



Why Dominican?

Presentation Notes for Candidacy Module 9: Living The Rule

Objectives: At the end of this session, the Inquirer will be able to:

1. Understand that the goal of becoming a Lay Dominican is to be able to live this Rule fully for the rest of one's life and thus, at this stage of formation, be able to articulate which parts of the Rule are personally relatively easy to live and which provide more of a challenge.
2. Articulate and embrace a specific place as a member of the laity in the Church and within the Order of Preachers through specific and active participation in both the Church and the Order.
3. Understand that the practice of Dominican devotions such as daily Scripture reading, attending Mass, praying the Rosary and the Liturgy of the Hours as well as frequent reconciliation are matters of the heart rather than requirements and be willing to investigate how those which are unpracticed might lead one to a fuller Dominican lifestyle.
4. Identify specific ways to develop and/or maintain a personal hunger for truth and knowledge so that assiduous study becomes a part of daily life.
5. Begin a personal plan of study to familiarize oneself with specific primary sources identified by the Order that will foster a gradual and consistent conversion of heart.
6. Articulate and investigate appropriate ways to preach the Word of God according to one's skills and calling.
7. Begin to discern where one's talents might lead one to serve as an officer within the Order, the Province, and the group/Chapter.
8. Identify specific collaborations between the Dominican Laity and other Dominicans within the Province and Order that might be of particular interest to one personally.

Materials: copies of The Fundamental Constitution of the Laity: The Rule, Study Guide Supplement on the Fundamental Constitution of the Laity: The Rule, chalk and chalk board or marker and poster board, clock

Prayer/Contemplation: Luke 22: 42b

Study:

1. Prior to this session, each Candidate should have re-read the Rule in order to re-acquaint him/herself with its purpose and basic format. A copy of the two column handout on the Fundamental Constitution of the Laity: The Rule (from the Inquiry Stage), available as a Study Guide Supplement for this Module, should have also been reviewed. It is essential that each person understand that living the Rule willingly and with a continual conversion of heart is the foundation of becoming a life-long member of the Dominican Laity.
2. To foster this common understanding, spend a few opening minutes brainstorming phrases to answer the prompt: What comes to mind when you pray about the Rule? List these on the board or poster without comment.
3. Explain that the purpose of this current session is to begin to answer a very personal question, “Is God calling me to live this Rule as the foundation of my life?”
4. Divide the group into pairs preferably with promised member of the Dominican Laity partnered with a Candidate. If the group only contains Candidates, pair people who do not usually share together as partners.
5. The task for each pair is to discuss personal strengths and challenges of beginning to live the first section of the Rule using the Study Guide Supplement and any modifications made during Inquiry as a guideline. Remind all present of confidentiality standards. Instruct each person to be as specific and honest as possible. Each person will have 5 minutes to share before the partner begins to share. The partner is to listen without comment to what the person says.
6. At the end of five minutes, have the partners switch roles.
7. At the end of the second five minutes, allow each pair to comment positively on each other’s sharing and/or offer encouragement in appropriate areas. Remind the participants to refrain from being boastful or falsely humble and to use gentle words of encouragement and understanding.
8. Repeat steps 5 through 7 for Section II and then III with each person changing to a new partner if possible for each section.
9. At the end of the partner sharings, allow some quiet time for each person to jot down some specific ideas to meet the personal challenges that the Rule might present at this stage of formation. Explain that this reflection is the beginning of

formulating a personal plan for improvement, but that it will NOT be shared aloud.

10. Return to the second step of brainstorming phrases that opened this session. Invite someone to read the first item brainstormed from the board or poster board. Ask for specific matches to the item based on pair sharings. Repeat this process for each item.
11. In closing this section of the session, the presenter should attempt to connect the matches further to specific items listed under “objectives” for this session if there is a reasonable connection.
12. One final point needs to be made about changing the Rule. Only the Pope can make a change to the Rule. The Master of the Order, however, can issue a Declaration in which he clarifies a particular part of the Rule. Be sure to check with your Provincial Executive Council and include recent Declarations by the Master of the Order at this point in your study of the Rule. As of this writing, the last official set of Declarations was on Nov. 15, 2007. They can be found by accessing the following link:
<http://luminaria.infodat-llc.com/GeneralDeclarations.pdf>. A general discussion of each Declaration is appropriate.

Community: The purpose in rotating the partners in the pairings is to allow each member to get to know another member a little more at each sharing throughout Candidacy. It is important to point out that even the permanently promised have challenges to living the Rule. Mutual understanding and encouragement without false humility or boasting foster true Community spirit.

Apostolate: The main Apostolate of the Order is to preach. Dominican Laity have many such opportunities. Be sure to explore those activities currently being followed and be open to those that present themselves during this session and others.

Conclusion: Encourage interaction among participants before the next meeting.

Assignment: Distribute the Study Guide for the next session.