



Holy Half-Hours

Franciscan Young Adult Formation Program

on the

Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order

“The members of the Franciscan Youth consider the Rule of the OFS as an inspirational document for the growth of their own Christian and Franciscan vocation either individually or in a group.” OFS General Constitutions, Title VII, Article 96.3

Make a commitment to spend four **holy half-hours** to prepare for each session.

Preferably, spend one holy half-hour a week.

For each holy half hour:

- Put yourself in the presence of God.
- Pray to the Holy Spirit for Guidance.
- Read the assigned passages.

After reading, spend time with God in prayer. Use some of your thoughts as points of dialogue with God.

June 2018

Compiled by Kathy Taormina, OFS
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St. John XXIII, OFS fraternity

**Original Holy Half-Hours formation design attributed to
Jack Sheridan, OFS, St. Elizabeth of Hungary Region, 2017*

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Prologue, Chapter One

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| <p>Make a commitment to spend four holy half-hours to prepare for session.</p> | <p>For each holy half hour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Put yourself in the presence of God.• Pray to the Holy Spirit for Guidance.• Read the assigned passages. <p>After reading, spend time with God in prayer. Use some of your thoughts as points of dialogue with God.</p> |
| <p>Preferably, spend one holy half-hour a week.</p> | |

1. **Read** OFS RULE, Prologue, Chapter One.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Article 9.2.
3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- Do I love the Lord with my whole being?

Week 2:

- Do I feel blessed by God? How? Give examples.

Week 3:

- When in my life have I been a spouse, a brother, a sister, or a mother of our Lord?

Week 4:

- Do I see Jesus as my brother? How?

Holy Half-Hours

OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Prologue, Chapter Two

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| <p>Make a commitment to spend four holy half-hours to prepare for session.</p> | <p>For each holy half hour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Put yourself in the presence of God.• Pray to the Holy Spirit for Guidance.• Read the assigned passages. <p>After reading, spend time with God in prayer. Use some of your thoughts as points of dialogue with God.</p> |
| <p>Preferably, spend one holy half-hour a week.</p> | |

1. **Read** OFS RULE, Prologue, Chapter Two.

2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.

3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- How do I see penance (not the Sacrament of Reconciliation) in my world? When am I not doing penance?

Week 2:

- When do I act like a “slave to the world”?

Week 3:

- What does spiritual blindness look like in my life?

Week 4:

- What do I see as my “account on the day of judgement”?

Holy Half-Hours

OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 1

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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 1.

2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 1, 11, 98.

3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- Do you believe the Holy Spirit raised the Franciscan family in the Church? What prompted me to be a Franciscan instead of one of the other spiritual families?

Week 2:

- What has drawn me “to follow Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi”?

Week 3:

- How do I explain “life-giving union with each other”?

Week 4:

- How do I “make present the charism [of St. Francis] in the life and mission of the Church”?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 2

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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 2.

2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Article 1.3.

3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- What do I understand is the meaning of “an organic union”?

Week 2:

- Am I “open to every group of the faithful”? How? Is my fraternity? If not, what can I do to help us be more open?

Week 3:

- How do I “strive for perfect charity in [my] own secular state”?

Week 4:

- How do I “pledge [myself] to live the gospel in the manner of St. Francis”?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 3

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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 3.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 4-5, 9.2
3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- Why is it important for the RULE to adapt “to the needs and expectations of the Holy Church in the conditions of changing times”?

Week 2:

- Did I know that the Rule’s “interpretation belongs to the Holy See”? What does that mean to me? To my fraternity?

Week 3:

- Have I ever read the OFS Constitutions or the OFS USA Statutes? Do I know where to find them?

Week 4:

- Why is it important for an Order to have a Constitution? Isn’t spirituality enough?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 4

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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 4.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 8, 9.2, 44.3.
3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- How do I describe the “rule and life of the Secular Franciscans” and what does this mean to my Franciscan Youth group?

Week 2:

- Is Christ the “inspiration and center” of my life as it was to St. Francis? How?

Week 3:

- When and how do I “devote [myself] especially to careful reading of the gospel”?

