

# The SP Temperament

SPs must be free, unconfined, and able to do whatever their inner spirit moves them to do. Therefore, it is important that the SP be dedicated to God so that this inner spirit is the Holy Spirit and not a merely human spirit. SPs are impulsive and dislike being tied down by rules. They want to follow whatever impulse strikes them. Again, it is important that they be committed to doing God's will or their free spirit can lead them far astray.

SPs love action and become easily bored with the status quo. They are crisis oriented, good at unsnarling messes, and able to get things moving. They make good trouble shooters, negotiators, and diplomats. They have unlimited energy as long as the crisis exists and work best and most efficiently when it is necessary to respond quickly and dramatically. They are flexible, easy to get along with, open minded, adaptable, and willing to change their position. They are good as conciliators since in their view almost everything is negotiable.

SPs live very much in the present without concern either for the past or the future. Neither yesterday nor tomorrow exist for a true SP. They are always looking for something new, new places to go, and new things to do. They dislike practice and want simply to perform and act. They thrive on excitement, adventure, risk, and challenge. They hunger for activity and enjoyment. Optimistic, cheerful, light hearted, witty, charming, they live life intensely and are capable of unrelenting vigor when challenged and excited.

Franciscan spirituality is very popular among ordinary people, men and women of action who want and need to do things for others. Acts of loving service can be a most effective form of prayer. If an SP has made a commitment to centering his or her life in God and in doing God's will, all of these acts will be accompanied by a free-flowing, spontaneous, informal praising and by a loving dialogue with God. Franciscan spirituality is very optimistic

and sees the beauty, goodness, and love of God everywhere.

All of God's creation is a Bible for the SP temperament. God speaks to them through every sense impression – all they see, hear, feel, taste, or smell. Yet the books of the Bible, especially the gospel accounts of the life of Jesus, will have special appeal for the SP person.

Because of their impetuosity and generosity, SPs are fond of the "grand gesture" whereby they dramatically express their commitment to God. Ordinarily they are not excessively concerned about either the past or the future. They are usually merciful and forgiving toward the past and optimistic and hopeful about the future. An SP's motto might be *carpe diem*, "seize the day," according to Jesus' teaching: "Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today" (Matt. 6:34).

The SP does not respond well to the symbolic but is primarily interested in the real and the literal. However, they are capable of great and heroic sacrifices for a worthy cause. Therefore, their generosity may result in untold sacrifices for a worthy cause.

Franciscan prayer makes full use of the five senses and will be flexible and free flowing. It is what we call "spirit-filled prayer," totally open to the presence and voice of the Holy Spirit. Since SPs can see God in the whole of creation, they are able to make a fruitful meditation on the beauty of a flower, a meadow, a lake, a waterfall, or any event of nature such as sunrises and sunsets. If there is any temperament that can honestly claim that their work is their prayer, it would be the SP. Much of their prayer is what is called virtual prayer or the prayer of good works. Of all the temperaments, SPs have the least need for long periods of formal prayer. Nevertheless, they should try to give at least twenty minutes of formal prayer daily.