

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

AFFILIATE PROCESS

AFFILIATESHIP

FOCUS: INTEREST

A. Affiliate

An affiliate is a woman who has expressed interest in joining the Congregation and has been accepted as an affiliate.

B. Purpose

The purposes of the affiliateship are:

- 1. to provide opportunities for the interested woman to begin to know us as a Congregation and for us to know her, to ascertain her suitability for life as a Sister of St. Joseph of St. Augustine.**
- 2. And to assess her readiness for Postulancy.**

C. Process for becoming an affiliate:

After sufficient time for initial contact and acquaintance with the Community, if a woman desires to become an affiliate, she will have an interview with the Affiliate Director and complete the formal application.

The Affiliate Director will consider the application and, after consultation with the General Superior, will inform the applicant of the response in writing.

D. Program:

An affiliate will:

- 1. meet regularly with the designated affiliate director for vocational direction concerning prayer, personal growth, ministry, social life and relatedness to the community.**
- 2. grow spiritually through daily prayer, Eucharist, regular spiritual direction.**
- 3. continue to update herself in theology, spirituality and scripture through reading, workshops, classes, etc.**
- 4. if possible, collaborate in some apostolic activity of the community while continuing to participate in her parish**
- 5. receive psychological testing during this year so that she may gain self-knowledge and pursue the personal growth desired for community living.**
- 6. share with us in some informal times of relaxation, as well as in community celebrations and community prayer days.**
- 7. participate in community-sponsored events for affiliates.**
- 8. will continue to live independently.**

She continues the life of a single person professional and ordinarily does not reside in a SSJ Community.

The community, through the Affiliate Director, will:

- 1. invite her to activities specifically designed for affiliates**
- 2. invite her to participate in appropriate regional community days of celebration, assembly, prayers**
- 3. introduce her to the regional community**
- 4. facilitate visits with local communities**
- 5. provide her with appropriate congregational communications**
- 6. assist her through regular meetings to assess her affinity with us as a congregation and her readiness for postulancy**

VALUES IMPORTANT TO HOLD:

empowerment – assist affiliate to enter into discernment and SSJ values

justice and charity – both community and women in formation give and receive from one another

responsibility balanced with interdependence

FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR INITIAL FORMATION

It is understood that financial arrangements are made in dialogue with the appropriate formation staff and the Central Governance and clearly understood by all parties involved.

Financial resources are not criteria for admittance.

Affiliate Financial Commitment:

an affiliate will cover the costs of the steps required for entrance to postulancy including psychological tests, medical, eye, and dental examinations. (the congregation will bear half the cost of the psychological test.)

Community Financial Commitment:

the congregation finances the various activities that are normally sponsored for affiliates. Any additional programs or activities that an affiliate may choose to participate in will be financed by the affiliate.

Evaluation:

an affiliate and the affiliate director will evaluate:

- **how mutual expectations have been met**
- **her growth and readiness for postulancy**

Ordinarily, affiliateshship will be a minimum of 7 – 8 months and no longer than three years. If during [?] toward joining the community, affiliateshship will be terminated. When assessment reveals desire and readiness for postulancy, the affiliate will move into postulancy.

POLICY FOR ADMISSION TO THE COMMUNITY AS AN AFFILIATE:

In welcoming a woman our congregation, the Sisters of St. Joseph of St. Augustine, Florida recognize and acknowledge:

- **her response to God’s movement in her life**
- **her desire to minister among God’s people**
- **her willingness to live chastity, evangelical poverty and obedience in community**

We see such willingness as a desire coming from the special experience of being loved by God and of responding to that love by directing her life to ever fully living and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus.

A woman asking for admission to the Sisters of St. Joseph seeks to authenticate her desire for commitment in collaboration with the congregation. In this seeking, the congregation expects her to:

- **be willing to share her expectations and personal goals**
- **have a high school diploma and two years of further schooling or work experience**
- **have a basic knowledge of Catholicism**
- **be living singly and be free to make a commitment in community**
- **have sufficient health (physical, psychological and spiritual)**
- **live a vowed community life in ministry**
- **have a capacity to grow professionally and ministerially**
- **be attentive in developing her prayer life and be willing to pray in a group**
- **be realistic about a commitment to the Church and to the demands of evangelical witnessing**
- **be willing to be enriched by people of other races and cultures**