Week 4:

- How do I embody and live out “going from gospel to life and life to the gospel”?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 5

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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 5

2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Article 9

3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- How do I actively “seek to encounter the living and active person of Christ”?

Week 2:

- Do I seek to encounter Christ in my brothers and sisters? How?

Week 3:

- How do I seek Christ in Sacred Scripture? In the Church? In liturgical activity?

Week 4:

- What is “the inspiration and pattern of [my] Eucharistic life”?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 6

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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 6.

2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 17, 53.2, 99.

3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- What is the connection between my Baptism and my Promise?

Week 2:

- Am I a witness to Christ in my world by my “life and words”? How?

Week 3:

- Am I called to “rebuild the Church”? How? Give examples.

Week 4:

- Am I “living in full communion with the pope, bishops, and priests”? What happens if I disagree with them on certain subjects?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 7

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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 7.

2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 11, 13.

3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- Do I feel “united by [my] vocation as brothers and sisters of penance”? How?

Week 2:

- How do I describe “radical” conversion? Have I experienced it?

Week 3:

- Do I try to examine my lifestyle in view of living my vocation daily?

Week 4:

- How do I understand the Sacrament of Reconciliation? Do I feel that it is “the privileged sign of the Father’s mercy”? How?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 8

| | |
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 8

2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 12.3, 14.2, 53.2.

3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- What is the difference between “prayer and contemplation”?

Week 2:

- Is “prayer and contemplation” the soul of everything I am and do? How?

Week 3:

- Do I participate, not just attend, the Eucharistic feast while attending Mass?
How do I participate?

Week 4:

- What other forms of liturgical prayer do I experience? How often?

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Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 9

| | |
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 9.

2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Article 16.

3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- How do we know that Mary “was open to [God’s] every word and call”?

Week 2:

- Mary was chosen by St. Francis to be “the protectress and advocate of his family”. What did that mean to St. Francis and what does that mean to me today?

Week 3:

- How do I “express [my] ardent love for Mary”?

Week 4:

- How do I know if I am “praying earnestly and confidently”?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 10

| | |
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 10.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 10, 12.2.
3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- Do I place my “will into the Father’s will”?

Week 2:

- When do I hold part, or most, of myself back from God?

Week 3:

- What are the “duties proper to [my] various circumstances of life”?

Week 4:

- I am to “witness to him even in difficulties and persecutions”. When do I find that most challenging to do?

Holy Half-Hours

OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 11

| | |
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 11.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Article 15.

3. Questions:

Week 1:

- Describe what a “humble life” would look like today.

Week 2:

- What is a “proper spirit of detachment from temporal goods”?

Week 3:

- If I am a steward for the gifts I received, do I use these gifts for “the benefit of God’s children”?

Week 4:

- How can I purify my heart from “every tendency and yearning for possession and power”?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 12

| | |
|---|--|
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 12.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Article 100.3.

3. Questions:

Week 1:

- How do I witness “to the good yet to come”?

Week 2:

- “Because of the vocation [Promise] they have embraced...” Have I truly embraced my Franciscan Young Adult vocation? How do I know this for sure?

Week 3:

- I am “obliged to acquire purity of heart because of the vocation [I] have embraced”, so how do I go about acquiring this purity of heart?

Week 4:

- I can freely embrace the concept of loving God, but how do I “freely” love my brothers and sisters?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 13

| | |
|---|--|
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 13.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Article 18.

3. Questions:

Week 1:

- How do I see each person in this world “as a gift of the Lord”? What does this look like in my everyday life?

Week 2:

- Do I possess “a gentle and courteous spirit”? What happens to that same spirit when I disagree with someone, or have a fight with another?

Week 3:

- “A sense of community will make them joyful.” Where do I find a sense of community? Is it in tight circles with those who think like I do, or is it meant to be a broader community? Explain.

Week 4:

- Do I “strive to create conditions of life worthy of [all] people”? How?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 14

| | |
|---|--|
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 14.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 19-20.
3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- What does “a more fraternal and evangelical world” mean in my world today?

Week 2:

- What does “a more fraternal and evangelical world” mean in my fraternity?

Week 3:

- Describe “the kingdom of God”.

Week 4:

- What are my “responsibilities” of service in a “Christian spirit”? Am I exercising them “competently”?

