

# Flow Chart Explanation

## What is a Redemptorist Associate?

Redemptorist Associates are lay people, secular clergy, or other religious who together seek to align their lives with the Redemptorist Mission, while living out their ministry in independent lifestyles.

## Formation for Redemptorist Associates

There are 3 main components for this process: 1) Understanding spirituality especially from the Christian Tradition; 2) Redemptorist Spirituality that is a unique expression of a Christian Spirituality; and 3) discernment of discipleship that relates to an expression of spirituality.

### 1) Understanding the importance of spirituality for human development and maturity.

Christian Spirituality is a major world view that strives to understand the human condition.

It is based on being in relationship to God and Neighbor through Divine Love, made manifest in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ; brought to life through his ministry of healing and proclamation of the Reign of God; and fulfilled through the Paschal Mystery.

### 2) Redemptorist Spirituality is one dimension of Christianity!

1\* Christ the Redeemer is at the heart of this view. Through redemption, family members are restored to their rightful place.

2\* People who participate with God's family find purpose and desire for unity. They are able to see God as Father, Jesus as brother, and Mary & Joseph as parents. This familial bond is based on God's Love.

3\* In a particular way, family members are invited to take the Blessed Virgin Mary as their model and helper. She dedicated herself completely as a handmaid of the Lord to the person of her Son and to his work, and thus served the mystery of redemption. Indeed, she still serves it, as the perpetual help of God's people in Christ (cf Con. 32)

4\* The Good News that Jesus proclaimed centered on God's transforming love which saw the marginalized (wounded) and poor as being important. When people realize that they have been restored, it is only fitting that they want to be there for others in the same way. Redemptorist Spirituality is about building the family bond which restores people to God and one another.

5\* The founding of the congregation expresses a real-life story of those who followed the example of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, by preaching the word of God to the poor. They saw the importance of the marginalized and organized to meet their holistic needs. Those who professed vows became a sign of hope to those who were abandoned and wounded in the world. From those earliest years, the Redemptorists sought to animate the devotional lives of those who lived on the margin by empowering and equipping the laity to lead their neighbors in acts of prayer, devotion and service.

6\* Redemptorist Saints, Blessed, and Martyrs are examples of people who took this Spirituality and lived it in the world. Sharing their stories gives insights into the different generations of the Redemptorists who responded to the needs of their times and circumstances.

### 3) Personal discernment - (Done in a circle as Partners in Mission)

7\* People are called by their baptism to have a relationship with God and others. Prayer opens us to this connection to God. Communal prayer connects us to others in the kingdom.

8\* Discipleship is the process of following Jesus and finding the Christian Spirituality that becomes the expression of the Baptismal Promises and bears fruit in acts of Christian charity, reconciliation, and generosity.

9\* By understanding the Mission of the Redemptorists in the world and the Denver Province, people are able to see Christ the Redeemer at work through their charism and spirituality.

10\* Personal discernment with the help of the Holy Spirit is necessary for people to choose a type of Christian Spirituality. The life of St. Alphonsus in his discernment can help them reflect on their own dedication to a particular path. As the Doctor of Prayer, St. Alphonsus also offers models of meditation that assist in forming resolutions as fruits of prayerful discernment.

The 10\* core elements (that also appear in the flow chart) are important for completion of the initial formation. These topics can be expressed in a multitude of ways. Individual Redemptorists and circles of Partners in Mission are responsible for organizing the retreat and a minimum of 4 gathers in a circle to present these core elements. (Those that coordinate the

formation process are asked to share their programs with PIM library.) Saving the different formats and presentations will be helpful for future circles that might need some assistance in formulating their own programs. The present program defines the bare bones of what is required. Fleshing out the program needs to be attentive to the needs of the local or virtual circles and the cultural identity of our Partners in Mission. “Living Redemptorist Spirituality” is a good resource that can be used in the formation process. PIM for the North American Conference has made these booklets available to each province. Contact the Denver Province or Liguori Publication for these booklets.

Those who complete the initial formation will receive a certificate from the Denver Province that acknowledges their participation in understanding our spirituality and charism.

People can continue participating in the circle after completion of the course. Each person will discern when and whether they want to become a Redemptorist Associate. The responsibilities of the Redemptorist Associates have four elements:

- 1 Participation in a local or virtual circle.
- 2 Celebrating special C.Ss.R events.
- 3 Choosing some type of personal ministry that shows the Redeemer’s Love.
- 4 Desire to mature in C.Ss.R. Spirituality and Charism.

This dedication is for the quadrennium of the Denver Province. Renewal of the dedication would be conducted with each new quadrennium every 4 years.

The local or virtual circle will have a ritual service that celebrates a person’s decision to become a Redemptorist Associate. (Once again, if the local circle creates their own ritual celebration, please send a copy to the PIM library.) The circle also needs to send the names of the Redemptorist Associates to the Denver Province. They will be added to our registry on the provincial and conference level. They will then be able to receive our newsletters from the Redemptorist world, conference and province.

## **Participation in a Circle for PIM**

Circles are formed to sustain our Partners in Mission. It is not only for the Redemptorist Associate and Lay Missionaries of the Most Holy Redeemer but Redemptorists that want to share our Spirituality and Charism with non-professed. Redemptorist Associates are an integral part of a circle since they share their lives with the professed making real the Redeemer’s presence in the world.

Each circle needs to decide how often they would meet and what type of activities they plan on doing during their gatherings. The group is able to consult the PIM Library to utilize programs

that have been designed in the past that are helpful for ongoing formation. The group is also encouraged to create new approaches that benefit their circle. They can share what they develop with PIM Library, so others can benefit from their work.

Development of a formation program for Redemptorist Associates and development of a circle at the same time can be a challenge. This scenario will have to rely on a Redemptorist who is willing to take the initiative to build both programs at the same time. The Denver Province Working Group and PIM for the North American Conference are dedicated to helping them succeed. The PIM Library will have one section dedicated to this task. As formation programs and circles get built, there will be various models on how Redemptorists can succeed.

Circles that become established will have the task of offering new candidates the opportunity to begin a formation process to become Redemptorist Associates. The circle would become responsible for organizing the retreat and the 4 sessions concerning discernment. How often they would be able to do this depends on the circle's ability to invite new members and conduct the program.

The role of leadership in the circle can take on various forms. A person or group that takes on the leadership role must see the role as service to the circle. Leadership has 2 main tasks:

- 1) Support the members so they can mature in a C.Ss.R. Spirituality.
- 2) Look for ways to invite new candidates to be a part of the Redeemer's Mission.

The circle should be able to function as an individual group by meeting their needs but at the same time be aware that they are connected to a province, conference and world organization.

Circles can be formed by a local Redemptorist community or a virtual circle can be formed by a Redemptorist through the internet. Depending on what type of circle gets formed, there will be different approaches needed to make it work. Creativity and flexibility will be important. Either way, the participation in a local or virtual circle needs to figure out how formation of a Redemptorist Associate can be done.

There will be failures and successes in trying to make this work. Do not get discouraged! We need to remember that the initial Redemptorist community did not last. However, the desire to be faithful to God's call enabled the second attempt to flourish.