



"To Jesus through Mary"



SODALITY UNION ADW

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION (FAQS)

1. Does Sodality Union have a website, and if so, what will I find there?

Yes, it is available at www.SodalityUnionADW.org. The website includes an electronic version of this Sodality Union Manual; the date, time and location of each upcoming General Meeting; forms such as Request for a Sodality Union Representative; and much more. See Consent to Publish and Consent Form—Request to Post Information on Sodality Union Website.

2. What are the procedures for my parish Sodality to join Sodality Union and what are the benefits of membership?

Parishes wishing to become members of the Sodality Union begin the process by completing the Parish Sodality Application for Sodality Union Membership (*see* Addendum-17.) and submitting it to the Moderator of the Sodality Union. The Moderator, with the assistance of the Executive Board, as needed, reviews the Application and supporting documents for conformity with Sodality Union's procedures. Assistance, if needed, will be provided to bring the documents into compliance with Sodality Union's requirements. When all requirements are met, approval for membership in the Sodality Union will be granted by the Moderator. *See* Article IV—Membership.

Parish Sodalities derive many benefits from membership in the Sodality Union. Member Sodalities are provided the Sodality Union's Manual which contains a detailed explanation of procedures for the administration of parish Sodalities. Members are kept informed of Marian Archdiocese events, and events of other entities germane to Sodality, through attendance at the Monthly General Meetings and mailings. All members of the Sodality Union are eligible and encouraged to attend the monthly meetings and the yearly Orientation.

3. What is the Sodality Union Orientation and who can attend?

An Orientation Meeting is held by the Sodality Union each *September*. The objective of Sodality Union is to provide a central organization by which parish Sodalities can work in unison to promote individual Spiritual growth and an increased devotion to the Blessed Mother by working for God, the Church and the Community. The Orientation Meeting provides affiliated parish Sodality officers and committee chairs a centralized organizational format—position descriptions, rules/regulations, parliamentary procedures, methods, references/resources, etc.—which may be used to structure their individual parish Sodality. Orientation is an opportunity for parish Sodalities to ask questions, and to share ideas, information and suggestions. All parish Sodalists are invited to attend Orientation.

Newly elected Prefects are asked to provide their contact information at the Orientation in order that parish Prefects may receive the President's monthly letter and other information, which may then be shared with her/his parish Sodalists. *See* Parish Prefect Contact Information, at Addendum-20.

4. What is the Annual Day of Commitment?

Commitment Day occurs annually on the first Saturday of *October*. It is the day when Sodalists from across The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington join together to celebrate and renew their commitment to being a Sodalist. The Sodality Union sponsors a Mass in which Sodalists from all parishes are invited. At the beginning of Mass all Sodalists process into the sanctuary with a flower that

they place before a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. During or at the conclusion of the Mass, Sodalists recite the same Act of Commitment that they made at the time they first became a member. After Mass, the Rosary is offered by all. Sodalists traditionally wear white for this occasion in honor of the Blessed Mother. There is no General meeting held on this particular first Saturday as it is a day for celebration of the Blessed Mother and the Sodality Way of Life.

5. Why does the Book of Deceased Sodalists need to be updated each year before it is presented at the November Sodality Union Mass?

The Book of Deceased Sodalists, presented before the Altar annually at *November* Sodality Union Mass, is updated each year in order to include and honor in prayer the memory of Sodalists who have passed since November of the prior year. Parish Prefects shall provide this information to the Sodality Union's Apostolic Life Committee Chair by mid-October.

6. What is the Book of the Living presented at the Sodality Union Mass each December?

The Book of the Living includes a roster of current members of the affiliated parish Sodalities to bring in prayer before the Altar all current Sodalists at the Sodality Union Mass each *December*. Parish Prefects shall provide this information to the Sodality Union's Spiritual Life Chair by mid-November.

7. How do I join a Sodality Union Committee?

If a Sodalist is interested in joining a Sodality Union Committee, she/he should express their interest to the President. The President will have the Sodalist speak with the Committee Chair to obtain an understanding of the Committee's objectives, programs, and requirements. After prayer and an understanding of the requirements and commitments of time and energy, the Sodalist will advise the Committee Chair of their commitment to be a member of the Sodality Union Committee. All active Sodalists are eligible to be members of the Sodality Union Committees, excluding the Nominating Committee, which is limited to the parish Prefects or alternate, and the Audit Committee, which is limited to the appointed persons as stated in Article VII – Finances, Section 16.

8. How do I invite a Sodality Union representative to my parish Sodality event?

If your parish Sodality is interested in inviting a Sodality Union representative to attend one of your events, please complete the Request for a Sodality Union Representative form. *See* Addendum-21. The form requests information about your Sodality, the event, the date of your event and the topic of discussion the Sodality Union representative is invited to address.

9. What is involved in hosting a Sodality Union General Meeting?

Beginning each Sodality year and at each meeting, the Sodality Union Program Coordinator will announce available dates for Sodality parishes to volunteer hosting a Sodality Union meeting. The meetings are held on the first Saturday of each month from September through June; no meeting is held in October or January. The Sodality parish representative, typically the Prefect, will volunteer for a specific date to host a Sodality Union meeting for approximately 100-125 Sodalists, pending discussion and confirmation with their Sodality Moderator and parish Pastor. More than one parish can co-host a Sodality Union meeting.

The Sodality parish Prefect shall:

- Meet with their pastor and Sodality Moderator to authorize hosting the Sodality Union Mass and meeting for a specific month.
- Confirm Mass celebrant and liturgy for the specific date.
- Contact the Sodality Union Program Coordinator and confirm the month and time the Sodality will host the meeting.

