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**For Immediate Release**

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**FRANCISCAN FRIARS HONOR MAYOR BLOOMBERG FOR EARTH DAY**

NEW YORK, N.Y. – April 20, 2010 – In recognition of Earth Day, the Franciscan friars of Holy Name of Province are honoring New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg on April 21 with their Francis Medal.

Given to persons who advance the values and ideals of St. Francis, patron saint of the ecology and founder of the Order of Friars Minor, the formal name for the Franciscans, the Francis Medal is being given to Bloomberg for his efforts to improve the New York City environment.

“Mayor Bloomberg’s green efforts – from banning smoking in public places to encouraging sustainability -- have made New York City a better place to live and work,” said the Rev. Daniel Kenna, OFM, pastor of Holy Name of Jesus Church, one of four New York City parishes staffed by HNP friars, where the award is being presented.

The Franciscan friars singled out Bloomberg’s efforts to:

- Ban smoking in public places
- Encourage and reward recycling operations, many of which have won New York City environmental awards.
- Launch green-friendly new building initiatives
- Revitalize park areas in business districts, including Times Square and along the waterfronts of the Hudson and East rivers and Jamaica Bay.

The award ceremony, at Holy Name of Jesus School on West 96<sup>th</sup> Street, will include music, student prayer, and expressions of gratitude.

“This is a teachable moment for the children,” said the Rev. Brian Jordan, OFM, of Holy Name Friary, who nominated Bloomberg for the award. “We want to honor the mayor’s sincere efforts toward the integrity of creation. The Franciscans appreciate his eight years of acting as a pathfinder in urban development.” The Rev. Dominic Monti, OFM,

Provincial Vicar, is presenting the award.

Among other people honored over the years with the Franciscans' Francis Medal is author and *New York Daily News* columnist Michael Daly, who was given the medal in 2009.

**About Holy Name Province**

Holy Name Province is one of seven provinces in the United States that belong to the Order of Friars Minor, better known as the Franciscans. Holy Name is the largest U.S. province, with ministries in 12 states along the East Coast. Its 360 Catholic priests and brothers serve in colleges, parishes, urban ministry centers and a wide variety of social ministries, as well as in overseas missions.

The Order, founded in 1209 by St. Francis of Assisi, commemorated its 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2009. Today, 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 the province can be found on [www.hnp.org](http://www.hnp.org)

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