

# FRANCISCAN VOCATION MINISTRY SACRED HEART PROVINCE

*A Gospel Movement*

April 2009

## Befranciscan.com



The Franciscan Vocation Ministry has launched a new website: [www.befranciscan.com](http://www.befranciscan.com). Here, you will find resources on how to determine your vocation and our latest news and videos. Take a peak at our newest release and let us know what you think!

## Franciscan Vocation Awareness Campaign



The early months of 1209 were momentous for Francis of Assisi. In late February, while attending Mass at the Portiuncula Chapel on the feast of St. Matthias, he was impressed and deeply touched by a sermon on Matthew 10:7-10 because he felt his "life project" was made clear. Shortly thereafter, Bernard of Quintavalle, a prominent gentleman from Assisi, came to join him. They "divined" the Book of the Gospels and came across three significant passages to guide their way of living, which they put together as a primitive "rule of life." In the spring, Francis led his first eleven followers to Rome to seek permission from Pope Innocent III to live by this rule of life.

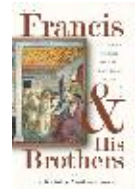
The members of the group then made their first public commitment to live the holy Gospel without gloss. That charism to the Church and that legacy which has become known today as the Franciscan Family continue even now to rebuild the Body of Christ through prayer and penance, poverty and proclamation of the Gospel, peace and the promotion of solidarity and oneness in community. What can we do to honor this historical moment in time? Nothing can be more fitting than to promote a [Franciscan Vocation Awareness Campaign](#).

## Pax Et Bonum



As Franciscans we stand for the goodness of God and preach a social vision of peace, concern for the poor and the care of creation. May God deepen in us the international dimensions of Christ's compassion. May God make us Instruments of the Lord's peace.

## Recommended Reading



This book, *Francis & His Brothers: A Popular History of the Franciscan Friars*, released by St. Anthony Messenger Press (SAMP), offers readers a look back on the history of the Franciscan friars.

*Francis & His Brothers* was timed to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the Order's founding. The Franciscans commemorate this milestone in 2009.

## Vocation Prayer Day



Dear friends, do not become discouraged in the face of difficulties and doubts; trust in God and follow Jesus faithfully and you will be witnesses of the joy that flows from intimate union with him. Imitating the Virgin Mary whom all generations proclaim as blessed because she believed (cf. Lk 1:48), commit yourselves with every spiritual energy, to realize the heavenly Father's plan of salvation, cultivating in your heart, like her, the ability to be astonished and to adore him who is mighty and does "great things", for Holy is his name (cf. Lk 1:49). On the occasion of the next World Day of prayer for vocations to the priesthood and to the consecrated life, which will be celebrated on 3 May 2009, the Fourth Sunday of Easter, I

## 800 Years Ago... (celebrating the Order's 800th anniversary)



Some 1,800 Franciscan friars from all over the world are expected to converge on the Umbrian hill town of Assisi, Italy, to celebrate the 800th anniversary of papal approval of the Franciscan rule.

For the first time, representatives from the four main Franciscan branches were to meet in Assisi -- the birthplace of their founder, St. Francis -- to take part in an International Chapter of Mats April 15-18.

A Chapter of Mats gets its name from the time in 1221 St. Francis called more than 3,000 friars to the Portiuncula chapel in Assisi for a general meeting or chapter.

Because the small town could not accommodate the large number of visitors, the friars lived in huts made out of reeds and slept on mats, said Father Jose Rodriguez Carballo, minister general of the Order of Friars Minor.

The chapter falls on the 800th anniversary of the formal founding of the Franciscan order when St. Francis presented his rule to Pope Innocent III for approval in 1209.

During a press conference April 7 at Vatican Radio, Father Rodriguez underlined the spiritual nature of the gathering and said organizers hope it will be an occasion for "coming together as a family, offering the church and the world our witness of brotherhood and celebrating our beginnings."

want to invite all the People of God to reflect on the theme: Faith in the divine initiative - the human response. The exhortation of Jesus to his disciples: "Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest" (Mt 9:38) has a constant resonance in the Church. Pray!

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### Websites

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[www.thefriars.org](http://www.thefriars.org)  
[www.ofm.org](http://www.ofm.org)

### Saint Francis™ Prayer Before the Crucifix

*Most High, glorious God, enlighten the darkness of my heart and give me true faith, certain hope, and perfect charity, sense and knowledge, Lord, that I may carry out Your holy and true command. Amen.*



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