

Profession of Vows in The Order of Saint Luke¹

“Profession of Vows in The Order of Saint Luke” is excerpted from *The Book of Offices and Services of The Order of Saint Luke (4th edition)* © 1988, 1994, 2012 OSL Publications. It is posted on the Order of Saint Luke website for reflection by members and those who are considering membership in The Order of Saint Luke.

Profession of Vows may follow a brief Service of the Word² and be succeeded by a Service of Eucharist, or it may be placed in the context of one of the hours of prayer in the Daily Office. The presider is usually the abbot or chapter prior.

INTRODUCTION AND CHARGE

Dear friends in Jesus Christ:

Through our baptism, we are made into the one Body of Christ

Through renewal of the baptismal covenant,
we accept the call to service
and affirm those vows made at the time of our entrance
into this family we call the Church.

We come to affirm our commitment
to living out our baptism
through the Rule of Life and Service
of the Order of Saint Luke.

PRESENTATION AND BAPTISMAL RENEWAL

Brother/Sister N,³
are the persons (or “is the person”)
you present prepared by a commitment

¹ When used by the General Chapter in retreat or convocation, it should be noted that the service is the high point of our time together. Therefore, enough time should be allowed for it to unfold at its own pace. Persons who find it difficult to sit for an extended period of time are encouraged to stand or walk in the back of the chapel as need arises.

² At General Chapter, the service begins with a processional and a brief Service of the Word which may include an opening dialog, hymn, prayer of the day, scripture, and homily.

³ At meetings of the General Chapter, the presentation is made by the provincial general. In local chapters, the prior designates another member of the Order to make the presentation.

to Christ as Lord,
to join with other members of the Order
in seeking to serve God and the Church
through the Order of Saint Luke
by study, service, gifts and practice
in order to live the sacramental life,
seeking to incarnate the life of hope,
promised and fulfilled in Jesus Christ?

The presenter responds (persons standing when presented)

They are (*or He/She is*) so committed.
I present to you *these persons (or, in the case of one person, NAME)*
seeking to make a first profession to the Order of Saint Luke.

Name, name, name . . .

I present the professed members of the Order
making [*annual*⁴] renewal of their vows.

When appropriate,⁵ the following presentations are also made:

[I present those seeking to make lifelong profession to The Order.

[I present those who have taken lifelong vows in The Order.

I invite all other baptized persons present to stand with us.

The Presider asks the questions with all the baptized responding:

God has consecrated you with water and the Holy Spirit.
Acknowledging that our first calling is to be children of God
by adoption and grace, I now ask you:

Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil?

I do.

Do you renew your commitment to Jesus Christ,
putting your whole trust in Him?

I do.

The Presider addresses the whole community which responds

Will you do all in your power
to support one another in your life in Christ?

⁴ Annual renewal of vows ordinarily takes place in October, near to the Feast of Saint Luke on October 18. However, all members renew their vows in concert with new members at any profession service.

⁵ Ordinarily these presentations are made only at a meeting of the General Chapter.

By the strength and grace of God, we will.

+PRAYER OVER THE WATER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray:

Pour out your Holy Spirit,

and by this gift of water call to our remembrance

the grace declared to us in our baptism,

for You wash away our sins

and clothe us with righteousness throughout our lives,

that dying and rising with Christ

we may continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior,

who with You and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns forever.

Amen.

Water may be lifted up and allowed to fall back into the font, sprinkled over the congregation, or used in some other symbolic ways, as the presider says:

Remember your baptism and be thankful.

Amen!

PROFESSION OF VOWS

The presenter invites the candidates with these words:

If you are making your first profession, please come forward.

All members of the Order remain standing; others are seated.

The presider receives the vows on behalf of the community:

I ask you who are now making your first profession,

in the presence of,

and in concert with, your brothers and sisters

both here present and throughout the Order:

Do you affirm the Apostolic hope?

Candidates and members respond **I do.**

Do you live for the church of Jesus Christ?

I do.

Will you seek the Sacramental life?

I will.

Will you promote the corporate worship of the Church?

I will.

Do you accept the call to service
as put forth by the Rule of Life and Service
of The Order of Saint Luke?

I do.

Will you abide by the Rule of Life and Service of the Order
and indicate your commitment by study, service, gifts and practice?

I will.

*Those making first profession remain standing; all others are seated.
Each candidate making their first profession then kneels or sits.*

*The presider places hands on the head of each candidate, being joined by
other professed members, as all members raise their hands in blessing
and the following prayer is offered.*

Almighty God, send down your Holy Spirit upon *Name*
who this day accepts your call to service
as a member of this Order.

Uphold *him/her* by your power,
inspire *him/her* with your Word,
and sustain *him/her* with the means of grace
that *he/she* may faithfully discharge your calling;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*[If annual renewal of vows takes place at this service, the presider
addresses those who renewing their annual vows:]*

[Will the members of the Order making annual renewal of their vows
please come forward?

*[Those making annual renewal of their vows come forward to kneel
or sit as members of the Order raise their hands in blessing and the
following prayer is offered:]*

[Loving God, you abide with us in life and in death;
in joy and in sorrow.

