



What would YOU like to know about the option of religious life for women and men in our diocese?

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*We Invite You to Meet Some of the Religious Sisters
In Our Diocese*



There are two things I love most about being a woman religious. I love being part of a community of women who share a common charism for the mission and with whom I can pray, share friendship and support at times of joy and sorrow. I also love the freedom to be of service and to partner with other church members to bring Christ more fully present to many people. (Sister Virginia West, SND de N)

One of the greatest joys of my religious life is to experience the shared Christ-centeredness of each Sister's call to prayer, community and ministry and the uniqueness with which these calls are lived out. (Sister Florence Bryan, SSJ)

"What I love the most about having responded to Jesus deeper invitation to become a Missionary sister is the growing awareness that in loving and serving others I am loving and serving God." (Sister Teresa McElwee, SND de N)

"What I love most about being a Sister is to glorify God our Lord in everything and serve people for God's Love." (Sr. Tukuza Mpangara, OSB)

What do YOU Want to Know???

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Why Do Young Women Choose Religious Life Today?

Because God continues to call! The needs of this world's homeless, hungry, lonely, ignorant, and oppressed cry out for the presence of religious Sisters. Sisters are women who publicly profess vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience to God in the context of a life in religious community. They assist the mission of the Church in a wide variety of ministries. Their witness to the joy, beauty and viability of community living gives hope to the world in search of unity and reconciliation.

What Personal Qualities Are Needed to Become a Sister?

A great love for Jesus Christ and the life of the gospel! A good candidate shows a great desire to "give back" through service to God's people, a habit of prayer, an ability to live with others in community (or a willingness to learn), and a burning desire to spread the love of God!

What Are the Age and Health Requirements?

Women desiring to experience the life of a religious must be single (with a church annulment if divorced), 20 – 45 years of age (for most communities), with good physical, mental and emotional health.

Will I Be Able to Keep in Touch With Friends and Family?

Yes! The support and prayers of your loved ones will give you the courage and energy to continue to follow Christ wherever he calls you. Your care for them will speak to them of the love which God has for them.

What Are Some of the Joys and Struggles of Religious Life?

The Joys - Living totally for Jesus Christ with the support of a prayerful, caring community is the greatest joy for a religious woman. But her ministry, whatever the form of her of service with God's people, is an essential part of her loving relationship with the Lord. Scripture, spiritual direction, spiritual reading, and growth in prayer contribute to the joy she finds in her call. The people with whom she ministers in parishes, schools, health care, the arts, prison ministry, counseling, liturgical involvement, and peace and justice service bring her much joy! "The apostolate is inseparable from the path of transforming union!" (Sr. Rose Hoover, rc)

The Struggles - As women living in community with other women, brought together by the call of Jesus Christ, a Sister soon experiences the frustration of living with others who do not share the opinions and ways of doing things to which she has become accustomed. Opportunities to "die to self" abound as she strives to focus more closely on the needs of others than on her own needs. She will, from time to time, experience the pain of her sacrifice of marriage and family, the demands of community living, and material luxuries.

How Can I Find The "Right" Community / Order For Me?

Visit several religious communities, asking for the grace to find the community where your special gifts may be best used for God's honor and glory. Reading a national vocations magazine may be helpful in locating communities to visit. (Contact our Diocesan Vocation Office for a catalogue). Many times women read about so many communities that they begin to feel anxious. They begin to worry, "What if I don't find the "right" community and so fail to answer God's call?"

Read about the basic types of religious community (cloistered and apostolic) and then visit with several. Prayer for discernment and complete openness will be needed. This will help you to choose one community in which you feel a "kindred spirit."

At this point you will need to request acceptance as an Inquirer in order to come to know that community more fully. If accepted, you will begin a spiritual formation process, without a live-in experience. It will give you the information and experience you need to make a choice either for or against continuing in formation with that community.

What Are the Differences Between Cloistered and Apostolic Religious Communities?

Cloistered Sisters (Nuns) - Most cloistered women profess solemn vows and are called nuns. They profess vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience to God in the person of their superior. They pray in community throughout the day, as well as cherishing time spent in personal prayer. They are not “sent” outside their monastery, but serve within as artists, writers, gardeners, creators of vestments and altar breads, or special food products which are sold to maintain the monastery.

