

THE FRANCISCAN CHALLENGE

Q & A's

What is a Franciscan Friar?

The Franciscans, also called the Order of Friars Minor, are members of the Catholic religious order founded by Saint Francis of Assisi over 800 years ago. We seek to follow the manner of life that Saint Francis led. Our Order is a mendicant religious order of men who therefore depend directly on the charity of the people for their livelihood.

This new order founded by Saint Francis was prompted by a need to reinvigorate the life of the Catholic Church. At the present time the Franciscan Friars number 17,224 worldwide with 586 novices or "Friars in training".

Often times you will see OFM after a Friar's name, wondering what it means. It refers to the Order of Friars Minor commonly called the Franciscans.

What is a Franciscan Province?

A Franciscan Province is a geographic area of the country where the Friars of that province live and work. The Franciscan Order divides countries into provinces.

What is Holy Name Province?

Holy Name Province is the largest of seven provinces in the United States belonging to the Franciscan Order. It covers the eastern seaboard with some locations beyond. The Provincial headquarters are located in New York City.

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Who lives in Holy Name Province?

There are 325 Franciscan Friars in Holy Name Province serving the people of God in a wide variety of settings – colleges, parishes, urban ministry centers and diverse social ministries along the East Coast. Today we continue the mission of Saint Francis to make the Gospel message come alive in our contemporary world. We live in cities, suburbs and rural areas. Our backgrounds are diverse and our ministries are varied; most of us serve in pastoral roles, while others work in education, social ministry, administration and manual trades.

What is the mission of the Franciscan Friars of Holy Name Province?

The core of Franciscanism is in the living out of the Gospel of Jesus Christ within the Church according to the rule of life proposed and observed by Saint Francis of Assisi to preach this message to every creature. This is our purpose and mission.

Our message is very simple:

God loves each of us totally and unconditionally.

What makes the Franciscan Friars different?

The Franciscan Friars have always been thought of as “of the people and with the people”. Living in community is a core value and often helps the Friars to put things in a more “down to earth” perspective. The Friars never see themselves as better than anyone, and therefore they are not usually judgmental and are very accepting of everyone, those who are in the faith community and those who are not.

All Are Welcome is the usual core of Franciscan hospitality.

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Why do the Franciscan Friars need money?

The Franciscan Friars ask not for themselves, but for the sake of others, and often do so with some embarrassment and hesitation. However, there are times that need a stronger call, and that is now. The Friars, in our "tradition of begging" are asking for money for three very important causes:

1. For our young men who desire to become Franciscan Friars – We need help for education and all its costs, their room and board and their intern expenses.
2. For our work with the poor and desperate – Saint Francis traced the beginning of his conversion to when God led him to live among lepers to serve them. Ever since that time, direct service to the materially poor and marginalized people of society has been a hallmark of Franciscan ministry. We are continuing that tradition over 800 years later.
3. For our sick and elderly Franciscan Friars – These Friars have served so many for so long – and are now in need of care themselves. The cost of their care has risen drastically while the quality of their care depends on those of us whom they have served so well.