



Franciscan Vocation Ministry
Holy Name Province

Insight & Wisdom

*For those discerning a call to
our Franciscan way of life*

Summer 2009

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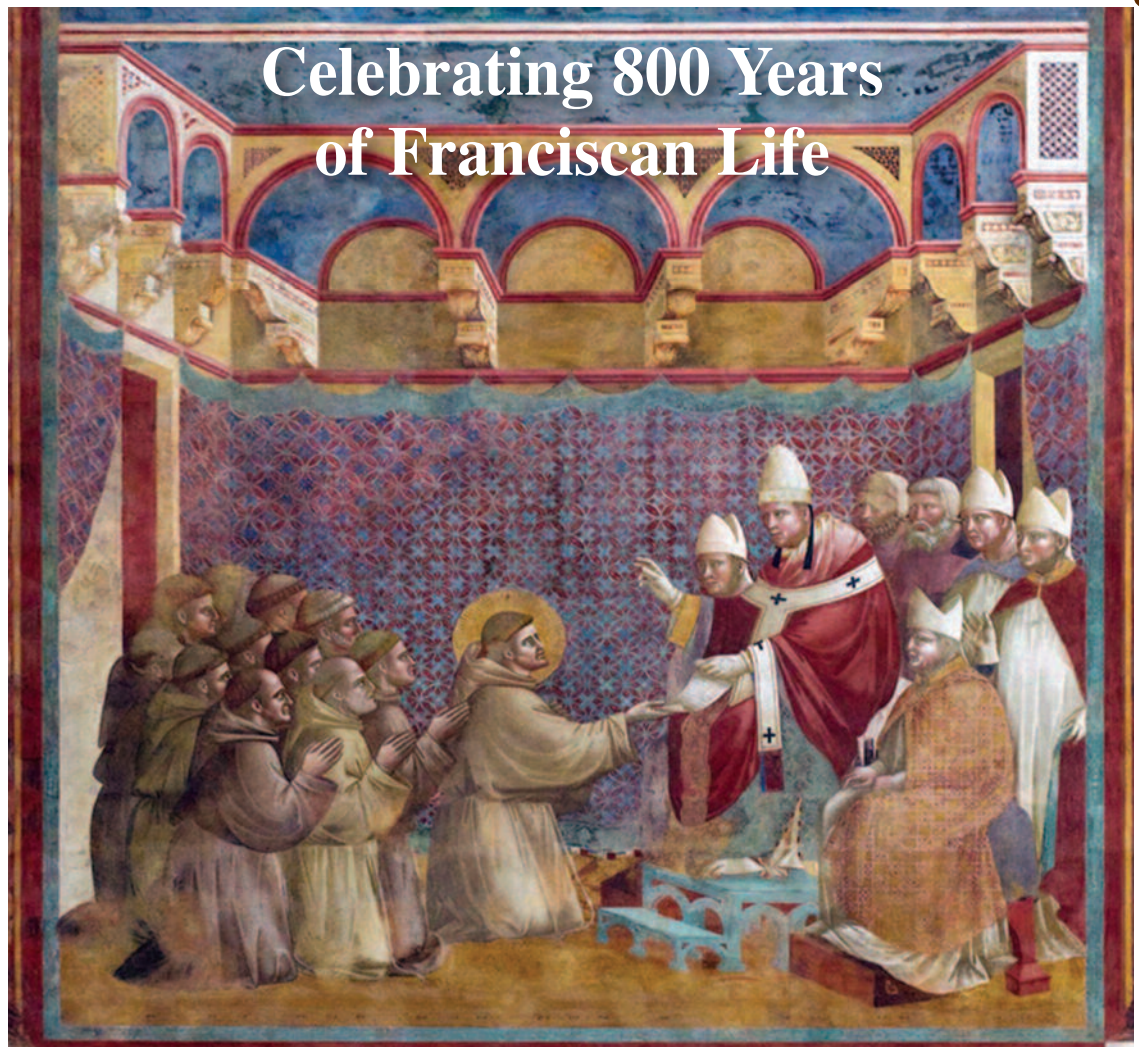
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Celebrating 800 Years of Franciscan Life

By Fr. Dominic Monti, OFM

Earlier this year, the Franciscan Friars of Holy Name Province took an unusual route in reaching out to young adult men about considering a life of prayer and spiritual service in our Catholic faith community.

