

ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS
- Initial Formation for Candidates -

Module 8: "What is Formation?"

sheet 4 [most suitable for Formators]

4. Methodology & Tools for Implementation at Home what has been Lived & Learned Together

METHODOLOGY

1. Accepting the persons being formed

- Being called by name makes us unique 'I have called you by your name, you are mine' [Isa 43.1]
- Formation must link human experience with Scripture & Franciscan charism
- In the group, some will readily participate; some will need to be encouraged to get involved
- Some think in symbols, creating own mental pictures; liking well organised presentations
- Some enjoy discussions & unstructured sessions; reflecting on material & drawing conclusions
- A group may be diverse & require different approaches to include everyone
- Sometimes a formation 'team' composed of different sorts of people is helpful—but sheer numbers will dictate the possibility of this

2. Relying on the positive attributes of each person

- Formation = person-centred—so even in a group each person must be carefully considered
- It must be remembered that a person in formation might be 'very knowledgeable', perhaps a theologian, an experienced deacon or priest [even a bishop!], may have learning difficulties etc
- While never talking down to others, the Formator must 'manage' the formation, steering it through the material & making sure that formation is actually taking place. Are they 'growing' or just 'covering the required ground'?
- Look out for what each has to offer the fraternity, Church, world
- Help candidates to recognise their abilities, esp their willingness to serve others [sick, youth; prayer activities, hospitality etc]

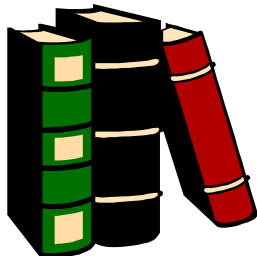
Involving those being formed in the process

- Dialogue, rather than lecture –people concentrate for a few minutes; intake time is often shorter; vary methods
- 'Informing' is important—but much more important is 'forming' itself
- Learning should be 'heuristic' [finding things out for oneself] as well as 'reciprocal' [the Formator is also a part of the learning experience—the Candidate may have great insights that can help you both in your growth/formation]. Remember, we are all in formation—Initial [Enquirers & Candidates] but also in ongoing formation— in the monthly meetings [Enquirers, Candidates, Professed]
- And remember, formation is the Holy Spirit's work—give him a chance! [Rom 14.13b]




TOOLS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Remember, the Formator is expected to ‘know his stuff’, so: ‘Do your best to present yourself...as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.’ [II Tim 2.15]



Reading: access may not be easy, so expect to supply/recommend as much as is reasonable to the pocket. But don’t overburden with constant suggestions of reading material—not everyone is an avid reader!

- Scripture is central— make clear which translation [NRSV is best]
- Rule & Constitutions
- Documents of Vatican II [see suggestions in ‘Additional Resources’ Index]
- Francis & Clare [the complete works, ISBN 0-8091-2446-7]
- Numerous Franciscan Writings [Omnibus of Sources etc]
- Spiritual Writings [that you & others have found helpful]



ORDO FRAN...

- Initial...

Module:

Title...

Pictures
and Text

Worksheets: are just one way of involving everyone and giving material that can be taken away and reflected on in the weeks ahead. The production of such, and their use, is very personal. Well produced, easy to read, easy to understand material is essential. This can be done by someone other than a Franciscan, but it is important to give definite instructions about what is wanted and to check the result! So:

- See topic as *piece of steak* that needs cutting into *manageable chunks* [gobbets] that can be picked up, chewed, swallowed & digested
- ‘What is Formation?’ [name of Module]
- ‘Subdivision’
- ‘Sheet number’ - could be backed or not [to provide space for notes]
- Provide binder so that this & other material [given out or collected by Candidate] can be gathered into a PORTFOLIO. Never use work sheets as handouts!