



**Franciscan Friars  
Holy Name Province  
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**Buffalo Franciscan Priest Francis Pompei  
Celebrates 25<sup>th</sup> Profession Anniversary**

BUFFALO, N.Y. – June 11, 2010 -- The Rev. Francis Pompei, OFM, a Franciscan priest at St. Patrick Friary here, is celebrating 25 years as a friar this month.

Pompei, who was ordained as a diocesan priest in 1974, joined the Order of Friars Minor, the formal name for the Franciscans, in 1985. He is guardian of St. Patrick Friary and is a member of Holy Name Province based in New York City, with ministries in 12 states.

He works with the Province's Ministry of the Word, an educational and evangelization ministry, traveling the country, teaching, preaching and giving retreats.

This teaching and preaching ministry has been well suited to Pompei, who is regarded as a gifted preacher and who travels about 15,000 to 20,000 miles a year.

In 1986, Pompei formed the Franciscan Mystery Players, an organization of teenagers who present a living dramatic meditation at churches around the country. Pompei writes, directs and produces the mystery plays, with 12 operating groups in the United States.

Pompei, 62, has been in Buffalo for the last four years, and while he could live anywhere since his ministry is traveling, he doesn't mind the cold Upstate New York winters. He grew up in Oswego, and taught at Bishop Timon High School in South Buffalo, a former Holy Name Province school.

"I like Buffalo," he said, "especially this community whose friars are into living simply. We cook, we clean, we live in simple rooms. It is a lot like a dorm, and built in 1882, it's one of our oldest friaries." He also enjoys being close to his family.

Before returning to Buffalo, he ministered at St. Francis Inn, the Province's soup kitchen in Philadelphia, from 1995 to 2006. He was also associated with Buffalo's St. Rita-St. Patrick Church, before it closed several years ago.

Pompei first met the Franciscans while doing diocesan training at Christ the King Seminary near St. Bonaventure University in Allegany, N.Y.

“After a few years as a diocesan priest, I began to really miss praying and sharing with others.” So, remembering his experience of the friars at St. Bonaventure University, and their brotherhood and prayer together, he realized that he was being called to the Franciscans.

In addition to his religious passion, Pompei enjoys sports and music. He plays tennis two days a week, and is proficient on the Highland bagpipes. He also counts as his many interests theater, ballet, opera, flying and sign language. “I love to fly. In another life, I’d get my pilot’s license.” But for now, he’s content with building and flying radio control airplanes as a member of the Flying Knights of Hamburg, N.Y.

### **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 last year. 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 Pompei’s Franciscan Mystery Players can be found on the website [www.mysteryplay.org](http://www.mysteryplay.org)

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