With our Manhattan provincial headquarters a virtual stone's throw away from a subway stop, we decided to sponsor an advertisement aimed at New York City train riders that boldly

asked: "Day Shift, Night Shift – How about a Life Shift?"

The question itself, the location where it was posed and the uncertain economic climate we live in all created an opportunity for those seeing the ad to reflect upon the purpose of their individual lives and the possibility of doing something more meaningful and rewarding in serving others and God.

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Franciscan
Vocation
Ministry

"O Most High, Glorious God, enlighten the darkness of my heart and give me a right faith, a certain hope and a perfect love, insight and wisdom, O Lord, that I may carry out your holy and true command."

— St. Francis of Assisi, Prayer for Discernment

As Franciscans, we know making a “life shift” can be a very risky endeavor. But our Order, which this spring celebrated the 800th anniversary of its founding, has a long history of taking risks to fulfill our calling to be “heralds of the Gospel in the midst of society.”

This history of risk taking began eight centuries ago in the year 1209 when a dozen shabbily dressed men managed to enter the Papal Court. To gain an audience with the pope then, just like in 2009, was no easy feat — especially for such an insignificant group. But these men and their calling were different.

The Franciscan Life Shift

Led by a young man named Francis from the town of Assisi, these men were seeking the approval of Pope Innocent III to lead a radical life according to the pattern of the Gospel. The pope granted their petition and thus officially launched what has become the largest and most popular religious movement in all of Catholic history.

But what exactly did Francis mean by “living according to the pattern of the Gospel?” How is that relevant and why is it risky in 2009?



For starters, this life demands “doing penance” — not in the sense of performing one or other acts of self-denial, but radically renouncing a life “in the world” based on self-interest and reorienting oneself toward the values of the reign of God.

Francis and his brothers abandoned all their possessions, rejecting life in a soci-



Friars at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Manhattan, as in many other areas of the East Coast, give food to the hungry.

ety in which they had been born and bred and one driven by its quest for wealth and power. They deliberately chose “to follow the humility and poverty of our Lord, Jesus Christ” by becoming “lesser ones, subject to all.”

They believed, by making this choice, they could escape the vicious circle in which their contemporaries were caught, and thus more easily open their hearts to God and one another — creating a new type of belonging, a brotherhood of mutual care based on Gospel values.

Our Lives and Work Today

The Franciscans have become the largest group of male religious in the Roman Catholic Church. Our friar priests and brothers live the Gospel today as preachers, confessors, teachers, pastors and workers in various ministries, while helping the poor and the marginalized of society in such impor-

tant areas as peace and social justice, education, healthcare and immigration.

We, like Francis and his Lesser Brothers, do not abandon “the world” but instead plunge into it in a new way. You can see this on the streets of Manhattan every morning when our brothers at St. Francis of Assisi Church on West 31st Street host the longest running daily breadline in the United States.

The challenge as we begin the next 800 years is to continue to find new ways within modern society to share Christ’s love as proclaimed through the Gospel and to foster a deeper relationship for individuals with God and each other.

If you are up for the challenge, and the rewards that come with it, we invite you to join us.

Editors note: Information about Fr. Dominic’s book, Francis & His Brothers: A Popular History of the Franciscan Friars, can be found on page 6.



Fr. Dominic Monti, OFM, met the Franciscans as a student at St. Bonaventure University in Allegany, N.Y. He entered the Franciscan Order in 1964 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1971. Fr. Dominic received his doctorate from the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. He has taught church history at the Washington Theological Union and Franciscan history at the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University. His academic research focuses on Christianity in the Middle Ages, especially the history and theology of the Franciscan movement. Fr. Dominic is Provincial Vicar of the Franciscan Friars of Holy Name Province and serves as Secretary of Formation and Studies.

Choosing the Franciscans



“... a way of life that is challenging yet rewarding”

Br. Larry Anderson, OFM, came to know the Franciscans while earning a master of arts degree in pastoral ministry at Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora, N.Y. During his time as a student, he found the friars to be “down to earth and happy.” Upon entering the Order, Larry said, “I am looking forward to being part of something bigger than myself, a way of life that is challenging yet rewarding. I am looking for a community that will pick me up when I fall and share in my joy when I succeed. I desire a group that will show me the face of God in its actions.”

