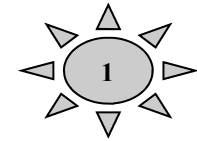


Remember that being professed in a religious Order—a professed member of OFS—is a **VOCATION**. Like all vocations it is not right for everyone; there are many ways to follow God's will in the Christian life.

So, make your decision and be at peace. These decisions are good but not infallible. Go with them! If it becomes clear that your decision requires some adaptations, consider these prayerfully and patiently.

Many things influence us in our decision making:

- 'Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God.' [1 John 4.1]
- reflect on what you are looking for until it becomes clear
- seek the advice of a competent spiritual guide [Spiritual Companion/Spiritual Director]
- Do you find you are constantly putting off making a decision? This may be an indication that this not right for you—at the moment; at all....



Discernment





What is discernment?

- Discernment is the human, prayerful discovery of God's preference for my life.
- It considers movements and tendencies in life in order to discover their source. Some come from one's own human spirit, some from the Spirit of God and others may come from 'another source'.
- Ultimately we can say that IT SEEMS that God is calling someone to this decision.

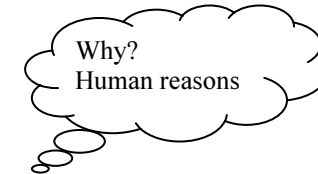


Deciding: OFS or not OFS

- Your reflection may tell you that our Franciscan way is not what you're looking for.
[Thank God for helping you know that. Continue your search for other ways to follow Jesus]
- Perhaps you are still attracted, but not totally certain that this is the way you wish to live your baptismal promises.
[Continue in your search, taking time to decide whether God is calling you to our Franciscan way of life. Together we will ascertain whether you have been called to it.]
- You may be certain this is the way you wish to follow Jesus.
[Thank God for your decision.]

Every decision is reached after discussion. It is best if there is agreement all round—everyone involved must be open and honest. Here are a few ideas regarding discernment.....

THE HUMAN SPIRIT



These ideas arise from one's emotions—which need to be taken into account. What reasons do you have for making this decision? Do you have enough information to make this decision? What is influencing your decision? Testing: do you feel at ease with this decision? Have you talked it over with others?

THE HOLY SPIRIT



The movement comes from a for Jesus—it's an increase of Spirit is stretching you to sur-completely to Gospel living.

deeper love faith. The render more

Testing?

- What is the source of your decision?
- Do you sense an inner prompting from the Spirit?
- Even though you are aware of a struggle to accept daily conversion, do you feel at peace with the decision?
- Is there joy in this decision?
- Do you feel urged to act on your decision?
- Have you talked it over with someone else?

When the Holy Spirit acts it is like water on a sponge: it soaks in!