇒ to delight in living in relationship with God in everything he does.
- ⇒ to delight in a life within a religious community.
- ⇒ to be interested in a spiritual life.
- ⇒ to be an open-minded, optimistic person.
- ⇒ to be ready to examine and clarify his life style and life perspectives by listening to God's call.
- ⇒ to be open for changes and available for the community.
- ⇒ to be ready for formation and ongoing formation.
- ⇒ to have joy in dealing with people and to be willing to serve sick, old, handicapped and disadvantaged people.
- ⇒ to discover freedom, authenticity and meaningfulness in a life according to the three evangelical counsels (poverty, consecrated chastity and obedience).
- ⇒ to be willing to let the fulfilment of his own needs be transformed in the love for God.
- ⇒ to be willing to live reconciled with himself and with his neighbours.
- ⇒ to see self-surrender not as a renunciation but fostering his capacity for love.
- ⇒ to be used to live on his own.

Criteria for Admission into Postulancy

- ⇒ the honest search for God is noticeable
- ⇒ interest in the community and their ministries
- ⇒ experience in praying
- ⇒ knowledge of the basic implementations of our faith
- ⇒ commitment in the church / socialisation in the church
- ⇒ social competence / ability to form relationships
- ⇒ willingness to improve oneself
- ⇒ openness for guidance, counselling, criticism

- ⇒ analysing one's own sexuality
- ⇒ willingness / capability to live the vow of consecrated chastity
- ⇒ learning receptivity and willingness for changes
- ⇒ self-reflection according to their age
- ⇒ the desire to enter must be consistent
- ⇒ basic experiences with the spirituality of the community are there
- ⇒ as a rule the candidate should not be older than 35 years

Whoever wants to become a Brother of Mercy of Mary Help of Christians gives himself up to a way of formation, by

- ⇒ taking sufficient time to get to know the religious community...
- ⇒ ...and giving the religious community enough time to get to know him.
- ⇒ being willing to talk openly about his vocation and to get involved in a common journey.

A Candidate is

- ⇒ to get into a journey that has not yet reached the destination.
- ⇒ to experience community as it is.
- ⇒ to accept frankly the feedback of the community.
- ⇒ to examine and to deepen the motives of his vocation.
- ⇒ to learn to see the word "vocation" from different perspectives.

The Postulancy

- ⇒ lasts at least half a year and...
- ⇒ ...is the first binding step in the communal life of the candidate and the religious community.
- ⇒ will start with a formation contract.
- ⇒ offers stages of formation with regard to the human maturity.
- ⇒ is a practice of religious life.
- ⇒ helps to clarify religious and theological questions.
- ⇒ helps to clarify the relationships someone has.
- ⇒ gives opportunity to reflect on one's life story so far, to accept it
- ⇒ ...and to integrate it in one's decision for religious life.
- ⇒ intends to lead to a closer relationship with God.

The Novitiate

- ⇒ offers the novice the opportunity for formation and to become a Brother of Mercy of Mary Help of Christians.
- ⇒ offers the unique possibility to live one's own prayer and life in a permanent and intimate way with the Father through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.
- ⇒ lasts two years.
- ⇒ is an intensive time for the novice to learn to cope with community life...
- ⇒ ...and with the theology of religious life (poverty, chastity and obedience).
- ⇒ is a time during which the novice master and the community test the novice's suitability as a Brother.

- ⇒ has a regulated daily rhythm which is rooted in the spiritual exercises (inner prayer, meditation, Prayers of the Hours, Eucharistic celebration among others), classes and various practical services.
- ⇒ offers classes in spirituality and tradition of the Brothers of Mercy.
- ⇒ explains the spiritual way and the mission of the Brothers of Mercy (Rule of St. Augustine, Our Way of Life...)
- ⇒ ...and tries to implement them in every day life.
- ⇒ ends with the decision of the novice for First Profession ...
- ⇒ ...and with the admission of the congregational leadership ...
- ⇒ ...or with the decision to leave this way of life.

Required Documents:

- ⇒ handwritten, complete curriculum vitae
- ⇒ passport photograph
- ⇒ birth certificate
- ⇒ all school reports and vocational training certificates
- ⇒ employers references

Documents, issued within the previous 3 months:

- ⇒ certificates of baptism and confirmation
- ⇒ criminal record
- ⇒ medical certificate of health; if applicable: a psychological assessment
- ⇒ parochial certificate of good-conduct or personal testimonial of a spiritual guide,
- ⇒ if applicable: testimonial of the superior of a religious order or of a director of a Seminary

Our Profession formular

I, Brother ..., make this promise in honour of God. I am firmly resolved to consecrate myself to God and to follow Christ in religious life for life. Therefore, in the presence of the Brothers here assembled I vow into your hands, Brother N.N., my Superior General, for ... years (forever) a life in celibate chastity, poverty and obedience according to the Rule of Saint Augustine and the Way of Life of the Brothers of Mercy of Mary, Help of Christians. With all my heart I place myself at the disposal of this religious community in order, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, confident of the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of our blessed Father Peter Friedhofen, to attain perfect love in the service of God and the Church.

The Stage of temporary Vows

- ⇒ lasts at least five years...
- ⇒ ...and is a deepening of the decision for religious life.
- ⇒ is to foster a greater faithfulness to one's vocation and a deeper sense of personal responsibility for one's own life.
- ⇒ intends to bring together contemplation and action more and more.

- ⇒ is a time for integration of all elements of formation through which the personality becomes more like Jesus.
- ⇒ intends to help recognize God's gifts and to foster personal initiatives.
- ⇒ fosters the growing into the Congregation.
- ⇒ is determined by the respective planning for the future of the temporary vowed person (Junior).
- ⇒ is a time for formation and ongoing formation.
- ⇒ will be guided and reflected on by the leader of the Juniorate...
- ⇒ ...and is an ongoing formation in religious life and in our spirituality.
- ⇒ leads towards the decision for Final Profession.

The Final Profession

- ⇒ is the definite decision to be a Brother.
- ⇒ underlines the availability of the Brother within the ministries of the Congregation.

Formation is a life-long process. The Brother, therefore, never stops to seek continuous training in his religious life and its deepening.

Connected with the heaven,
attached with the people -
living in fraternal community



Brothers of Mercy
of Mary Help of Christians