

ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS
- Initial Formation for Candidates -

Module 4: "PROFESSION"
sheet 2

1. A Gift of the Spirit
[III] Celebration, Eucharist, Baptism & Profession

So, how's it going? Everything clear so far?

Not bad. Of course, the commission, as you call it, is from the King [Christ himself] who calls us by the Holy Spirit to become, if you like, a part of this regiment [OFS] in the Franciscan army [Family] whose overall mission is to 'Repair the Church!'

Yeah, I think I've got it. I think you're saying getting professed is more like getting a royal commission than enlisting? That being done in the context of the mass etc means its got the stamp of the Church itself—a really serious undertaking?

With God:
'Mission Possible'!

Absolutely. Shall we go on?

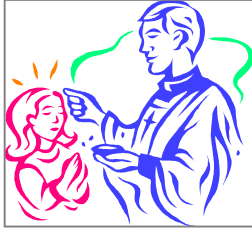


CELEBRATION

Gift of the Spirit in celebration = 'sanctification' [makes us holy], which comes through the priest, from God, because he acts *in persona Christi*

Purpose here: 'May the Spirit of your love penetrate their hearts, so that your grace will strengthen their commitment to the gospel life' [Ritual II, 30] - Spirit confirms what he has begun [Ritual II, 27]

Presbyter—one who channels blessing to professed; professed = privileged beneficiaries of this presiding function of the priest



EVCHARIST

The mass, as the source & summit of our salvation, is the right setting for Profession for in it the Church associates the promise [Profession] with the Eucharistic sacrifice

- the true nature of candidates as both priests & victims is made manifest: by promising to live the gospel life they make themselves entirely available to God, placing *their bodies [persons] on the altar of Christ's sacrifice*
- Profession = not instantaneous, isolated, act but new existential situation – commitment for life; 'person in a new state'
- from now on, every time one attends the mass, there is a sense in which that Profession is being renewed
- this 'sacrifice' confirms & seals the commitment to live the gospel life

BAPTISM

Baptism makes us living members of the Church for by it we are incorporated into Christ's death & resurrection [Rom 6.3ff], and we are sealed with the promised Holy Spirit [Eph 1.13] as the Rule reminds us, the relationship between baptism & Profession is fundamental:

'They have been made living members of the Church by being buried and raised with Christ in baptism; they have been united more intimately with the Church by Profession...' [Rule, 6], and so:

'You have been made members of the People of God by baptism...Do you wish to bind yourself more closely to the Church & to work intently to rebuild the ecclesial community...? [Ritual II, 31] - where the response is renewal of baptismal promises, & new consecration in Profession

- Profession in the OFS helps one to live baptismal grace & consecration with greater intensity of commitment & diligence [Ritual I, 12]
- Profession, by its nature, is renovation of the consecration & promises of baptism; Profession = the 'memorial of baptism' [Gk 'anamnesis' = memorial/bringing to mind again by bringing past to present: as in the mass 'a memorial of Christ's death' - the Real Presence]
- so, Profession makes baptism more fruitful, stronger & richer [cf *Lumen Gentium*, 44a]

