FAQ about being an Associate of the Order of the Ascension

**Q:** I’m a lay person. I primarily participate in my parish by attending the Sunday Eucharist and joining in the coffee hour after. I say Morning Prayer on my own each day. My baptismal ministry is not expressed through the parish. I avoid serving on committees or helping with parish projects. I understand my Christian apostolate as being in my daily life – at work, in civic life, and with friends and family. Does that fit being an Associate?

**A:** Absolutely.

Verna J. Dozier wrote - *The lay person's primary function is out there in the world. There is a problem when the church becomes the primary focus of their lives. I can remember that when I was most unhappy on my job, I was most active in the church*.

Dorothy Sayers wrote - *The official Church wastes time and energy, and, moreover, commits sacrilege, in demanding secular workers should neglect their proper vocations in order to do Christian work. – by which (the Church) means ecclesiastical work. …The only Christian work is good work well done.* And Archbishop

William Temple said *- Nine-tenths of the work of the Church in the world is done by Christian people fulfilling responsibilities and performing tasks which in themselves are not part of the official system of the Church at all.*

Many Christians understand their vocation to be primarily in their daily secular life while also on occasion offering some time to a parish project. And a minority see their vocation largely as being in and through their parish.

**Q:** I’m not participating in a traditional parish church at the moment (it’s a military chaplaincy chapel or a prison chapel or an emergent church not connected with a parish church). Can I become an Associate?

**A:** Yes. Our focus is on the parish church because that’s the form of common life that the overwhelming majority of people participate in. However, most of our work will apply to other forms of congregational life.

**Q:** I already engage in all the practices called for in the Associate’s Rule. And I’ve recently read *Seeking God*. Do I need to wait for the four months before becoming an Associate?

**A:** No, you don’t. There are a significant number of people who already live a Rule that matches the Associate Rule. And many people have read de Waal’s book in a Church Development Institute program or on their own. If that’s true for you please send a message to the Coordinator of Associates that you want to be admitted.

**Q:** I’m an associate with another religious community or order. Can I also be an Associate with OA?

**A:** Yes. We suggest you consider whether you see your vocation as adequately aligned with both OA and the other community. We’d also urge you to consider the danger of overloading your life with more to do. You may also want to assure yourself that the other community sees things in the same way. Finally, do a self-check to be sure that you’re not engaging in “religious groupie” behavior – just wanting to be involved with many things religious.