Larry was born in Geneva, N.Y., and raised in a number of small towns throughout Upstate New York. He holds a bachelor’s degree in philosophy from Wadhams Hall Seminary and College in Ogdensburg, N.Y., and worked as a high school campus minister at the Aquinas Institute in Rochester, N.Y., prior to joining the friars. More recently, Larry completed a master’s degree in social work from The Catholic University of America and a graduate certificate in theological studies from the Washington Theological Union, both in Washington, D.C. Currently serving as a deacon at St. Mary’s Church in Pompton Lakes, N.J., he is preparing to profess solemn vows this summer.

Upcoming Vocation Events

*Are you being called to be a Franciscan?
Join us for a weekend to learn more about our way of life.*

Come and See Weekend

**Sept. 25-27, 2009
St. Francis Friary
Beach Haven, N.J.**

If you are interested in Franciscan life, we welcome you to our oceanside community in Beach Haven, N.J., for a weekend of hospitality, prayer and fraternity. Share meals with us, visit our local churches, celebrate the Eucharist, and reflect on the Gospel life of joy, compassion and service inspired by St. Francis of Assisi.



Discernment Retreat

**Oct. 24-25, 2009
Mt. Irenaeus Franciscan Mountain Retreat
West Clarksville, N.Y.**

Join students from nearby St. Bonaventure University in listening to what God is calling you to do with your life. Spend two days of quiet, contemplative prayer at beautiful Mt. Irenaeus in Western New York — 228 acres of land that is home to a chapel, a common house, six miles of trails, a pond and seven hermitages.



Franciscan Experience Weekend (FEW)

**Nov. 20-22, 2009
St. Anthony Shrine, Boston, Mass.**

FEWs offer an opportunity for guests to discuss their calling in depth with the vocation director and other members of the vocation team. These conversations serve to clarify the interest level of both the candidates and the friars. Guests also meet our friar community in Boston and are taken on a tour of local ministries by student friars in their first year of formation with the Province. Generally, guests are *invited* to attend the weekend by the vocation director.

Ordination 2009



Four Holy Name Province friars were ordained to the priesthood on May 16 at St. Francis of Assisi Church on West 31st Street in Manhattan. For Linh Hoang, Hugh Macsherry, Stephen Mimnaugh and Harry Monaco, this joyful event was the culmination of years of personal, spiritual and educational development and the beginning of serving in full-time priestly ministry.

The 11 a.m. Mass was celebrated by Most Rev. Celestino Migliore, Apostolic Nuncio and permanent observer of the Holy See to the United Nations, with the assistance of Fr. John O'Connor, OFM, Provincial Minister, Fr. Dominic Monti, OFM, Provincial Vicar, and Fr. Francis Di Spigno, OFM, director of post-novitiate formation.

"This is a great day for the Franciscan friars of Holy Name Province, and for the families of these men, and indeed for the universal Church," Archbishop Migliore said, referring to the 800th anniversary of the Order and the recent international gathering of Franciscans in Assisi that marked the momentous occasion.

A large number of Holy Name Province friars participated in the celebration along with family members, friends and people with whom the new priests had ministered during their years of formation.



Clockwise from bottom left: Fr. Stephen Mimnaugh, OFM, Fr. Francis Di Spigno, OFM, Br. Fadi Azar, OFM, of the Custody of the Holy Land, who served as deacon, Fr. Hugh Macsherry, OFM, Fr. Harry Monaco, OFM, Fr. Dominic Monti, OFM, Fr. John O'Connor, OFM, Fr. Linh Hoang, OFM, and Archbishop Celestino Migliore.

Meet Our Newly-Ordained Priests

Fr. Linh Hoang, OFM

Linh moved to the United States as a child from Saigon, Vietnam, and settled with his family in Lebo, Kan. He holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium, master's degrees in theology and divinity from the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, and a doctorate in theology from Fordham University in the Bronx. Linh said he joined the Franciscans while a grad student at Fordham because "I was attracted to the spirit of St. Francis and the theologies of the early Franciscan scholars. I felt the contemporary Franciscans were seriously trying to live out that tradition." Linh currently teaches full-time in the Department of Religious Studies at Siena College in Loudonville, N.Y.