Cloistered Sisters may be spiritual directors, but they meet others from behind a grille which separates them from non-members. They do not leave the monastery grounds except in special circumstances (doctors, etc.). Cloistered Sisters profess solemn vows.

They are committed to praying for the needs of the world beyond the monastery grounds.

Apostolic Sisters - Women who are accepted as members of apostolic religious communities are called to bring their contemplative hearts into the world. They are willing to be “sent” wherever they are most needed and able to serve according to the talents which God has given them. They profess simple perpetual vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience and live in community. Daily Mass and daily prayer together, as well as time spent in personal prayer, are essential to the formation of a contemplative heart.

Most apostolic religious women live under a common roof with other members of their own community. A small number live with religious women of other communities, and some Sisters, for various reasons, have received permission from their communities to live alone. In each case, community is the style of their lives; they meet regularly with other members of their community to share their faith, their vision, their friendship, and their dreams!

What is the Process for Becoming a Sister?

Through the various stages of spiritual formation (Inquirer, Affiliate, Postulant, Novice, Initial Profession and Final Profession) a young woman comes to know and love the Sisters in her chosen community. She receives spiritual, scriptural, and theological instruction. She is offered assistance in prayer, and experiences the joys and struggles of community life.

Inquirer - A young woman who begins discernment prayer and the search for information about religious communities of women may be described as an Inquirer (Candidate/Associate). She is encouraged to speak to her pastor, spiritual director, and religious whom she knows about her questions and prayer. She attends retreats where discernment of vocational call is an emphasis whenever possible. She looks for materials which will give her a wider view of what is possible for her, and continues to pray each day to know God's will for her life.

Affiliate - When an Inquirer finds a community in which she feels a "kinship", she seeks to be accepted as an Affiliate (Candidate, Associate) so that she can begin a structured time of spiritual formation which will enable her to spend time with this community, getting to know the Sisters, their charism and ministries. She spends time with them in prayer, discussion, meals and recreation. She lives at home and continues with her career during this time. She has a director who helps her to know the community sisters and their "spirit." She meets regularly with her Director (or Contact Sister) who provides her with spiritual guidance, spiritual reading and opportunities to spend time with the Sisters.

Postulant - When an Affiliate desires to experience life in community, and is accepted as a Postulant (Associate/Candidate), she begins her life as a member of a local community, united with the sisters in every facet of their lives. She is not yet a Sister, but is fully engaged in testing her own ability to live community life and ministry with this community to which she feels called. She meets regularly with her director who assists her and guides her through this process. She begins study of scripture, theology and community history.

Novice - A Postulant may request permission to begin her novitiate when she feels ready to prepare for vows and life as a Sister living in community. Her first year is a year of spiritual studies and spiritually-based ministries. It resembles a long retreat in that sense. She begins an in-depth study of the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. She continues with her study of prayer, scripture, theology and the history of religious life. She prays, plays and ministers with the sisters, beginning to test herself as a member of this community.

In her second year of novitiate, a novice is given the opportunity to enter into several of the ministries of the community for shorter periods of time in a learning capacity, thereby expanding her own experiences of Church ministry. These ministry periods are balanced by theological reflection on her growth as a minister and their effect on her life of prayer and community living. She continues her preparation for profession of vows, her spiritual direction, and study of scripture.

Profession of Vows - At the close of her second year as a novice, she may request permission to profess vows of chastity, poverty and obedience in her community for a temporary period of time. When both she and the community feel she is called by God to continue her life as a religious, she may be accepted for Final Vows.

Who Should I Talk With About My Vocation Discernment?

Start with your closest friends whom you think will be open to understanding your desires for union with God and service for and with others. Talk with your parents, your pastor, and the vocation director of the communities in whom you are interested. Contact the Vocation Office of the Diocese of Orlando: kpower@orlandodiocese.org or 407-245-4875. Check out the diocesan web page: www.orlandodiocese.org.



