

What Is a Companion?

What Does a Companion Do?

A companion is just that! A seasoned member of the Order of Saint Luke who accompanies you as a seeker inquiring about who we are, what we do, and how we stay in love with God. A companion walks with you to see if the Order is a good fit. Companions are knowledgeable and wise in the ways, stories, and practices of the Order. If the relationship deepens from a *time of inquiry* to a *time of discernment*, your companion will guide you in testing your readiness for profession.

A companion's work is not to push you through a course of study, but to be a listener and prompter for you on a journey of self-discovery in relationship to the Order. As an Inquirer you have unique needs, understandings, and a sense of direction. Your companion has capacity to welcome you and to share, listen, and guide you. A companion does not assume the outcome of your exploration, except that the Holy Spirit will guide you.

What to expect:

- Initial Contact (a short time)—you may already be through this period
- the Time of Inquiry (a longer time)—this is when you'll meet and start to relate to your companion and to others in the Order. It may lead to the next period
- the Time of Final Discernment leading to first public profession (a few weeks up to a year in duration)

Where your companion lives: In some cases, your companion will live near you and be part of a chapter in your area. However, since we are a dispersed Order, your companion may be someone who lives in another state or even another country.

What do we ask of you in relation to your companion?

1. Get to know your companion as one who represents the Order to you and you to the Order.
2. Take the initiative to stay in touch with your companion. His/her role is to support you in *your exploration*. It is good to agree on a schedule of meeting face to face or via phone or ZOOM or some other digital platform.
3. Live the Rule of Life and Service and share your experience and questions with each other.



Now a brother in the Order, Wayne Perry, was one of the first to go through our Inquiry and Discernment process that started in August of 2018.

4. Aim toward mutual discernment of how the Spirit is calling you in relationship to the Order. Whether you are ready to move to the next stage or determine that your interest has waned and the Order is not for you, explore it with your companion.
5. When you reach a discernment your companion will guide you in next steps in collaboration with the Novitiate Team Leader and the Companion for Seekers, Inquirers and Discerners.

Suggested activities for Inquirers (consider all of them with your companion)

- Keeping a journal
- Praying the daily office regularly and reflecting on this discipline (sometimes with others in chapter / association or online group)
- Engage in formation by learning about the Order of Saint Luke
- Participating in the life of the Order in ways as available, including:
 - Local chapter or association meetings or retreats
 - Facebook group page for Inquirers and Probationary Members
 - General Chapter Retreat or Spring Council Meeting
 - Personal retreat at a monastery (this to aid in getting a deeper sense of religious life, even though it is not the Order of Saint Luke)
 - Regular Eucharist (Word and Table) and reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant in your local church
 - Reflection on your *calls to service* in the world



Service of Profession at a chapter meeting in Perkins Chapel at SMU.

If you have questions or concerns in the process of Inquiry or Final Discernment, contact Sr. Debbie Neill (debbie@saint-luke.net), Novitiate Team Leader.