

Become a Sister

“God often interrupts our plans.” St. Vincent de Paul

“For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for woe, plans to give you a future full of hope. When you call to me, when you go to pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes when you seek me with all your heart, you will find me with you, says the Lord...” Jeremiah 29:11-14



Is God changing the direction you thought your life would go in? Are you finding yourself more and more concerned about what is happening in the world around you? Are you pondering what you are called to do in the face of war, injustice, oppression, poverty, and violence? Are you feeling called to what lies beyond the present boundaries of your life? Are you being invited to break open the boundaries of your love?

Consider yourself interrupted...

“I see interruptions as moments of grace...” Sr. Marianne Joyce, SC

...the love of Christ overwhelms us... 2Cor 5:14

Jesus Christ came “to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty and to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord’s year of favor” (Luke 4: 18-19) The mission of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth is to proclaim and live this gospel of Jesus Christ.

To explore vowed membership with the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth you must be:
a single woman, 21 – 40 (exceptions are made through mutual agreement)
a practicing Catholic for at least three years
in good physical and mental health

You must have:

education or work experience beyond high school
a desire to live a life of service
a call to live in community with other women

Women of all racial and ethnic backgrounds may apply for entrance. The suitability of the applicant is determined on an individual basis.

Steps in the process...

Inquiry (There’s no such thing as a stupid question!)

Ask all the questions you want to without any expectation or obligation on our part for you to continue to be in contact with us. Do you have questions about decision making, religious life, the vows, Church, God? Questions about our community, our mission, ministries and life?

The Vocation/Admissions Director is available to talk to you by phone, email or in person and to keep in touch and assist you in whatever ways are helpful. See her contact info in the sidebar on the right.

Getting to know each other...

If you are interested in learning more about life as a Sister of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, you are welcome to meet and talk with Sister Maryanne Tracey, the vocation/admissions director at the Congregation's Motherhouse located in Convent Station, NJ

This period of time is an opportunity for you and the Sisters of Charity to get to know each other through individual meetings, spending time with small and large groups of Sisters for prayer, dinner and conversation, volunteering (if you are not already doing so) to serve at a Sister of Charity ministry and a variety of other experiences.

Eventually it may be agreed to enter into a process of discernment with us or God is calling you to something else.

The discernment process takes about six months to a year. This helps you and the community to know if you are called and ready to take the next step and begin the application process to become a Candidate of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth.

Initial Formation

If you are seeking membership you are someone who has already experienced the call to faith and mission in Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

You now believe that it is in the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth that you can best continue your response to that call.

Through contact with the Sisters specifically responsible for the formation program as well as with the larger community, you and the Congregation begin to test the validity of that belief.

Candidacy

Candidacy is the first stage of formation to the religious life as a Sister of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. It is ordinarily not less than six months nor more than two years.

During this period of time you begin to participate in the life of the Congregation by living in a local community of Sisters and engaging in a Sister of Charity ministry.

Your on-going discernment continues with the Formation Director as together you discern your call to the Sisters of Charity.

Novitiate

Novitiate is the stage of Formation when you are helped to discern the integrity of your call to the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. The novitiate lasts for a two year period.

The first year is called the Canonical novitiate which further incorporates you into the Congregation. The purpose of this time is to learn more about religious life, prayer, church ministry, and theology, to deepen your connection to the Congregation's mission and enable you to develop an understanding of active apostolic religious life.

The second year of Novitiate is a time to develop an integrated life of full-time ministry, community and spirituality. It also provides preparation for the profession of first vows with the guidance of the Director of Formation.

Temporary Profession

Profession of first vows of poverty, chastity (consecrated celibacy) and obedience for a period of three to six years occurs at the end of the second year of Novitiate.

Temporary Profession is the stage of formation following first vows and allows you to deepen your life as a Sister of Charity fully living the charism and mission.

It provides a time of discernment to a lifelong commitment as a Sister of Charity.

Final Profession

Profession of final vows completes the initial formation period and welcomes you into full membership.

Throughout your professed life as a Sister you are challenged to remain open, listening to God's call to a daily conversion of heart and to a deeper life of union with God. Your continuing development includes apostolic, affective, intellectual, and aesthetic formation. Through all of this you strive to grow daily into what you are called to be, a woman of Charity.

...render yourselves worthy of the name you bear. – Saint Vincent de Paul