



October 4th

Today we celebrate St. Francis of Assisi.

He was born Francesco di Pietro di Bernardone, in Italy around 1181, to a wealthy family. In his youth, Francesco was baptized yet was known for excessive partying and drinking. He joined the military in Assisi and got captured during a battle between Assisi and Perugia, then spent a year in prison. His life began to shift from attachment of worldly possessions during his imprisonment. He powerfully renounced his family's dedication to their acquired wealth by stripping himself of his clothes, choosing instead to wear a simple cloth - a habit that Franciscans still wear today to unite themselves to St. Francis.

St. Francis is considered one of the most beloved saints in the United States, among both Catholics and non-Catholics. He is the patron saint of the environment and animals because of his care for all creation. He famously wrote the Canticle of the Sun, a hymn of praise. Some consider him to be the first person to receive the holy stigmata that recreated the wounds of Jesus at The Crucifixion, which he received in 1224 when he was approximately 43 years old.

St. Francis is a missionary saint. God chose St. Francis to "go, rebuild my Church" – a call that Francis answered literally by re-building the San Damiano church as well as living out his faith by caring for the poor and marginalized. He encouraged others to live simply. Ultimately, the call to "go, rebuild my Church" was actualized by Francis reforming the image and lifestyle of clergy, demonstrating the power of simple living, renewing

The Peace Prayer of Saint Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is error, the truth;
Where there is doubt, the faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled, as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.

Courtesy of the
[National Shrine of Saint Francis of Assisi](#)

in others the desire to create change – by leading an exemplary life of service - and calling people to renewed faithfulness to Christ and commitment to His mission. We, as missionaries, must contemplate how we are being called to rebuild the Church; today it is especially needed now during this current crisis and will continue to be needed until the end of time.

“Preach the Gospel at all times, and if necessary, use words,” is commonly attributed to St. Francis because his life evangelized many, especially given the context of a society where St. Francis’ vow to poverty was a stunning image of the Gospel. He died in 1226. He was canonized two years later by Pope Gregory IX. In 2013, Pope Francis became the first pope to adopt St. Francis’ name.

St. Francis, pray for us.

There are three orders of Franciscans. He founded the first order in the early 13th century: Orders of Friars Minor (OFM), Orders of Friar Minor Capuchin (OFM Cap.) and the Orders of Friar Minor Conventuals (OFM Conv.). The second order was founded in honor of St. Clare of Assisi, who wanted to include women in the Franciscan movement; they are the Order of St. Clare, but commonly called the Poor Clares. The third order is composed of secular Franciscans, who are not ordained or religious, but vow to uphold the Franciscan charism. To all our Franciscan sisters and brothers, Happy Feast Day!