We give thanks for the grace given to *Name*
who this day renews *his/her* vows to our Order.

Send down your Holy Spirit upon *him/her*.

Continue to uphold *him/her* by your power;
renew *him/her* in your Word,

and sustain *him/her* with the means of grace
that *he/she* may seek always your will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

[Lifelong Vows, ordinarily professed only at meetings of the General Chapter, are professed at this point; see the section below for Lifelong Vows.]

COLLECT FOR THE ORDER OF SAINT LUKE

The Holy One be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray:

**O Shepherd of us all,
who inspired your servant Saint Luke the Physician
to set forth in the gospel
the love and healing power of Jesus:**

**Grant, we ask you, your Spirit to the Order of Saint Luke,
that we may proclaim faithfully the Apostolic hope,
magnify the Sacraments,
and embody Christ's healing grace for all creation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

The service may continue with a celebration of the Holy Eucharist at the point of The Presentation of the Gifts, or conclude with a hymn, blessing and dismissal (given by the abbot or a former abbot if present). In any case the service concludes with the passing of the peace.

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Lifelong Vows (inserted in the service above before the collect for the Order of Saint Luke)

The Abbot⁶ continues:

My sisters and brothers in Christ,
we are gathered as a community
to witness the profession
of those who pray that the remainder of their lives
will be given to the living out of our Rule of Life and Service.

The Provincial General says:

Brother/Sister Abbot,
these come (*or “this person comes”*) to make a lifelong profession
of the Rule of Life and Service
and to declare their (*his/her*) devotion to the sacramental life.
God has called them (*her/him*) to a life of continual worship
and to the constant use of the means of grace.
They seek (*She/He seeks*) to consecrate their lives (*his/her life*)
to presenting the Incarnate God to the world
and to being instruments of healing in the Church
and to all the world.

Let those who desire the blessing of God and this community
come forward, namely *Br./Sr. Chosen Name*.⁷

As each name is read, let the candidate respond:
I am ready and willing.

The Abbot says:

You come before this community seeking our discernment
and affirmation of your call to the sacramental life.
You have made and renewed your vows
to be formed by living under the Rule of Life and Service.
I invite you now to tell us of your journey
that we may understand the call which you seek to answer.

Each candidate, in turn, may tell the story of his or her decision

⁶ Except in unusual circumstances, lifelong vows are made only at meetings of the General Chapter with the abbot presiding. The abbot may designate someone else to preside in his/her place.

⁷ Inquiry should be made in advance as to what name the candidate chooses to use in the Order, whether a given name or a new name.

*to make a life commitment to the Rule of Life and Service.
This may include telling ways they will seek to live out the Rule.
When all have finished, the Abbot addresses the candidates:*

You have renewed your baptismal covenant
and confirmed the vows of our Rule of Life and Service.
I ask you now,
in the presence of brothers and sisters here present
and in community with your sisters and brothers
throughout the Order:

While you have life and breath,
will you seek to live according to the vows
you have confirmed this day
with your brothers and sisters in the Order of Saint Luke?
With God's help, I will.

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons,
loving your neighbor as yourself?
With God's help, I will.

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people,
respect the dignity of every human being,
and be a faithful steward of all that God has given you?
With God's help, I will.

The Abbot addresses the community

Brothers and sisters in Christ,
you have heard the testimony and call
of these who come seeking our discernment and affirmation.
Is it your discernment that their call is truly of God?

The community responds:

That is our discernment.

Is it your will that we should affirm their call?

That is our will. Thanks be to God!

Each candidate then kneels or sits before the Abbot,

*placing a hand on a Bible,
and making the following vow,
as the life-vowed members of the Order raise their hands in blessing.*

I, *Chosen Name*, by the grace of God
consecrate myself to the service of God
by commitment to the sacramental life.
Therefore, I promise to live the Christian life
in The Order of Saint Luke
by observing its Rule of Life and Service
all the days of my life.
I trust in God alone for my strength.
May the grace of the Holy Spirit,
the example of the apostles,
and the bonds of this community always be my help.

The community responds

So may it be. Thanks be to God! Amen.

The abbot then blesses each new life-vowed member individually.

*When all have professed, the entire community gathers about them,
laying hands on them⁸ or raising their hands in blessing,
as the Abbot, holding both hands above them in blessing, prays:*

Loving God, you abide with us in life and in death,
in joy and in sorrow.
We give thanks for the grace given to *Br./Sr. Chosen Name(s)*
who this day have (*has*) made lifelong vows in our Order.
Send down your Holy Spirit upon them (*her/him*).
Continue to uphold them (*him/her*) by your power,
renew them (*her/him*) in your Word,
and sustain them (*him/her*) with the means of grace
that, throughout their lives (*her/his life*),
they (*he/she*) may keep these vows
to the honor and glory of Your Name,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

⁸ Br. Timothy Crouch gifted the Order with this rubric. It testifies to the support of the community for those taking life vows and signifies the way in which the Holy Spirit is mediated to us through the community. The presider (usually the abbot) raises hands in blessing, rather than sharing in the laying on of hands.

*The community is seated.
The service continues with the collect for the Order (see above).*