Visit a Cloistered Community



Monastery of the Visitation “Maryfield”

Live + Jesus...Is God calling you to a cloistered/contemplative religious life of prayer? Please direct inquiries to: 770-972-1060 or to the Sisters of the Visitation of Most Holy Mary, 2055 Ridgedale Drive, Snellville, GA 30078-2443.

Order of the Visitation of Most Holy Mary, celebrating 400 years of foundation (1610-2010, Founder: St. Francis de Sales, Bishop and doctor of the church, St. Jane de Chantal – wife, mother, widow, religious.

Pictured: Visitation nun Sister Mary Jane Frances Williams was officially named the mother superior at the Monastery of the Visitation, Snellville, May 9, 2008. Mother is a title quite familiar to Sister Jane Frances. Prior to entering the cloistered monastery, she was married for nearly 42 years before her husband died, gave birth to nine children, and she has 29 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. (Photo by Michael Alexander). Courtesy of <http://www.georgiabulletin.org/local/2008/06/05/superior/>

Representation of Women Religious in the Diocese

Abbreviation and Name of Congregation

Adrian Dominican Sisters (O.P.)
Benedictine Sisters of Pontifical Jurisdiction (O.S.B.)
Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity (O.S.F.)
Immaculate Heart of Mary Reparatrix-Ggogponya (I.H.M.R.)
Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic (M.M.)
Mission Catechist Sisters (M.C.S.)
Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart (M.H.S.H.)
Missionary Sisters of the Incarnation Consecration Mission (I.C.M.)
Order of St. Clare (O.S.C.)
Presentation Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary (P.B.V.M.)
Religious Teachers Filippini (M.P.F.)
Servants of Mary (O.S.M.)
Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters (O.P.)
Sisters for Christian Community (S.F.C.C.)
Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, Ohio (S.C.)
Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (B.V.M.)
Sisters of Christian Charity (S.C.C.)
Sisters of Divine Providence (C.D.P.)
Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross (S.L.)
Sisters of Mercy From Ireland (R.S.M.)
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas (R.S.M.)
Sisters of Notre Dame (S.N.D.)
Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (S.N.D.de N.)
Sisters of St. Dominic of St. Catherine de Ricci (O.P.)
Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia (O.S.F.)
Sisters of St. Francis of the Holy Family (O.S.F.)
Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet (C.S.J.)
Sisters of St. Joseph of Chambery (C.S.J.)
Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace (C.S.J.P.)
Sisters of St. Joseph of St. Augustine, Florida (S.S.J.)
Sisters of the Good Shepherd (R.G.S.)
Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary (S.N.J.N.)
Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (I.H.M.)
Ursuline Nuns (O.S.U.)

We Invite You to Meet Some of the Religious Priests In Our Diocese



“Life in a religious order is about *intent*. The priests and brothers in my community *choose* to live, pray, work, and play together as a gospel witness to the world of commitment to God, the Church, and each other. The support I receive from my brothers enhances my ability to live out my vocation as a Franciscan priest and teaches me about the selfless love of Christ upon the cross.” (Fr. David Kaczmarek, TOR)

“As a member of a missionary order, I enjoy being part of a worldwide family of men committed to preaching the good news. From Tanzania to Guatemala to Orlando, the Precious Blood missionaries, although greatly diverse, are still one brotherhood.” (Fr. Ben Berinti, C.Pp.S.)

“September 15, 2007 our founder, Father Basil Moreau, was beatified. His vision continues in apostolates in academia, parish ministry and the missions. I am bonded with these religious in our common call to live the mission of service.” (Fr. Robert Brennan, CSC)

What Would YOU Like to Know???

Personal Qualities Needed in a Religious Priest

Age and Health Requirements

Maintaining Bonds with Family and Friends

Differences between Diocesan and Religious Order Priests

Cloistered and Monastic Religious Orders of Men

The Process for Becoming a Religious Priest

Who to Talk to About Your Vocation

What Are the Personal Qualities Needed to Live as a Religious Priest?

