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**Holy Name Province**  
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**For Immediate Release**

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**INTERFAITH PRAYER SERVICE SET FOR OCT. 27**

**Spirit of Assisi Event Commemorates 1986 Calling for Peace**

NEW YORK — Oct. 20, 2011 — In honor of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1986 gathering in Assisi, Italy, of leaders of the world religions, the Franciscan friars are holding an interfaith prayer service on Oct. 27 at Holy Name of Jesus Church on New York's Upper West Side. All are welcome to the 7 p.m. program, titled "Pilgrims of Truth, Pilgrims of Peace," that will offer prayers and music.

The Very Rev. John O'Connor, OFM, provincial minister, or chief executive, of Holy Name Province, headquartered in Manhattan, will participate as will representatives of other congregations.

The commemoration is an opportunity "to remember our call to peace and reconciliation and commit to a year of civil dialogue," said Russell Testa, director of the HNP Office for Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation.

Information about the event, at St. Mary of the Angels Chapel, 207 W. 96<sup>th</sup> St., may be obtained from the Holy Name parish office, 212-749-0276, according to the Rev. Michael Tyson, OFM, the primary organizer for the prayer service.

The New York City event is one of many commemorations planned by Franciscans around the world to mark the milestone anniversary. As a high mark for these celebrations, Pope Benedict XIII is leading a prayer service in Assisi. All these efforts celebrate and invite persons of all faiths to embrace their common work for peace and reconciliation.

In a world that seems to be growing "more and more fractured and divided, reclaiming the 'Spirit of Assisi' that Pope John Paul II initiated 25 years ago is an opportunity to highlight that which we have in common," said the Rev. Francis Di Spigno, OFM, of St. Bonaventure University in Allegany, N.Y.

"Oftentimes in our desire for security, or even self definition, we push aside anything that is different than what we know, who we are or what we understand. The Franciscans' prayer will echo the other prayer services throughout the country and the world in our common prayer and desire for a peace that is strengthened by our diversity, not weakened," he said.

**About the Franciscans**

Holy Name is the largest of seven provinces in the United States belonging to the Order of Friars Minor. With ministries in 12 states along the East Coast, its nearly 350 Catholic priests and brothers serve in colleges, parishes, urban ministry centers, and a wide variety of social ministries as well as in overseas missions.

More than 800 years since its founding by St. Francis of Assisi, the Order continues to minister to the poorest of the poor. St. Francis, whose feast day is Oct. 4, remains one of the most widely known saints, revered for his affection for nature and care for creation.

Information about Holy Name Province is available on [HNP.org](http://HNP.org). News about the friars and their ministries can be found on the Franciscan Friars of Holy Name Province Facebook page.

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