

## ***Holy Spirit Adoration Sisters***

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**Mount Grace Convent, Saint Louis, Missouri - USA**

### **Goal and Orientation of Formation**

**Growth Into Our Contemplative-Missionary Calling**



***"If the Sisters penetrate into our spirituality by persevering study and make our traditions their own, they will esteem them, translate them into concrete life, and pass them on by a testimony of a life lived according to the Constitutions in the joy of the Holy Spirit."***

#### ***From our Constitutions***

The primary objective of the formation process is to prepare our Sisters for a total consecration to God in the following of Christ, at the service of the Church in our contemplative-missionary vocation. To say yes to the Lord's call by taking personal responsibility for maturing in one's vocation is the inescapable duty of all who have been called. Every attitude and action, at important moments as well as in the ordinary events of life, should show that they belong completely and joyfully

to God. Formation is a path of gradual identification with the attitude of Christ toward the Father. On every level this formation in our Congregation is oriented to a life of contemplation. Since this basic attitude of contemplation is ultimately a gift and operation of the Holy Spirit, we foster in our young Sisters the ability and readiness to listen to God's summons and to respond to it.

Growth towards human and Christian maturity implies the harmonious development of a person's physical, emotional, moral, and intellectual endowments. As our young Sisters make the adjustment to life in the cloister, formation helps them to overcome difficulties with steady courage and to pursue the authentic freedom of the children of God. Our formation program aims at helping our Sisters to do the following:

- to deepen their faith and grow in awareness and appreciation of this gift through an increasing knowledge of the mystery of salvation in Christ
- to progress in their understanding of the value and requirements of the contemplative life, and of its significance for the Church and its missionary work
- to adore God in spirit and truth (cf John 4:24), especially in liturgical worship and its continuation in the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, to which our Congregation is obligated
- to follow Christ radically in the goodness and holiness of truth and in love, according to his standard of adulthood; and thus to grow towards the full maturity of Christ himself (cf Ephesians 4:13, 22-24)

## Postulancy

The postulancy is a gradual initiation into our cloistered religious life. The word "postulant" comes from the Latin word *postulare*, which means "to seek" or "to question." The purpose of the postulancy, which lasts from one to two years, is to introduce the candidate to our way of life and apostolate. The postulant has the opportunity to discern if God is calling her to become a Holy Spirit Adoration Sister, and at the same time, the Congregation is able to form a judgment about her fitness for the novitiate.



## Novitiate



The novitiate is a time of further discernment and of thorough preparation for total dedication to God in our way of life according to the evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty, and obedience. It begins with the rite of initiation, by which the novice is officially accepted into the community. Based on the gospel and on the spirituality of our Congregation, the formation aims at developing an attitude of openness to the Holy Spirit. The novices study our Constitutions, scripture, liturgy, and Church dogma. As they grow in community life, they learn to be large-hearted and constant in

devoting themselves to their vocation. At the end of the two-year period, the novice may request permission to make her vows.

## Temporary Vows



At the profession of first vows, the Sister receives our rose-colored habit, the profession cross bearing an image of the Holy Spirit, and a new religious name.

The years of temporary vows serve to further develop and test one's ability to live according to the evangelical counsels, to carry out the obligations of our contemplative-missionary apostolate, and to find personal fulfillment in our calling. This is a time of progress in aptitude for living and working with others, in stability and readiness for service, and in living faith. Temporary vows are made for one year at a time for five or six years.

## **Perpetual Profession**

A period of immediate preparation precedes the perpetual vows. Its aim is to ready the Sisters for a final wholehearted surrender of themselves to Christ, one which involves their entire life. The more fully they ratify this commitment by perpetual profession, the more vigorous becomes the life of the Church and the more fruitful its apostolate.



During the ceremony of perpetual profession, the Sister vows to the holy triune God for life chastity, poverty, and obedience according to the Constitutions of the Congregation of the Sister-Servants of the Holy Spirit of Perpetual Adoration. She

receives the ring, stamped with an image of the Holy Spirit and engraved with the inscription *Ave Sponse Coelestis* (Hail, Heavenly Spouse) as a sign that she is now forever a bride of Christ.

## On-Going Formation

The process of formation does not terminate with perpetual profession. At whatever stage of life we find ourselves, we are conscious that we have not yet reached our goal. Our community, as part of the People of God, is on the way to fulfillment in the eternal community where God alone is all in all. Throughout our lives we endeavor to perfect our spiritual, doctrinal, and practical development. Taking advantage of all that is offered us for our growth and making it our own, we are supported by the Lord who ever anew gives us his Spirit, in whose strength we can do all things.



***"Human dignity demands that a person act according to a knowing and free choice. Hence our young Sisters should receive guidance which could help them to form their conscience and to make free and responsible decisions."***

***From our Constitutions***