A heart full of love and a deep need to make a difference in the world through service! A man called to serve God as a member of a religious community has the capacity to live in community with others who share the same dream. He is able, gradually, to learn to live the life of the vows: chaste love (chastity), simplicity and non-possessiveness (poverty,) and accountability (obedience to God and his elected superiors.) The spiritual vision of the founder of his community (ex: St. Ignatius Loyola for the Jesuits) speaks to him of a particular way to live a gospel-centered life. He is open to the call to mission and willing to be sent where he is most needed.

Do Communities Have Age and Health Requirements for Candidates?

Religious communities have varying age guidelines, but generally speaking membership is open to men 18 – 50. Men who wish to live in religious community must be single (with a church annulment if divorced), with good physical, mental and emotional health.

Will I Be Permitted to Maintain my Friendships and Family Bonds if I Enter a Religious Community?

Certainly! These are often the very relationships which have supported your vocation. They deserve the best you can offer them. The healthy balance between community commitments and family ties is something that new members in a community struggle to forge and maintain throughout their lives as religious.

What are the Differences between Religious Order Priests and Diocesan Priests?

Religious Order Priests - Priests who are members of a religious order are community men. They choose to live out their lives within the structure of the vows and community life, while pursuing a ministry of loving service which flows out of the particular charism of their community (care for the poor, healing, education, media, foreign missions, etc.). As community members they elect their superiors who then send them to

missions where they are best suited and most needed. Many religious communities have an option for missions world-wide.

Religious priests celebrate the Mass and administer the sacraments. Their daily Mass and prayer in community support their call to religious life and their total commitment to the service of the gospel.

Diocesan Priests - Diocesan priests are ordained for ministry in a particular diocese, with accountability to the Bishop of that diocese. They are men of prayer, obedient to their bishop. Their ministries are dictated by the call of their Bishop and the needs of their diocese. The vast majority of diocesan priests serve as parish priests, which encompasses hospital visitation, family counseling, youth activities, and parish organization. At the heart of their commitment to Christ is the celebration of daily Mass and administration of the sacraments.

Diocesan priests do not ordinarily live in community situations and must be capable of living on their own. This vocation is demanding since there is no community with which to pray, outside the celebration of Mass and sacraments, unless the priests form one for this purpose. Often a priest will say, "My parish is my community." Diocesan priests are encouraged by their Bishops to form strong relationships with their brother priests for prayer, sharing, support, and relaxation.

Are There Monastic and Cloistered Religious Communities for Men Who Feel Drawn to Priesthood?

Monks are laymen who are called to live in monastic (enclosed) communities. They are community members in a religious community dedicated to a particular style of spirituality (ex: Benedictine, Trappist). A man is accepted into a monastery for life. No matter how many times he may be sent out briefly, his initial monastery will always be his home.

A monastery schedule includes more hours of silence and community prayer than are commonly found in apostolic communities. The hours of ministry are wrapped around the firm monastic schedule of prayer, silence, work, meals, relaxation, and rest. There exists a variety of monastic styles, some quite strict, others less so. A small number of monks are ordained to priesthood to serve their communities.

What Is the Process for Becoming a Priest in a Religious Order?

Inquirer - Faithful prayer, rooted in complete openness to God's will, is the starting point of a man's discernment. Seeking information about religious communities may take him to vocation periodicals, the web, friends, and family. But the most reliable source will be religious men with whom he can discuss his hopes and anxieties. If no religious priests live

in his area, phone conversations and email can be very helpful for information-gathering at this point.

When the Inquirer finds a community spirit / charism with which he feels a connection, he asks to visit and pray with the members as frequently as possible. When the time is right, and the community vocation director encourages him, he may ask for acceptance into the spiritual formation program.

Candidate - During this period of one or two years, he may live in a local community, praying and ministering with the members, and receiving spiritual direction, and learning the history of the community.

Novice - The novice immerses himself in the spiritual traditions of his chosen community. He studies theology, philosophy, prayer, religious life, and community history and traditions. He continues spiritual direction and participates in community ministries.

Profession of Vows - At the close of his one / two year novitiate, a novice may request permission to profess vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. These vows expire at the close of one year, and must be renewed if the man wishes to retain his membership in the community. At the close of the period of initial profession, he may profess his perpetual vows in the community.

