

## Interview Guide

**Background:** It is very important that all first time visitors have a discussion with a professed member of the fraternity to complete the information contained in the Visitor Information Sheet. ***Even if the visitor is brought to the meeting by a member of the fraternity who vouches for them this interview is necessary.*** This can be done at the end of the first meeting or after the visitor has returned for the second meeting. ***Explain that this information is necessary to ensure the visitor has the necessary background and experience and no impediments exist that would prevent them from becoming a professed member of the SFO.*** It is important to use this opportunity to become acquainted with the visitor not just ask for answers to the information required on the Visitor Information Sheet. The questions listed below are meant to give you some assistance in carrying out a productive discussion. It is suggested that you do not attempt to complete the Visitor Information Sheet during the discussion but rather make notes and fill the form out later.

***Before you start the interview make certain the person has a definite interest in the SFO.***

### Suggested Questions

#### **Name, Address, Phone, E-Mail, Name of Parish**

- Let me be certain that I have the correct spelling of your name.
- Your current address? How long have you lived there? (If it is brief where did they live before?), phone number? Do you have an E-mail address?
- What is your current home parish? Who is the Pastor there? How long have you been a member?

#### **Family Information**

- Are you employed? What is your occupation? Retired? What was prior work history?
- Are you married, single, or divorced? If married what is the name of the spouse, how long have you been married?
- Do you have children, if so names and ages?
- Do you have a copy of your marriage certificate? Are you married in the eyes of the church?
- If previously married, do they have a Degree of Nullity (Annulment) or not?

#### **Religious Formation**

- When did you receive your first instruction in the Catholic religion, time and place?
- Have you participated in other Catholic religious study groups, classes, seminars? If so where, when for how long?
- Do you call yourself a practicing Catholic? What does that mean to you?
- Do you support the doctrine, dogma, and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church as presented by the Church's Magisterium, especially in regard to Sacred Scripture, the Sacraments, and the primacy of the Roman Pontiff?

#### **Sacramental Information**

- Where and when were you Baptized?
- When did you receive your First Communion?
- Have you been Confirmed, if so, when and where?

- Do you regularly attend religious services?
- How frequently do you attend Mass?
- How often do you receive the Sacrament of Penance?

### Secular Franciscan Order

- When did you first learn of the Secular Franciscan Order? Do you know any people who are members of the Secular Franciscan Order, our fraternity?
- What draws your interest to the SFO and St Francis?
- Membership in the SFO will require a period of initial training which requires active study and participation once or twice a month. Will there be any problem in you participating in those formation classes?
- After profession you are expected to be an active member of the fraternity, participating in the regular monthly meetings and other activities. Will there be any problem in you participating in those sessions?
- You might choose to remind the visitor that we expect the monthly meeting date always belongs to the SFO.
- Has this decision been discussed with your family? Are there any problems with members of your family?
- Do you have any spiritual goals that the Secular Franciscan Order could help you achieve? If so, ask for an explanation.
- Have you considered any other secular third order religious organizations (Carmelites, Dominicans, Benedictines, Opus Dei, etc.)? If so what was their attraction?

### Miscellaneous Information

- Have you ever been a member of another Religious Order? If so, when, where, what is your present status with the order?
- Remember a candidate for the SFO cannot be a professed member of any other Religious Order (first, second or third order). ***If they are a member of another third order they will need to obtain a release from their order before the visitor can continue with the SFO.*** The visitor can be an ordained diocesan deacon or priest.
- Do you participate in any of your home parish or community activities?
- Do you do anything special in your leisure time?
- Do you have any questions about the SFO?

### Future Information

If you get to this part of the interview and do not see any obvious impediment, then tell the visitor about the certificates they will need as they progress through the formation process.

- Certificates of Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation and if necessary Matrimony, or Holy Orders if a diocesan priest or deacon is involved. Ensure there will not be a problem obtaining the certificates.
- That they will need to supply references from their home parish pastor and one other active practicing catholic who can attest to their spiritual life

When you have finished the interview think about the responses and look for signs of a call. Compare what you heard to the list of signs described below. Then complete the Visitor Information sheet. If you have missed any information follow up with a phone call. The Minister and Formation Director should see the information sheet as soon as possible.

*Adapted from "Catch Me a Rainbow Too" by Lester Bach, O.F.M. Cap, 1999, pages 25-27. Lindsborg, KS: Barbo-Carlson Enterprises, 2005.*