

FROM THE PROVINCIAL STATUTES REGARDING VOWS

43) "Vows are made directly to God and it is the Order acting on the authority of the Church that accepts them. This authority is conferred on her [the Church] by Jesus: "As my father sent me, so I send you." The local community council is the competent authority to admit vows.

44) In the code of Canon Law we read: 'A vow, that is, a deliberate and free promise made to God about a possible and better good, must be fulfilled by reason of the virtue of religion.' (Canon law 1.191.1)

45) One may take a vow to do some good action to which one is already obliged under some other title (for OCDS, their Definitive promise)." [Note: Taken from Be Holy: The Commentary on the Rule of Life of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites by Rev. Hilary Doran, O.C.D.; Dublin, 1992, pg 254-255.]

- a. Any member who feels called by God to make vows of chastity and obedience for life may petition the local community council not less than three years after the Definitive Promise.
- b. After receiving the consent of the local council and in consultation with the Regional Assistant, the member will then begin a year of prayerful discernment under the supervision of the Director of Formation. No formal program is required.
- c. After the year of discernment, the member will send a formal letter to the local council and their Regional Assistant requesting consent to make vows.
- d. When making its decision, the local council should consider the following criteria: i. The member must be faithful in living the Promise ii. The member's life must be suitably ordered with any major irregularities resolved so that there is no hindrance to grace iii. The member must have a healthy, balanced integration of the experience of God in their daily life and there should be an evidence of growing in charity, detachment and humility
- e. Initial discernment and formation for this call will generally include the assistance of one's own confessor or spiritual director, the local council of the community, and/or the Spiritual Assistant to the community.
- f. The vows are strictly voluntary. The promise makes one a full member of the Order. The vows do not change that status. The member must be informed of both the serious obligation and the rich graces associated with the vows. As with the promises, they are not binding under pain of sin.

46) "The vows entail a greater moral responsibility. The binding force of these vows, freely made, renders more visible the bond of love and commitment that exists between Christ and His Bride the Church." Found in Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites: Legislative Documents for the OCDS: Ritual for Promises and Vows. 10 December 1990, p.78 (see especially n. 7.)