

Deep Listening/Discernment Scenario:

The Council has to discern if an Inquirer is ready to be admitted to the Order (Candidacy.)

The Inquirer has attended the appropriate number of lessons in Inquiry and is requesting admission to Candidacy. This person has missed 2 lessons and had to “make up” the lessons with the instructor but offered no clear reason for the absences beyond, “I couldn’t make it.”

At the lessons, the person appeared engaged in the topics covered and seemed eager to go forward in the process toward Candidacy and even profession. She has expressed that she is deeply involved in varying church groups and is attracted to St. Francis and the Franciscan charism. She has participated in the larger fraternity gatherings (ongoing formation, social and fraternity apostolates), and seems to get along with others except for one time when she was critical of a member and when approached by the formation director who gently described how a Secular Franciscan should try to see each person is a brother and sister, and she responded by “chalking it up to just my personality.”

She has submitted all necessary sacramental documents to the Formation Director including recommendations from her pastor and friend who is an OFS. Her sponsor has some hesitancy about her “laissez faire” approach to her formation in the Order and lack of self introspection.

Instructions:

Please use the deep listening/discernment process on the back of this sheet to discern if the Inquirer should proceed to being admitted into the Order or not. Please describe the reasoning as to why your “council” has decided the way it has.

If yes, are there any conditions associated with this decision such as frequent “check in’s” with the FD, SA and other council members, please identify them.

If your group decides that they would not admit someone into the order- how would you explain this decision to the person requesting admission?

In your group, please “Mutual Invitation” to invite people to share (directions following).

A person makes a short statement of their thoughts, and then invites another person by name to share. Each person can share, pass with request to share later, or pass until everyone has spoken.

**St. Elizabeth of Hungary Regional Workshop
November 11, 2023**

Process of Group Discernment and Deep Listening¹
(Actual timing of prayer intervals may increase)

Gather together and pray:

Prayer Before the Crucifix.
Most high, glorious God,
enlighten the darkness of my heart
and give me, Lord, a correct faith,
certain hope, a perfect charity,
sense and knowledge,
so that I may carry out
Your holy and true command. Amen.

Remain in silent prayer to the Holy Spirit for 10 minutes.

First Round:

While using Mutual Invitation, each person shares after consideration of the issue at hand: what is moving within you? Where do you feel God is calling you personally?

There is no discussion at this point but bring what you have heard back to prayer. Remain in silent prayer for 5 minutes.

Round 2:

Each person shares (again using mutual invitation) the following questions:

What I heard my brothers and sisters saying that really struck me, touched me, or moved me.

Again, there is no discussion at this point.

Return to silent prayer for 5 minutes.

Round 3:

Again, each person shares (using mutual invitation) the following questions:

What I heard my brothers and sisters saying that really struck me, touched me, or moved me.

Again, there is no discussion at this point.

Return to silent prayer for 5 minutes.

Round 4:

Discussion of the question: "Now, what's been said to us here? What is the group's discernment and consensus?"

¹ Global Sister's Report on the Synod for Synodality. Oct. 2023.