Holy Half-Hours

OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 15

| | |
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 15.

2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Article 22.

3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- Am I “individually and collectively [being] in the forefront of promoting justice”?

Week 2:

- Do I show the world what I believe in by the way I live, by how I shop, and by what apostolates and hobbies take up my time?

Week 3:

- Is my life and how I spend my time in line with the gospels? Would other people know this about me without asking?

Week 4:

- When I vote, am I making “definite choices in harmony with [my] faith”? How?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 16

| | |
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 16.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Article 21.

3. Questions:

Week 1:

- How do I view the action of “work”, whether outside the home or inside the home?

Week 2:

- Have I ever esteemed work as a gift? Or do I see work as drudgery or something I am entitled to have? Give an example or two.

Week 3:

- How can I see work “as a sharing in the creation”?

Week 4:

- How is any of my work a “service to the human community”?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 17

| | |
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 17.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Article 24-25.
3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- As a Franciscan Young Adult, do I cultivate the Franciscan spirit in my own family? How have I shared with my extended family why I am a Franciscan?

Week 2:

- What are the ways in which I have made my family a sign of being renewed in Christ?

Week 3:

- In the sacrament of matrimony, does our love share in Christ's love for the church? If we are single, how are we "spouses" of our "Lord Jesus Christ"?

Week 4:

- Do I respect all life from conception to natural death? What have I done to promote this belief?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 18

| | |
|---|--|
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 18.

2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 12.1, 15.3, 18.3.

3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- How do I know that Francis respected all of creation?

Week 2:

- How is it possible for an inanimate creature to “bear the imprint of the Most High”?

Week 3:

- In what ways am I still exploiting creation? In what ways have I stopped?

Week 4:

- Have I read and studied Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato Si’*?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 19

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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 19.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 23, 26-27.

3. Questions:

Week 1:

- Am I a bearer of peace in the world? How?

Week 2:

- True dialogue (listening and speaking) is one of the ways to peace. How good of a listener am I? Am I quick to speak/judge and slow/reluctant to listen? Why?

Week 3:

- How do I “strive to bring joy and hope to others”? When is it not easy to do so?

Week 4:

- Why is it important how I understand Sister Death? How did Francis live and die all while praising God?

Holy Half-Hours

OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 20

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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 20.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 28-29.

3. Questions:

Week 1:

- The local fraternity is the basic unit of the OFS Order. Do I prioritize my Young Adult gatherings and celebrations above other commitments? Why/why not?

Week 2:

- How do I cherish my Promise by participating in fraternity gatherings and how do I contribute to her apostolates?

Week 3:

- When I choose not to be present with my brothers and sisters in fraternity, how am I hurting them? How am I hurting myself?

Week 4:

- Our “fraternities are coordinated and united to the norm of this rule and of the constitutions”. What does that mean to me?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 21

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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 21.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Article 30-32.

3. Questions:

Week 1:

- Each Young Adult council is called upon to “animate” the fraternity. Do I make it a priority to attend my fraternity elections?

Week 2:

- How do I elect council members who are ready and willing to serve?

Week 3:

- Having “a ready and willing spirit” to serve “is a duty of responsibility of each member” of the fraternity. What are the excuses I use to not serve my fraternity?

Week 4:

- All those who lead do so temporarily, accepting and relinquishing their office. Do I find myself offering to serve beyond my time limit or my ability to serve?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 22

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| <p>Make a commitment to spend four holy half-hours to prepare for session.</p> <p>Preferably, spend one holy half-hour a week.</p> | <p>For each holy half hour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Put yourself in the presence of God.• Pray to the Holy Spirit for Guidance.• Read the assigned passages. <p>After reading, spend time with God in prayer. Use some of your thoughts as points of dialogue with God.</p> |
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 22.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 46-47.

3. Questions:

Week 1:

- The OFS fraternity is canonically established. What does that mean? Who serves as the OFS Fraternal Animator?

Week 2:

- Is my community, my fraternity, a “community of love”? When is it not?

Week 3:

- The fraternity “should be the privileged place” for developing and feeding a Franciscan vocation. In what ways do we develop this “privileged place”?

