

A Study Guide for Aspirants and Postulants Oriental Orthodox Order in the West

For Interested Individuals Wanting to Know More About the Order

1. Read through the Content and Sections found on the Order's Web pages.
2. Make a list of questions that come up for further inquiry. What more do you want to know? Be specific.
3. Contact one of the monks or friends of the Order nearest you with your questions, or for more information about the Order.
4. After a period of personal reflection and if you feel so led, submit a letter of intent to the abbots of the Order.

For Aspirants considering Postulancy

1. In consultation with the Novice Master, you will be given a mentor.
2. Read Cynthia Bourgeault's **Wisdom Way of Knowing** or another book from the Order's reading list that you and your mentor select.
3. Journal your response to your reading of this text.
4. Meet with your mentor in person or virtually and discuss your response to the book.
5. If possible, attend at least one of the Order's events.

For Postulants preparing to enter the Order

1. After discussions with your mentor and if you feel so led, attend the Order's annual gathering with the aim of entering postulancy.
2. A ceremony of commitment to postulancy begins the postulancy stage.
3. Read and prepare a personal rule from the Guidelines for a Rule of Life found on the Order's website..
4. Review your Rule with your mentor over several months. Note: this may even extend over several years.
5. Read the collection on Interiorized Monasticism found on the Order's website.
6. Study the series on Mystical Christianity available for download on the website.
7. Become familiar with the Pledge of a World Christian.
8. Begin a daily reading of the Psalms, from **Ancient Songs Sung Anew*** or some other Psalm translations, and from the sacred poetry found in the book of **Recitations*** as a form of Lectio Divina (spiritual reading). Establish a form of daily prayer and contemplative meditation using the models and guidance of the book of **Invocations***. Study the Liturgy for the Rite of Passage and the Consecration of Monks in the book of contemplative **Invocations***.
9. Choose a Gospel for reading and study: There are now more than four Gospel records of the life and teachings of Jesus. Choose one of the canonical Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John or the Gospel of Thomas, the Gospel of Mary Magdalene, and the Gospel of Philip in the **Luminous Gospels***. Read from this Gospel daily. Immerse yourself in the words and deeds of Jesus by knowing one of these books well.
10. We consider the readings above to be simply a beginning to give individuals a certain sense of the wisdom tradition and its relationship to the Order. For a more

comprehensive list of suggested readings for postulants and monks of the Order consult **A Bibliography for Wisdom Work** found on this site.

11. After appropriate discernment with your mentor and if you feel so led, submit your Rule of Life to the abbots at least one month prior to the Order's annual gathering.

12.. At the Order's annual gathering, you will be introduced to the Order by your mentor.

13. Upon approval by the abbots of the Order, you will be initiated as monk in a liturgy of consecration.

14. Monks are entitled to wear the Order's medallion and monk tunic.

Approved by the Abbots, January 2014