



Hospitaller Order of Saint John of God

Province of the Good Shepherd in North America



Frequently Asked Questions

The Hospitaller Order of St. John of God- Province of the Good Shepherd in North America

The Hospitaller Order of St. John of God is an Order of the Catholic Church. It draws its inspiration from the life, example and teaching of its founder – St. John of God. The basis of his life, example and teaching was a deep sense of hospitality which opened him to every person he met and moved him to do everything in his power to help them in their needs.

We devote ourselves as our mission, following the example of our Founder, to the sick and to those who are suffering. Our dedication to the suffering covers both health-care and welfare. We serve the sick, in general, and those suffering from mental illness. We have centers and programs for the developmentally disabled, the physically disabled, the elderly, the homeless, and those suffering from drug and alcohol dependency.

Answers to Some Questions Concerning Entrance into the Order

Do I need to be Roman Catholic?

Applicants joining must be practicing Roman Catholic.

Is there an age limit? Normally candidates are between 21 and 45 years of age.

What about education requirements?

Those joining must possess a high school diploma or equivalent and have the ability and willingness to undertake on-going education.

What if I have debt or financial obligations?

All persons joining the Order must be debt free.

What if I was married? Entrance into Novitiate requires a man be legally and canonically free of any marital obligation.

Is celibacy a requirement? We expect candidates to be on a path toward a mature self-understanding and sexual integration and to demonstrate a sense of

call that includes the ability to embrace a celibate life.

Does an addiction prevent me from joining?

A person's addiction is not necessarily a barrier in his exploring a vocation to the Order. If there is an addiction, we expect that the candidate give clear evidence of sustained sobriety for at least the previous two years and that he be actively engaged in some kind of support program.

When does training begin? Prospective candidates are required to join the community at least six months prior to commencement of the Novitiate program. Ordinarily, the Novitiate Program begins in August of each year.

Are their priest/brothers? The Order allows for ordained Brothers. Occasionally, a man joins the Order already ordained; others may eventually feel themselves called to Ordination. If so, the community joins together in discerning this call, a formal process that does not begin until

after profession of vows.

What clothes do I need? All persons joining the Order need to have an adequate supply of seasonal clothing suitable for both work and recreation. A dark suit and tie are a must.

What can I bring? As members of a religious community, we struggle at being a “Pilgrim People.” Therefore personal possessions should be “things necessary” for daily living. No personal televisions are permitted. The use of personal computers and tablets will not be permitted before the Apostolic year of Novitiate. Postulants and Novices may access internet/email on the local community public computer. Cell phones will not be provided before the Apostolic year.

What about health care needs? The Order provides for its members, but candidates should attend to medical and dental needs before entry. The Order does not provide psychological therapy to any

candidate or novice. During the initial affiliation period, a candidate is expected to provide his own health care coverage.

How am I cared for during retirement?

The Order provides for retirement needs. However, if a candidate has worked and contributed to a private or government pension plan (Social Security, Canada Pension, etc.) it is expected that this future income would be given to the order to contribute toward those needs.

What do I do with my personal possessions (car, real estate, etc.)? It is suggested that candidates do not dispose of these possessions but enrust them to a family member or friend until profession of first VOWS.

Personal Qualities

Certain qualities and skills are needed in order to live and work in our Order. Though it is not realistic to expect to see the following living skills fully evident in those desiring to join us, nor for that matter in the present members of the Order, we do nonetheless look for the capacity for those to develop.

Spiritual Life

A personal commitment to Jesus Christ

A devotion to the word of God in Scripture

A valuing of the sacramental life of the Church

An active responsiveness to the spiritual and social demands of the Gospel

An awareness of the need for on-going conversion

A sense of God's presence in the daily unfolding of one's life

A desire and willingness to pray both in community and alone with God

A love of Mary, Mother of God

Abilities Needed for Community Living

Evidence that one knows and accepts his abilities and limitations

The ability to live and function in moments of stress, challenge and silence

Evidence of one's ability to enter into open, honest and healthy relationship; the capacity to live intensely and generously with others

A comfortableness in relating to women

A proven sense of humor, the ability to sometimes laugh at self

An ability to live patiently and to persevere in the face of trial, tribulation and uncertainty

Evidence that one is in touch with his emotional life and is willing and able to develop his capacity for love, compassion, intimacy, trust and vulnerability

Gifts Needed for Ministry

Evidence of a stable and productive work history

An ability to learn and study

An ability and eagerness to be involved in challenging ministries

A lasting readiness to struggle with the ministry demands of hospitality

A willingness to face new and untried ministries

Flexibility of attitude, the ability to listen to others and to accept both praise and correction

An ability to work cooperatively and interdependently with others—both religious and lay

Good physical health and emotional well-being

A willingness to do humble tasks

An inclination and availability for new challenges

A readiness to enjoy rest and recreation



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