Ordination - A religious priest is ordained according to the tradition of his community. He may minister in a parish at the request of a Bishop, or in any of a wide variety of missions which lie within the context of his community mission / charism (education, justice work, etc.)

Who Should I Talk With About My Interest in Becoming a Religious Order Priest?

Start with your closest friends whom you think will be open to understanding your desires for union with God and service for others. Talk with your parents, your pastor, and the vocation director of the communities in whom you are interested. Contact the Vocation Office of the Diocese of Orlando:
kpower@orlandodiocese.org or 407-245-4875. Check out the diocesan web page: www.orlandodiocese.org.

We Invite You to Meet Some of the Religious Brothers In Our Diocese



“ I joined my community of Brothers because I wanted to live in a community of like-minded people who share the same spirit – the charism of our founder.” (Brother Augustine Lowe, CP)

“What I love about being a Brother is the opportunity to serve the Church and the people of God. As a Brother, I’m not held down to one thing, but I’m available for many roles of service.” (Brother Gerard Despathy, FPM)

For the past 32 years, my life as a Brother has been enriched by the people I’ve met and worked with. As a Brother, I believe God has stretched me to try and accomplish things I would never have attempted otherwise. Working with students in our Catholic schools today gives me hope for the future of the Church.” (Brother Peter Zawot, CFC)

What Would YOU Like to Know???

- [Why Some Men Choose to Become Religious Brothers](#)
- [The Difference Between a Religious Brother and a Priest](#)
- [Personal Qualities Needed in a Religious Brother](#)
- [Age and Health Requirements](#)
- [Maintaining Bonds with Family and Friends](#)
- [Cloistered and Monastic Religious Orders of Men](#)
- [The Process for Becoming a Religious Brother](#)
- [Who to Talk To About Your Vocation](#)

What is a Religious Brother and Why Do Some Men Feel Called to this Vocation?

A Brother is a man committed to living the Consecrated Life in response to a call from God. As a male religious, he is a lay Christian committed to Christ and the Christian community through vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. He becomes a member of a religious brotherhood with elected leadership, based on a particular spirituality (ex: Passionist, Redemptorist, LaSalette). The promise of

a community prayer life and extensive opportunities for a wide variety of ministries encourage acceptance of this call.

What are the Differences between a Religious Priest and a Religious Brother?

Religious priests and religious brothers share much as members of a religious community. Both live a community life and share in the spirituality of their founder.

Religious priests are called to the celebration of Mass, the administration of the other sacraments, and often the administration of a parish. Religious Brothers are called to other ministries: care of the sick and poor, education, health care, journalism, fine arts, and justice works. A brother may profess perpetual vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, but will not choose to be ordained.

What Personal Qualities are Needed in a Religious Brother?

A love for God and a dedication to the life of the gospel! A Brother is a person of truth and zeal. He sincerely wishes to minister with others as “servant.” He is attracted to a life in a prayerful community and sincerely loves others in faith. He is able to channel his natural desires for family and children into a loving service, and finds his greatest fulfillment there.

Do Communities Have Guidelines about Age and Health for Acceptance as a Brother?

Yes, they do. The best way to become familiar with these guidelines is to write, email or call the communities in whom you are interested. These guidelines vary widely from one community to another.

Is a Brother Encouraged to Maintain His Bonds With Family and Friends?

Definitely! Some changes will certainly take place, as his commitment to his community deepens and his time for sharing with family and friends may become shortened, but a Brother’s family becomes part of the larger family of the community, thus enriching the lives of his family and the community itself.

Are there Brothers Who Live a Monastic or Cloistered Life in Community?

Yes, there are. Benedictine Brothers, for example, live a monastic lifestyle. They remain members of their original monastery for their lifetimes. Their daily schedule is a monastic one, with ministry fitted into the schedule for community prayer. Silence plays a greater part in their lives than in an apostolic Brother’s life (ex: Presentation Brother).

Some Brothers are monks (Trappists) who live an enclosed lifestyle. They do not leave the monastery grounds except in special circumstances. Their work, prayer, and recreation occur on their monastery grounds. They may produce crops, food products (cheese, bread, wine) or make altar breads or vestments to support the community.

