

The Order of Ecumenical Franciscans Rites of Passage & Celebration Liturgy 2020



OPENING

Penitent Prayer- St. Francis' Prayer Before the Cross

Let us pray.

**God,
enlighten the darkness of our hearts
and give us
true faith,
certain hope,
and perfect charity,
sense and knowledge,
Lord, that we may carry out
Your holy and true command.**

Silence to meditate

Amen.

Call to Worship PSALM 63:1-8 (Jul Baker)

1 O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; *
my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you,
as in a barren and dry land where there is no water.

**2 Therefore I have gazed upon you in your holy place, *
that I might behold your power and your glory.**

3 For your loving-kindness is better than life itself; *
my lips shall give you praise.

**4 So will I bless you as long as I live *
and lift up my hands in your Name.**

5 My soul is content, as with marrow and fatness, *
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,

**6 When I remember you upon my bed, *
and meditate on you in the night watches.**

7 For you have been my helper, *
and under the shadow of your wings I will rejoice.

**8 My soul clings to you; *
your right hand holds me fast.**

Gathering Song

LITURGY OF THE WORD-

First Lesson- Song of Solomon 2:10–13 (Daniel Miller)

My beloved speaks and says to me:

"Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away;
for now the winter is past,
the rain is over and gone.

The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove
is heard in our land.

The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away."

Second Lesson- 1 Peter 4:1–2 (Stephen Kirk Bowman)

Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same intention (for whoever has suffered in the flesh has finished with sin), so as to live for the rest of your earthly life no longer by human desires but by the will of God.

Luke 12:32–37 (Sam Loudenslager)

Jesus said to his disciples, "Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for

yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

“Be dressed for action and have your lamps lit; be like those who are waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet, so that they may open the door for him as soon as he comes and knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master finds alert when he comes; truly I tell you, he will fasten his belt and have them sit down to eat, and he will come and serve them.”

Homily- John Michael

rites of passage-

Welcoming of Postulants (Carol Stiver on behalf of Formation Team)

All those who have been approved for the Postulancy are invited to come forward. New postulants are introduced.

Leader: My sibling, what do you desire?

Postulant: I desire to be acknowledged as a Postulant in the order of Ecumenical Franciscans.

ALL Franciscans present respond: We welcome you, _____, and pledge to you our support and encouragement as you continue to inquire into the Franciscan way of life. May our good example and fervent prayers help you to embrace more fully the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in the spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare.

All Postulants (new and returning) may lay their Rules of Life upon the altar.

After all Postulants have been welcomed:

Leader: Let us pray. God, our Creator, we pray that our lives may be filled with the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and may continue to witness to His Holy Gospel; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Leader: I welcome and acknowledge you as Postulants in the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans.

Postulant (s): Thanks be to God.

Leader: May the Holy Spirit guide and strengthen you, that in this and in all things, you may do God's will in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

Admission/Renewal of Novices (Helen Bathurst)

Those to be received as novices are presented individually and place their Rules of Life upon the Altar. When all have been presented, they commit their journey with this vow:

I, _____ dedicate myself to the service of our Lord Jesus Christ as a Novice in the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans. I commit myself to continue this journey, testing my vocation and moving toward Profession as Christ may lead. I undertake, by God's grace, to keep for one year the Rule of Life I now present upon the Altar.

Leader: I admit you as Novices in this community. May God accept your offering, and give you grace to persevere.

Each new novice is presented with a Tau Cross.

Those renewing their Novice vows place their Rules of Life upon the Altar then repeat the vow above.

Leader: Creator God, you call us to your service and inspire us to hear your call. These sisters and brothers of ours desire to continue to test our way of life; help them to know what you ask of them and strengthen us all in your service. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Admission to Solemn Profession (Servant Council Member)

The candidates present themselves before the Altar.

Leader: You already have been consecrated to Christ through baptism and therein have the promise of eternal life. What further do you ask this day of the Lord and of the Church?

Candidates: We are firm in our faith and commitment. We ask today that we might be allowed to live out this commitment as Franciscans, and so give glory to God and serve the church for the rest of our lives.

The Gathered Community: Thanks be to God.

The Candidate's formation counselor or their representative presents each candidate to the Leader. Each candidate is introduced by the name they intend to be known as to the Order. They may kneel before the leader.

Leader: You will now offer your vows before the Lord and this company.

The candidates individually say: I, _____, give myself to our Lord Jesus Christ, to serve Christ for the rest of my life in company with my brothers and sisters in the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans. I will seek to spread the knowledge and love of Christ, and to promote and live in the spirit of the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience, following the little way after the examples of Francis and Clare. I ask my God for strength, and my brothers and sisters for prayer, as I commit myself to this lifelong endeavor.

Leader: You are crucified with Christ but live by faith in the Son of God who loved you and gave himself for the life of the world. May the Lord accept your offering and give you grace to persevere.

External signs of making Profession are offered. The Leader then leads in prayer as the community gathers around the newly professed and lay their hands upon them.

Leader: Lord, look upon your servant _____ who is resolved to dedicate his/her life to you by making profession of the evangelical counsels in the presence of your people today. Mercifully grant that his/her manner of life may bring glory to your name and further your loving plan of redemption. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

When all the candidates have been received, all the Professed members of the Order lay their Rules of Life upon the Altar and make this pledge:

I, _____ declare again my pledge to live out my lifelong vows before Christ and this Order. I undertake, by God's grace, to keep for one year the Rule of Life I now present upon the Altar, and to keep the General Rule as expressed in the Principles of the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans.

Leader: Friends and family of those who have taken their vows as Postulants, Novices and Professed, do you promise to support these sisters and brothers and pray for them in their life in Christ?

All: We do and we ask God to help and guide us.

The Principles of the Order of Ecumenical Franciscans are chanted by all present. (tune provided by Br. E. Louis Canter, OEF)

CELEBRATION OF THE NEW COVENANT (Paula Clare Clouse)

Greeting of Peace

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.
The peace of the Lord be always with you

.
All: And also with you.

We share the sign of Peace

Meal

The elements are blessed and prepared for serving

SENDING

Benediction

May God bless us with *discomfort* at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships, so that we may live deep within our hearts.

May God bless us with *anger* at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that we may work for justice, freedom, and peace.

May God bless us with *tears* to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, hunger, and war, so that we may reach out our hands to comfort them and turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless us with enough *foolishness* to believe that we can make a difference in this world, so that we can do what others claim cannot be done, to bring justice and kindness to all our children and the poor.

Amen.

Sending Song:

Dismissal The Newly Professed Together

Go In Peace to live in love and make God's Peace!

Thanks Be to God!