The Sodality Union Program Coordinator will contact the Sodality parish Prefect and send a packet of

information once the date is confirmed with the pastor. *See* Forms, at Addendum-18, -19, -22. The parish packet of information for hosting a Sodality Union meeting includes:

- The Sodality Union Program Coordinator’s acknowledgment letter to the host parish.
- Consent to Publish form, e.g., photos taken during the meeting.
- Parish Liturgy Planning Form – Completed by the Prefect and Pastor and signed by the Pastor.
- Sample Program (*see* Sodality Union’s website at Contact Us page).
 - Front Cover – Image of the Blessed Mother - Insert Host Parish name.
 - Back Cover – Leadership Team.
 - Insert Host Parish Sodality History and Celebration of the Mass.

If the Sodality is hosting the month of April and the Sodality Union is holding the James Cardinal Hickey Scholarship Fund raffle fundraiser then the Sodality parish Prefect must obtain a letter, signed by the Pastor, permitting the raffle fundraiser event to take place at the parish facility. The signed letter is required for DC Lottery and Charitable Games Control Board to approve the Sodality Union holding the raffle. When the raffle is held, a Washington, DC parish Sodality must host the meeting.

In addition, the Sodality Parish Prefect will meet with her/his parish Sodalists to discuss the following responsibilities:

- Mass, rosary, and meeting times.
- Rosary lead(s).
- Mass attendants.
- Mass program completion including: Sodality history; Mass liturgy information; and Mass participants. Prepare copies (suggested 100 to 125) for distribution.
- Tables set up (Head table and table/settings for members).
- Preparation of menu / light refreshments for the meeting.
- Token gift for each Sodality member is optional.
- Meeting room set up and clean-up after the meeting.

The hosting parish will begin and end planning meetings with prayer and our Blessed Mother will be your guide.

10. How do I become a Sodalist in The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington?

First and foremost, you must have a desire to live your life with a deep devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. It is your devotion to her and living by her example that will guide your daily steps and lead you closer *to Jesus through Mary*. If your parish has a Sodality, you may want to attend one or more of their meetings—prospective members and guests are always welcome.

In any case, you will want to consult one of the Sodality leaders or members to express your interest. Typically, they will provide orientation and instructions about what it means to be a Sodalist and how the Sodality at your parish is organized. Your duties and responsibilities will include attendance at regular monthly meetings, active participation in the spiritual and apostolic works of your parish Sodality and an annual dues donation to support the organization’s activities and projects. When your orientation and introduction are complete and you are ready to make a commitment to join, you and your parish Sodality leaders will schedule an official induction ceremony. As you grow in your relationship *to Jesus through Mary*, you will likely feel called or be called upon to serve on a committee or in a leadership role and in this way help the Sodality and others to grow in devotion to Mary, our model. If your parish does not have a Sodality, you may contact a member or leader of the Sodality Union of the ADW (<http://www.sodalityunionadw.org/>) for assistance in locating a Sodality in a neighboring parish or for help in forming a Sodality at your parish.

11. If I move to another parish, do I need to be inducted in the new parish Sodality?

No. Once a person is inducted in Sodality, she/he is a Sodalist for life. Induction in a new parish Sodality is not required, only transfer of membership. It is recommended that if a Sodalist relocates from another parish, area, or state, she/he may transfer her/his membership to a new parish Sodality by obtaining a letter from the prior parish Sodality Prefect and/or Moderator, containing the following:

- Parish church and year of induction, if known;
- Your participation in the last Sodality, including payment of dues if applicable; and
- Recommendation for acceptance in the new parish Sodality in “good standing.”

12. What is a Spiritual Bouquet?

A Spiritual Bouquet consists of prayers or devotional acts that are offered to a recipient of the bouquet. Each prayer offered is like a flower and the group of Sodalists is like a bouquet mystically offered as a gift to God for a particular intention. “Spiritual bouquets” are often organized for particular purposes, such the intentions of the Holy Father in honor of his birthday or offered for with a particular theme such as the Christmas Spiritual Bouquet traditionally offered annually by Sodality Union. Those who participate promise certain prayers and devotions. A list of those prayers and devotions is compiled and presented to the recipient whose intentions are being remembered. Visit the Sodality Union website for a sample Spiritual Bouquet form.

All benefit from prayer. One significant aspect of this ministry is that it can be done communally or individually, at church or at home. Many of our homebound Sodalists are devoted to “prayer,” making them a special gift to this ministry.

a) What kind of prayers can we pray?

Prayers may include Masses attended, Holy Communion offered, rosaries and/or other prayers said. The Liturgy of the Hours is a wonderful way to pray for the Holy Father. Some may choose to spend time reading Scripture or in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Some devotions include the rosary or Stations of the Cross.

b) What kind of good works can we do?

The corporal works of mercy are especially worthy efforts to remember the Holy Father. A person may volunteer at a food pantry or a homeless shelter. Some may visit those who are sick or in prison or who live alone. Additionally, the spiritual works of teaching, advising, consoling, and comforting are encouraged. Financial contributions to groups that help the poor or to your local parish also serve to present as spiritual gifts.

c) How will the prayers and good works be presented?

The recipient may be presented a card identifying the giver, and the assembly of prayers and good works. It may include a narration describing some of the prayers and good works offered. Traditionally, the number and kind of prayer and good work are recorded, as an indication of the particular prayers and good works offered for the recipient’s intentions.

