

Lord, make me  
a means of Your peace,

Where there is hatred  
let me sow Your love

And where there is injury,  
Your pardon Lord

And where there's doubt  
True faith in YOU

Where there's despair in life  
Let me sow Your hope

Where there is darkness-  
Let me bring Your light

Where there is sadness  
Ever JOY!

O Master grant that I may not seek so  
much to be consoled as to console, to be  
understood as to understand, to be loved  
as to love with all my soul!

It is in pardoning  
That we are pardoned,

In giving to all  
That we receive

And in dying  
That we are born to eternal life

"St. Francis of Assisi was called to  
reform the church not in the way other  
saints had done, nor only for his own  
time, but for all time to come.  
Whenever society strays from the right  
path no other remedy is needed but to  
receive the spirit of the order founded  
by St. Francis."

*Pope Leo XIII*

### **Pope Francis about taking the name of St. Francis of Assisi**

...he said his intention came to his heart as  
an inspiration immediately after the election.  
St. Francis of Assisi, the pope said, was "the  
man of the poor. The man of peace. The man  
who loved and cared for creation and in this  
moment we don't have such a great  
relationship with the creator. The man who  
gives us this spirit of peace, the poor man who  
wanted a poor church."

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*Are you called  
to live more simply,  
to glorify God  
with your life,  
to live in fraternity  
with others,  
to make a  
difference  
in the lives of  
the less fortunate?*

## BUT WHAT DO WE DO?

One of the most common questions we Secular Franciscans hear from those just getting to know us is: “But what do you do?” We strive to live the Gospel by following the example of St. Francis. We make a life-long promise to live out our Baptismal commitment. So what do we do?

- We strive to be **peacemakers**: We **listen** to both sides; we **do not sow discord**.
- We **strive to be for creation**: More than loving animals, we **strive to be stewards** of all that God created. We see that it is good and beautiful and **encourage others to do the same** by our example and actions.
- We **stand with the poor**: We not only **serve**, but we **work to make their lives better**.
- We **look for the good in others**: We try to **treat everyone with patience and kindness**, even those we don't like.
- We **strive to be people of relationship**: we love to **pray together** and to **collaborate** in our fraternities and at work, school, and in family life.
- We strive to be **welcoming**: we **seek to see what is lovable** in those who may seem unlovable
- We strive to be **people of prayer and conversion**: we try to **deepen our relationship with Jesus** each day by spending time with him and

by **being willing to change** what needs to be changed in our lives.

- We strive to be people **focused on the Incarnation**: the Crib, the Cross, and the Eucharist. We **frequently meditate on the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ**, coming to know him well through the **Gospels**. We **receive communion frequently** because we know he is present in the Eucharist.
- We use our God-given gifts in the **service of others**, but we **avoid seeking recognition**.
- We try to **live simple lives**: we strive to be not “showy.”
- We live the **spirit of poverty**: We **esteem work** and work hard to support ourselves and our families, but **money and possessions are not our goal**.
- We live **detachment**: we strive to be **focused on Christ** rather than on possessions or personal recognition. **We don't cling to the world, to possessions, or to a personal agenda**.
- We strive to be **generous**: we strive not to be addicted to wealth, pleasure, power, position, or honor. **We serve when asked, but we serve gratuitously**.
- We strive to be **joyful, kind, gentle, and merciful**: Franciscans strive to be **willing to forgive**; when we need to correct others, we do so gently and with love.

- We **support the mission of the Church**: we help to move it forward by our participation and collaboration
- We **evangelize through our example**: we also **evangelize through our service to others** (our apostolates)

So, what we do, is to bring our baptismal commitment to life with a Franciscan flavor. We have promised this with all our hearts. We are not perfect, but in fraternity we work together to become more and more Christ-like.

## A Third Order

The Secular Franciscan Order is a lay Order in the Church, established by Saint Francis of Assisi. Its membership spreads across the globe, and is intimately tied to the religious Franciscan Orders and the Church. Secular Franciscans are a people of promises, not vows. We are formed through prayer and study for a period of two years or more.

Once professed, we become full members of a fraternity, gathering by regular monthly meetings, liturgies, retreats and other ways of deepening our spirituality, praise and love for the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and for each other.