

FRANCISCANS: prayer; We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for the life of good deeds which God designed for us. Ephesians 1:17-19 & 2:10

My name is _____ I'm a Secular Franciscan Since _____

Francis was born into a wealthy family. His father sold cloth which was in demand. Francis had a love of life and partied with his friends. In 1202 he took part in a war between Assisi and Perugia. He was captured and held prisoner for a year, when he was released he was seriously ill so returned home. He later attempted to join a court Gentle against Emperor Frederick II. On his journey he had a dream that he should return to Assisi. And wait for a call to the new Knighthood. Francis had always wanted to be a knight for his city. God was calling him in a different direction. After his illness he liked to be in solitude and prayer, so he might know God. Where before parties and having a good time were his interest. At the ruined chapel of San Damiano outside the gate of Assisi Francis heard the crucifix above the altar command him. "Go Francis and repair my house which is in ruins," Taking this literally, Francis hurried home gathered fine cloth from his father's shop rode to Foligno and sold both cloth and horse. He tried to give the money to the priest at San Damiano, He refused it. Francis' father was angered and brought him before the Council Authorities. Francis refused this summons. Then his father called him before the Bishop of Assisi. In front of everyone He removed all his clothing and handed them back to his father. He was completely naked. He said "Until now I have called you father on earth, from now on I can truly say: Our Father who art in heaven," The Bishop gave Francis his cloak to cover up. Francis left the city. He stayed wherever he found a shelter. He renounced worldly goods and family ties, to embrace a life of poverty. He repaired the church at San Damiano, brick by brick working without rest. In 1208 as he listened at mass to the account of the mission of Christ to the Apostles. From the Gospel according to Matthew 10:7, 9-11 As you go, preach the message, "the Kingdom is at hand. Take no gold, no silver, money in your belts, no bag for your journey, not two tunics, or sandals, or staff, for the labourers deserve their food whatever town or village you enter find who is worthy in it stay with them until you depart. (Thomas of Celano) said this was the moment Francis changed. He declared: "This is what I wish This is what I am seeking This is what I want from the bottom of my heart" He then removed his shoes, discarded his staff, put on a

rough tunic and began to preach repentance. Francis soon attracted followers to this life style.

As his followers increased he needed to establish a Rule, this was something Francis didn't want but it was necessary. He opened the Bible three times picking out sentences these became his rule. Francis walked to Rome to present his rule to the Pope who did not except it. He returned home with the quest 'To follow the teachings of Jesus Christ and walk in his footsteps' He returned to Rome a year later his rule was excepted.

Francis and his brothers worked for their food, or begged some days they ate other times they did without. In good times or bad they always shared with those around them who didn't have anything.

Francis was a Stigmata He had the marks of Christ Crucified. Other saints who followed St. Francis were: St. Anthony Padua, St. Padre Pio. St. Faustina

Crib: 1223 Francis celebrated the birth of Jesus by reincarnating the manger scene at Bethlehem at a church in Greccio Italy. The people came with candles and torches, Francis sang the Gospel with delight, then he preached about God, s great love in becoming human and living among us. During the mass a man had a vision, he saw the child laying in the manger lifeless. He saw Francis go to the manger and arouse the child. He held him in his arms, The child was alive. The vision reflected reality. Francis gave the people a new sense of reality of the presence of Christ.

SECULAR FRANCISCANS: On Francis's travels one day he meet a husband and wife who did works of charity, cared for the sick, lodging to pilgrims, helped widows and orphans, they wore a rough tunic of a simply peasant with a rope around the waist, they had others who joined them in this idea of living. Francis gave these followers a rule of life, those turning to God from sinful life. They had a prayer life, could live at home, make their wills so there would be no family strife later. They now had a rule they could follow give all they had, help in all occasions follow Gods

As Secular Franciscans we meet as a community everyone has a say and shares stories and any religious happenings, we support each other in time of need, At our meetings we collect tithe each person puts in what they can. Each year we sent Money to Provincial to cover each active member this helps with their

costs, any money over we give to local charities. We do not carry a bank account what we bring in we give to local charities. As a group we pray the Liturgy of the hours. Spend time in Gospel reading. Catch up on local events.

The tau cross that some Franciscans wear. The Tau cross is an ancient symbol. Ezekiel spoke of people being marked with an X or T to indicate belonging to God. St. Francis used the Tau to sign his name, he used it to identify the crucified Jesus, Throughout Franciscan History the Tau has been a sign of commitment for us. It reminds us of the love of Jesus. The cord with the Tau we wear has 3 knots representing Poverty Chastity Obedience

Chastity: watch how you dress. Obedience daily prayers and remember you represent Jesus. Charity support where you can. It is more involved than this.

On October the 4th we celebrate the death of St. Francis. Or sister death as he called it. Francis looked around the hut He looked at the faces of his brothers and prayed for each of them, he asked Brother Elias to strip him of his habit so that he could lie totally poor on the ground. Brother Elias did as Francis requested, but put another habit on Francis saying in that voice that brother used "father Francis I am lending you this habit in Holy obedience, You have no right of ownership of it, so I forbid you to give it away or to remove it from your body, Francis was ecstatic,

Lady Poverty had sent brother Elias to him at the very end to deprive him of his own will once more and still let him keep faith with his desire to die with nothing of his own on his back. Now as he lay on the cold ground, the final joy shot through his whole body. He would die now like Jesus his brother and Lord poor and clothed only in borrowed habit. The brothers were all weeping praying now.

Francis was waiting for his. Lord he died in the Lord.

May the Lord Bless you, Protect you from all evil. And bring you everlasting peace.

Amen.