

Role of the Formator – commentary

August 2017

The term “formator” refers to those who are accompanying candidates in formation for the clothing or promise*.

While the formator is responsible for the members’ formation, they serve not as the sole authority or owner, but as servant. "You have but one Teacher and that is Christ. (Matthew 23:10)" They serve as part of the formation team, working in collaboration with the Formation Director, the Council, and especially the Holy Spirit.

The formator serves as an instrument of the Holy Spirit and helps the candidate learn how to apply the study material to their lives as a Carmelite. The materials and goals for each step in formation are laid out in the formation guidelines. The Council, with the Formation Director, directs the formation program.

Formation in Carmel looks to the soul and spirit, not just the intellect. Formation in Carmel concerns the human, Christian, and Carmelite development of the entire person. The formator is responsible for helping create the space in which each person feels comfortable sharing what they learned from the materials. They also ensure that necessary concepts, values, and attitudes are grasped and put into practice. They assist the class in discussion, in helping them understand what the vocation entails, and in encouraging them in developing the qualities needed to live it. The formator's job is about helping to integrate the wisdom from our Carmelite tradition into the daily lives of those participating in formation classes.

As time nears for discernments, the Council normally meets with each formator to ask about the candidates’ readiness for the Promise. This is not a breach of confidentiality, but part of the formators’ responsibility as members of the Formation Team.

**Persons leading whole-community studies or definitively professed members’ formation sessions are normally referred to as presenters, facilitators, or moderators.*