Week 4:

- Each fraternity is “entrusted to the pastoral care of another religious Franciscan Order” from the 1st Order or the Third Order Regulars. Who is my fraternity sponsored by and why? Who is our Spiritual Assistant?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 23

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| <p>Make a commitment to spend four holy half-hours to prepare for session.</p> <p>Preferably, spend one holy half-hour a week.</p> | <p>For each holy half hour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Put yourself in the presence of God.• Pray to the Holy Spirit for Guidance.• Read the assigned passages. <p>After reading, spend time with God in prayer. Use some of your thoughts as points of dialogue with God.</p> |
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 23.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 37-44, 56.1.

3. Questions:

Week 1:

- “Your Promise is an important commitment.” Explain this in your own words by the example of your own vocation.

Week 2:

- I am responsible for my own formation. How did I fully immerse myself in study to prepare for the Promise?

Week 3:

- How do I prepare monthly for Formation? Do I read and answer the questions so that I am intellectually able to respond and share with my fraternity?

Week 4:

- Do I skip the preparation for formation and just wing it at the fraternity sessions? Is that fair to those who have taken the time to prepare? What can I do to change my attitude about formation?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 24

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| <p>Make a commitment to spend four holy half-hours to prepare for session.</p> <p>Preferably, spend one holy half-hour a week.</p> | <p>For each holy half hour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Put yourself in the presence of God.• Pray to the Holy Spirit for Guidance.• Read the assigned passages. <p>After reading, spend time with God in prayer. Use some of your thoughts as points of dialogue with God.</p> |
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 24.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Articles 31.4, 53.1, 96.1-2.
3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- Most Franciscan Young Adults meet but once a month. How would you propose to have more gatherings throughout the month to enliven and enrich members?

Week 2:

- What are some of the ways in which the fraternity can gather for various apostolates, especially ones that aid the poor and marginalized?

Week 3:

- How do I support the fraternity council in their endeavors to have “the involvement of all its members” in meetings and apostolates?

Week 4:

- The OFS “ought to be ready to share the experience of evangelical life with the youth who feel attracted to Saint Francis of Assisi and to seek the means of adequately presenting it to them.” How is your sponsoring OFS fraternity involved with the young adults?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 25

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| <p>Make a commitment to spend four holy half-hours to prepare for session.</p> <p>Preferably, spend one holy half-hour a week.</p> | <p>For each holy half hour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Put yourself in the presence of God.• Pray to the Holy Spirit for Guidance.• Read the assigned passages. <p>After reading, spend time with God in prayer. Use some of your thoughts as points of dialogue with God.</p> |
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 25.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Article 30.3.
3. **Questions:**

Week 1:

- Do I donate to the fraternity as best I can? Why is this important?

Week 2:

- What are the regular expenses of a fraternity and how am I contributing to meet those expenses?

Week 3:

- The Common Fund is used for the needs of the fraternity. What apostolates are our donations used for?

Week 4:

- Franciscan values advocate “that members are responsible for taking care of their own in whatever way is necessary”. How do I do this in fraternity?

Holy Half-Hours OFS RULE

Ongoing Formation

Assignment:

OFS RULE – Article 26

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| <p>Make a commitment to spend four holy half-hours to prepare for session.</p> <p>Preferably, spend one holy half-hour a week.</p> | <p>For each holy half hour:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Put yourself in the presence of God.• Pray to the Holy Spirit for Guidance.• Read the assigned passages. <p>After reading, spend time with God in prayer. Use some of your thoughts as points of dialogue with God.</p> |
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1. **Read** OFS RULE, Article 26.
2. **Read** any commentaries available on the Secular Franciscan Rule.
Read OFS General Constitutions, Article 90-92, 95.
Reference *Statutes for Spiritual and Pastoral Assistance to the Secular Franciscan Order.*

3. Questions:

Week 1:

- What constitutes a “suitable and well-prepared” Spiritual Assistant?

Week 2:

- What are the main responsibilities of a Spiritual Assistant?

Week 3:

- What is the purpose of a Spiritual Assistant to the fraternity?

Week 4:

- What is the purpose of a Fraternal Animator to the fraternity?