Fr. Hugh Macsherry, OFM

A native of Baltimore, Md., Hugh attended the University of Baltimore, where he earned bachelor's degrees in philosophy and classical languages as well as secondary education and foreign languages. Before entering religious life, he taught middle school Spanish in the Montgomery County School System in Wheaton, Md. Hugh first met the friars by attending Mass at St. Camillus Church in Silver Spring, Md., and was drawn to the Franciscan way of life by the image of St. Francis. A recent graduate of the Washington Theological Union in Washington, D.C., with a master of divinity degree, he is serving on the pastoral staff of St. Anthony Shrine in Boston.



Fr. Stephen Mimnaugh, OFM

Born and raised in Simsbury, Conn., Stephen earned a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Vermont and a master's degree in urban studies from the University of Pennsylvania. In his early career, he worked as an account manager in the financial services industry in Philadelphia. Getting to know the friars as a seminarian studying in New York, Steve noticed that they "gravitated toward ministry to persons who have experienced some form of marginalization." Having completed a master's of divinity degree from the Washington Theological Union, he is serving as parochial vicar at St. Francis of Assisi Church in New York City. Steve hopes his ministry will include service or advocacy for the homeless.



Fr. Harry Monaco, OFM

A native of Ballston Spa, N.Y., Harry attended St. Bonaventure University in Allegany, N.Y., where he earned a bachelor's degree in history. He also holds a master's degree in social work from Boston College and a master of divinity degree from the Washington Theological Union. After working in a variety of social outreach positions, Harry joined the Franciscans because of the person and story of St. Francis of Assisi. He was also impressed by the friars whom he met and the manner in which they chose to live the Gospel. Harry has returned to St. Bonaventure University where he is teaching and working while pursuing a master's degree in Franciscan studies.



Discerning God's Call in Your Life

Discernment and Spiritual Direction

By Br. Tony LoGalbo, OFM

Spiritual direction provides a safe and sacred space where a person is free from judgments and able to focus on God's presence in his or her life. Working with a spiritual director or companion also affords an individual the opportunity to discern — to sort and sift through the conflicting feelings about considering a calling to religious life and/or ordained ministry. The work of the director or companion is more about sharing wisdom than giving advice, i.e., listening and helping the seeker discover his or her way.

The process of spiritual direction often involves creating an attitude of listening to God's spirit dwelling in one's heart, to sift one's thoughts and pray. The person might consider such questions as "Why do I think God is calling me to consider this?" or "How do I see pursuing this as changing my spiritual life?" or "What can I do to help me discern more clearly?"

Some of the work of discernment involves accepting decisions that one makes and living with them with the assurance that, right or wrong, the meaning of these choices will become clear as one tries to live them out. The individual also looks to how the fruits of the Holy Spirit — love, joy, peace, patience, faith and fortitude — surface as he or she proceeds through the process.

We seek God and His will in our lives through faith. There will always be elements of uncertainty and doubt, and often we can only do our best and leave the rest to God while trusting in His love and mercy. Jesuit spiritual director Fr. Charles Healey counsels: "It should be a source of consolation to realize that the very desire to follow Him (God) and carry out His will is strong indication that we are fulfilling His will, for the desire itself is God's grace working within us."



Br. Tony LoGalbo, OFM, is a native of Buffalo, N.Y. He entered the Order of Friars Minor in 1964 and professed solemn vows in 1971. Br. Tony has served as formation advisor, spiritual director and missionary in Brazil, as well as librarian and instructor at the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University. Currently, he is director of the Center for Franciscan Spirituality and Spiritual Direction at St. Francis of Assisi Church in New York City.

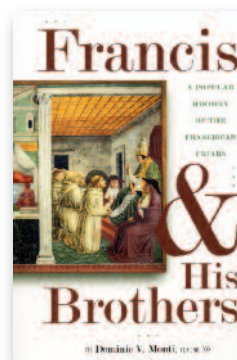
Resources for Spiritual Direction

Spiritual direction is available at several Holy Name Province churches. Two of the larger programs include the Franciscan Center for Spiritual Direction at St. Anthony Shrine in Boston and the Center for Franciscan Spirituality and Spiritual Direction at St. Francis of Assisi Church in New York City. Spiritual direction also takes place at the Church of St. Mary on Broadway in Providence, R.I., and St. Francis of Assisi Church in Triangle, Va.

