

ST JOSEPH'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY
RITE OF PERPETUAL OATH

1. Calling of the Candidates

Candidates stand
in front before the
altar

After the Gospel all sit.

The deacon calls the candidates for Perpetual Membership by name.

*Each answers **I am present**, and comes forward to stand in the front.*

2. Presentation of the Candidates

The Rector addresses the presider in these or similar words:

Dear Father, I have the joy of presenting to you these candidates for Perpetual Membership in our Society. After consultation with our members in their home areas and in this house, as well as their fellow students, they have been accepted by the Formation Staff and the General Council.

The presider then asks them in these or similar words:

Dear brothers, what do you ask of God and of His Holy Church?

The candidates reply together:

We ask for perseverance in God's service all the days of our lives as full members of St Joseph's Missionary Society.

*All answer: **Thanks be to God.***

3. Homily

Candidates sit

All sit.

4. Interrogation

Presider stands

Candidates stand

After the homily those to take the Perpetual Oath stand, and the presider questions them on their readiness to dedicate themselves for life as missionaries of St Joseph's Society.

Brothers, have you carefully studied the Constitutions of St Joseph's Missionary Society?

We have carefully studied them and we have understood them.

Is it your desire to become Perpetual Members of this Society and to persevere in it until death?

Such, by the grace of God, is our desire.

Do you desire to take the Perpetual Oath in this Society which will give stability to your commitment and put you at the total service of God for His people?

Such is our desire. We ask to be allowed to take the Perpetual Oath now, and thus to bind ourselves permanently to the service of God in the Apostolic life.

May God who has begun the good work in you bring it to fulfilment before the day of Christ Jesus.

All: Amen.

5. Prayer for God's Grace

The presider then prays for God's help, saying:

Let us pray.

Father in heaven,
source of all holiness,
creator of the human race,
your love for us is so great
that you gave us a share in your own divine life.

You sent your Son, Jesus Christ,
as our pattern of holiness and self-giving.
He became poor to make us rich,
a slave to set us free.

The voice of the Spirit
has drawn countless numbers of your children
to follow in the footsteps of your Son.
They leave all things
to be one with you in the bonds of love
and give themselves wholly to your service
and the service of all your people.

Look with favour then
on these who have heard your call.

Send them the spirit of holiness;
help them to fulfil in faith
what you have enabled them to promise in joy.

Keep always before their eyes Christ, the Good Shepherd.

May they build up the Church
by the holiness of their lives,
advance the salvation of the world,
and stand as a sign of the blessings that are to come.

Lord, protect and guide these servants of yours.
At the judgment seat of your Son be yourself their just reward.
Made perfect in your love,
may they rejoice in the communion of your saints
and praise you for ever in their company.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

6. Recitation of Perpetual Oath

After the prayer, the candidates kneel and recite, each individually, the formula of the Perpetual Oath.

Candidates kneel

I _____ from the Diocese of _____,
in the presence of the Most Blessed Trinity,
of Mary, the Virgin Mother of God,
of Saint Joseph, our Patron and all the Saints,
publicly declare before you, father, and this community,
that it is my sincere desire to follow Christ as a Missionary.
I solemnly consecrate myself under oath for life
to this Apostolic work
as a member of St Joseph's Missionary Society.
I also promise obedience to the General Superior
in accordance with the Constitutions of the Society.

Each comes forward, and placing his hands on the book of the Gospels, says:

Presider sits

Candidates stand,
come forward and
kneel in front of
the Presider

So help me God and these his holy Gospels.

After this they all recite together:

**We shall try to be like Christ,
messengers of the Good News,
and to spread the kindness and love
of God our Saviour.
We are ready to leave our home countries
and give up the security of bonds
with our families and friends.
We shall endeavour to become men of prayer,
and become ever more familiar
with the life and teaching of Christ,
and to live a total availability
to the communities to which we are sent.
We trust with the help of God's grace,
to be able to carry out our resolve
and ask all here present,
and all the members of St Joseph's Missionary Society,
for their prayers and moral support.**

7. Acceptance of the Oath by the Presider

The presider now says in these or similar words:

All stand

I now with great joy accept and welcome you
as full members of St Joseph's Missionary Society
to share with us our missionary task of loving service.
We, for our part, promise to support and assist you in your life-
long commitment to the furtherance
of the Kingdom of love and your own sanctification.
Pray with us that we all remain faithful to our missionary
commitment without looking back or counting the cost.

8. Blessing and Presentation of the Mission Crosses and Red Sashes

The presider blesses the Mission Crosses and Red Sashes and presents them to each of the candidates, saying:

Accept the Crucifix of our Lord Jesus Christ,
wear it always upon your heart,
and bear it with you into whatever lands you may be sent,
to be your strength and protection,
your consolation and salvation,
in life and in death.

Receive this Red Sash,
as an outward sign of your membership
of our Missionary Society.
May it be a sign of your own burning love for God and his
people and of your readiness to shed your blood,
like Christ, for the sake of God's Kingdom.

9. Signing of the Oath

The candidates now proceed to the altar for the signing of the Oath. After this they all return to their places in the chapel. The Liturgy continues with the Bidding Prayers.