What is the Process for Becoming a Religious Brother?

The spiritual formation process for a man who is called to serve as a Religious Brother has several stages and may last 3 - 9 years.

Inquirer- Faithful prayer, rooted in complete openness to God's will, is the starting point of a man's discernment. Seeking information about religious communities may take him to vocation periodicals, the web, friends, and family. But the most reliable source will be religious Brothers with whom he can discuss his hopes and anxieties. If no religious Brothers live in his area, phone conversations and email can be very helpful for information-gathering at this point.

When the Inquirer finds one community's spirit / charism with which he feels a connection, he asks to visit and pray with the members as frequently as possible. When the time is right, and the community vocation director encourages him, he may ask for acceptance into the spiritual formation program.

Candidate - During one / two years as a Candidate, a man may live in a local community, praying, ministering with the members, receiving spiritual direction, learning the history of the community, and learning to enjoy being a community member.

Novice- The novice immerses himself in the spiritual traditions of his chosen community. He studies theology, philosophy, prayer, religious life, and community history and traditions. He continues spiritual direction and participates in community ministries.

Profession of Vows - At the close of his one / two year novitiate, a novice may request permission to profess vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. These vows expire at the close of one year, and must be renewed if the man wishes to retain his membership in the community. At the close of the period of initial profession, a Brother may profess his perpetual vows in the community.

Who Should I Talk With About My Interest in Becoming a Religious Brother?

Start with your closest friends whom you think will be open to understanding your desires for union with God and service for others. Talk with your parents, your pastor, and the vocation director of the communities in which you are interested.

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Religious Communities of Men Represented in the Diocese of Orlando

Abbreviation and Name of Congregation

BROTHERS

Augustinian Monks of the Primitive Observance (OS.S.A.)
Congregation of Christian Brothers(C.F.C.)
Congregation of Holy Cross (C.S.C.)
Passionist (C.P.)
Presentation Brothers (F.P.M.)
Redemptorists (C.SS.R.)

PRIESTS

Augustinian Priests (O.S.A.)
Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament (S.S.S.)
Congregation of the Holy Cross (C.S.C.)
Congregation of the Passion (C.P.)
Discalced Carmelites (O.C.D.)
Missionaries of Our Lady of LaSalette (M.S.)
Missionaries of St. Charles (C.S.)
Missionhurst Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (C.I.C.M.)
Most Holy Trinity Fathers (O.S.S.T.)
Order of St. Benedict (O.S.B.)
Pauline Fathers (O.S.P.P.E.)
Redemptorist Fathers (C.Ss.R.)
Saint Joseph Society of the Sacred Heart (S.S.J.)
Scalabrinian Missionaries (C.S.)
Society of Jesus (S.J.)
Society of the Divine Savior (S.D.S.)
Society of the Divine Word (S.V.D.)
Society of the Precious Blood (C.P.P.S.)
Third Order Regular of St. Francis (T.O.R.)

Upcoming Retreats

“Sisters: A Life of Love” A Discernment Retreat for Women 18 – 35 yrs. Friday, July 10 - Saturday, July 11, 2009

Are you thinking about religious life? The Sisters of St. Joseph have planned a retreat for single, Catholic women (18 - 35 yrs.) who would like to experience the Sisters' lives and participate in their lives of prayer, community, and service.



Retreat will include Mass, community prayer, and sharing with Sisters about the joys and difficulties of their lives as religious women. There will be time for personal prayer, questions and answers, mealtime conversations and individual spiritual direction.

This retreat will be held in St. Augustine on Friday, July 10 - Saturday, July 11, 2009 at St. Joseph Convent, the SSJ Motherhouse. Arrival is at 4:45 pm. Evening Prayer at the Motherhouse is at 5pm. Retreat closes at 3 pm on Saturday. The cost is \$10, which includes dinner, breakfast, lunch and overnight accommodations at the convent.



To register, please contact Sr. Kathleen Power, SSJ at ssjflvocations@bellsouth.net or call 407-246-4928 or 904-610-9228
Visit our website: www.ssjfl.org