For further information on these programs, see "Spiritual Direction Encourages Relationship with God" in the May 20, 2009 issue of *HNP Today*. (The Province's bi-weekly e-newsletter can be found on Holy Name Province's Web site, www.HNP.org, by clicking on the Communications page.)

To discuss spiritual direction as an option, or for assistance in arranging spiritual direction services, please contact the Franciscan Vocation Ministry at 1-800-677-7788 or vocation@hnp.org. We are glad to help in any way that we can.

Recommended Reading



Francis & His Brothers: A Popular History of the Franciscan Friars by Fr. Dominic Monti, OFM. St. Anthony Messenger Press, Cincinnati, Ohio, 2009.

An excellent resource on the history of the Franciscan friars from medieval times to the modern world. From the back cover: "... a fascinating read — erudite, comprehensive and engaging. Dominic Monti brings together a wealth of scholarship and experience as a Franciscan friar, drawing us into one of the most exciting adventures of Christian history."

Formation Milestones

Jeffery Jordan Professes First Vows

On June 6, Jeffery Jordan made his simple profession of vows as a Franciscan at St. Paul's Church in Wilmington, Del. Provincial Vicar Fr. Dominic Monti, OFM, celebrated the 11 a.m. Mass, assisted by Fr. Ronald Pecci, OFM, director of novices. A number of family members, friends and Holy Name friars shared in this joyous occasion, which marked Jeffery's official welcome into the Province.

Reflecting on the event, Jeffery said, "I feel at peace and more solid in my vocational choice. This profession of vows represents a concrete, external act of my internal conversion and choice." He added, "This is a major milestone in both my vocation and in my life in general."

As a friar in post-novitiate, Jeffery will

take coursework and hone his ministerial skills over the next three or four years while living with other student friars at Holy Name College in Silver Spring, Md.

“This profession of vows represents a concrete, external act of my internal conversion and choice.”

— Jeffery Jordan, OFM

With a background in linguistics and languages, Jeffery plans to pursue a master of arts degree in theology with a concentration in Sacred Scripture at nearby Washington Theological Union. He is serving at St. Francis of Assisi

Parish in Long Beach Island, N.J., during the summer.

Originally a member of the Pentecostal Holiness Church, Jeffery was welcomed into the Roman Catholic faith in 2003. He joined the Franciscans in August 2007 after getting to know the friars as a member of Sacred Heart Church in Tampa, Fla.



Br. Jeffery Jordan, OFM, with Fr. Dominic Monti, OFM.

Province Receives Three Novices

Having completed their postulant (or first) year in initial formation, Scott Carey, Gerald Hopeck and Michael Reyes were received into the

Franciscan Order as novices in a June 12 prayer service at St. Paul's Friary in Wilmington, Del. Fr. Dominic Monti, OFM, who serves as the Province's

Secretary of Formation and Studies, presided at the service with the assistance of Fr. Ronald Pecci, OFM.

During the ceremony, the novices were vested with the Franciscan habit and signed the official Book of Reception, containing the names of all the friars who have joined the Province since 1951.

They also were presented with copies of the Rule and Testament of St. Francis and the General Constitutions of the Order, which describes the way Franciscans live out the Rule today.

During this next year, Scott, Gerald and Michael will deepen their relationship with God and be introduced more intensely to the way of life, history and traditions of the Franciscans.

They are currently participating in a summer program at the Franciscan Institute of St. Bonaventure University in Western New York.



Br. Michael Reyes, OFM, Fr. Dominic Monti, OFM, Br. William Herbst, OFM, assistant director of novices, Br. Scott Carey, OFM, Fr. Ronald Pecci, OFM, and Br. Gerald Hopeck, OFM.

Franciscan Vocation Ministry

The Franciscan Vocation Ministry is called to promote vocations to the Franciscan way of life and ministries of Holy Name Province.

We offer the following services:

- Information on our Order, the admissions process and the initial formation program
- Consultation and assistance with discernment to religious life
- Come & See Weekends for interested men
- This newsletter highlighting Vocation activities

For further information or to speak with the Vocation Director, please contact:

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