

All About Vocations

Are the Franciscan Friars for you?

OUR FOUNDER

As the 13th Century dawned, St. Francis of Assisi was in his early 20's pondering what to do with his life. Today, the choice that he made continues to challenge new generations pondering their future. The poor man of Assisi had a restless heart that found its peace in Jesus Christ: "Where your treasure is, there also will your heart be" (MT 6:21). Francis lived this ideal and inflamed other hearts to embrace the same treasure. Today the Order that he established in the Church has grown from a tiny mustard seed to a living tree with many branches.



The Franciscan Friars and Sisters of our day are dispersed throughout the world, ministering in a variety of apostolates. All of them are striving to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a way shown to them by their founder, St. Francis of Assisi. Eight centuries later, we strive to be today what St. Francis was to the world of his day.



FRANCISCAN FRIARS CONVENTUAL TODAY

The Franciscan Friars in the Order of Friars Minor Conventual are a world-wide community of priests and brothers who live a life of prayer, ministry and fraternity. As Franciscan Friars, we give witness to the fact that one can be a friar: priest, counselor, missionary, artist, physician's assistant, teacher, mechanic, nurse, catechist...all in a lifestyle of total service to God and His people. Today's friars find themselves in health care facilities, offices, on college or high school campuses, in parishes etc. They work with young adults, the needy or the aged. Any talent with which a man has been blessed can be developed and placed at the service of the Order and the Church. In the spirit of our founder, St. Francis of Assisi, the friars of today accept the challenge of telling the world that Jesus Christ is alive and has concern and love for his people. The friars' whole purpose is to preach the Gospel, not only with words but with the example of their very own lives.

The friars of Our Lady of the Angels Province serve the spiritual and temporal needs of people in a variety of ministerial settings: parishes, high schools, colleges, hospitals, soup kitchens and even Malls, in both urban and suburban settings. We also have friars ministering abroad in Canada, Costa Rica, Brazil, Japan, Great Britain, Ireland and Italy. All of our talents and gifts are offered for the common good of the community and the Church.



INITIAL FORMATION OF A FRIAR

The formation of a Franciscan Friar Conventual in Our Lady of the Angels Province is comprised of three stages, each of which helps the person to grow in Christian maturity and a greater awareness of his vocation in the Franciscan tradition.

The first stage is **Pre-Novitiate** or **POSTULANCY**. It is here that a man is introduced to the Conventual charism of the Franciscan Order. He learns what it means to grow in human maturity and to live in community: to pray together, to share meals and recreation time and work whether academically or together with his peers in the local community, and to make sacrifices for his fellow brothers. The Postulant also studies the lives of St. Francis of Assisi, St. Clare and other great saints of the Order. He also gains the skills to further his spiritual life. Postulancy is a one year process, during which time the postulant grows in his faith and understanding of the Franciscan way of life.

After Postulancy, the man enters the Order as a novice. This **NOVITIATE** year is a journey of intense prayer and spiritual formation. The friar-novice learns what the Order expects of him and what he can expect from the Order. Here, the friar continues to develop his community skills, learns more about the Franciscan charism, the history of the Order and the significance of a vowed life. At the completion of this year, if the friar and the community discern his readiness, he professes temporary vows of poverty, chastity and obedience for a period of three years.

The third stage of the process is **POST-NOVITIATE** formation, a time of integration where the friar begins to harmonize his vowed life with some active ministry and/or academic pursuits. Priesthood candidates pursue theological studies, while brother candidates engage in professional studies particular to ministry. At some time during this period, a friar ordinarily engages in a full-time ministerial experience for one year. After much prayer and reflection and at a time the friar and community decide the friar professes his solemn vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. This life-time commitment results in full membership of the Order. Although initial formation ends with the profession of solemn vows, formation in the Order of Friars Minor Conventual is a continual, life-long process.

OUTLINE OF THE PROCESS

A period of contact with the Community which includes participation in a "Come & See" weekend experience.

Application Process

*1 Year of **Postulancy***

*1 Year of **Novitiate***

*Generally 4 years of **Temporary Vows** which includes continued studies and a Ministerial year.*

*Solemn/Final **Profession of Vows***

***Ordination** to the Diaconate & Priesthood*

WHERE DO YOU GO FROM HERE:

Pray: Spend time with God, speak with Him, listen to His voice in the silence of your heart.

Seek Spiritual Direction: Regularly & honestly speak about your spiritual life with a priest, religious or anyone you trust.

A spiritual companion can help you to assess God's movement in your life.

Inquire: Contact our Vocation Director, Fr. Russell Governale by phone or email at (718) 510-5822/vocations@olaprovince.org.

