

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the three vows that you profess as a Franciscan Friar? The vows we profess as consecrated Religious are Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience. They are also known as the 'Evangelical Counsels', and are reflective of the life Jesus Himself lived on earth. Through being loyal to these vows we become imitators of Christ, and coheirs to eternal life.

What ministries could I get involved with as a Franciscan Friar? The Franciscans were not founded for any one particular ministry, but to preach the Gospel through our example in whatever environment we find ourselves, regardless if we are a Brother or Priest friar. In saying this, we do have some ministries that our friars are regularly involved with; outreach to the poor and underprivileged; ministry to parishes, shrines, youth, hospitals, prisons, schools, universities; we host retreats and days of recollection; we promote Marian Consecration; some friars are teachers and academics, others are craftsmen and good with physical work. We are always open to new ideas and opportunities to minister to God's people.

What are some of the 'claims to fame' of the Conventual Franciscans? Whilst we never go out of our way to seek out 'fame' or privileges, the Lord has indeed blessed our Order with some amazing responsibilities. We are the official confessors in St. Peter's Basilica, Rome; we are the custodians of both the Basilica of St. Francis, Assisi, and the Basilica of St. Anthony, Padua; we are responsible for campus ministry at the Catholic University of America, and various other colleges and schools; we have custody of three famous shrines where Eucharistic miracles occurred, Lanciano and Siena, Italy, and Walldürn, Germany. We have had six Popes including Sixtus IV who introduced the feasts of the Immaculate Conception and St. Joseph Husband of Mary, and built the Sistine Chapel (which is named after him); Julius II who established the Swiss Guards, and hired Michelangelo to paint the Sistine Chapel; and Clement XIV who suppressed the Jesuits during a time of much controversy. In 2012, The remains of King Richard III of England were found buried in the remnants of a 'Greyfriars' Church in Leicester. In the US, we run the National Shrines of St. Maximilian Kolbe, IL, St. Kateri Tekakwitha, NY, and Our Lady of Consolation, OH.



OLHC Australian Delegation

The worldwide Franciscan Order was founded by St. Francis of Assisi in 1209. Our Australian Mission was established in 1954, and became a Delegation of the St. Bonaventure Province (USA) in 2012. St. Francis' simplicity, love for the Eucharist, and devotion to the Virgin Mary remain at the heart of our Delegation. This solid Catholic foundation unifies the friars as we live our 800 year tradition of Gospel fraternity and deep love for the Church.

Our Franciscan identity is further shaped by the life and mission of St. Maximilian Kolbe, our confrere who founded the world-wide Militia Immaculata movement (M.I.) and became a "Martyr of Charity" in Auschwitz (+1941) when he gave up his life in place of another prisoner. We strive to further his mission of evangelization by promoting Marian Consecration and expanding Catholic media to build up the "Culture of Life".

We live our vocation together as we serve in parishes, centres of spirituality, and international friaries. Our friars are immersed in the life of the local Church as we celebrate the richness of our liturgical traditions. Our Catholic and Franciscan heritage also focuses our ministry of reaching out to those in need through sacramental, spiritual and practical service.

Each friar contributes to the mission of the Delegation as he engages his many God-given talents and skills. Preaching, teaching, nursing, counselling, youth ministry, chaplaincy, retreat work, writing, creating graphic design and developing media resources, cooking, tailoring, and sharing musical and artistic abilities are just some of the ways we are helping to build up the Kingdom of God; we are always welcoming of new and innovative ways of bringing the Gospel to others through good works and examples.



CONVENTUAL FRANCISCANS

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"Come Follow Me!"

Could God be calling you to be a
Franciscan Friar?

PRAYER & SACRAMENTS

CHARITY & SERVICE

MARIAN DEVOTION

LIFE IN COMMON



About Us

Following in the footsteps of the great saint from Assisi, the Franciscan Order has served the Church for over 800 years. The Conventual friars trace their roots right back to St. Francis and the beginning of the Order in 1209. Known traditionally as the **'Friars of the Community'**, we embrace a life that is both fraternal and charitable, not only amongst ourselves, but to all whom we meet; we have always lived in bigger communities with our 'friary' as a home base for whatever ministry with which we may be involved.

Franciscans have always had a big **devotion to the Blessed Mother of God**, but thanks to the motivation and efforts of the great Conventual Saint, Maximilian Maria Kolbe, the Immaculate Virgin Mary has taken a greater place in the hearts of the friars and the devotional life of the Order.

Because the Conventual Franciscan Friars recognised the importance of a **good academic formation**, we have a long history of being big contributors to the Arts, Sciences, Humanities, Music, Architecture, Writing, Exploration, Education, Medicine, Theology, and Philosophy. Still to this day we have many friars who are experts in these fields and are continuing to impact the wider world.

Saint Francis was a man **dedicated to prayer** and the preaching of the Gospel through example. As his spiritual sons, we too strive to live a life with God always at the center; through our witness we hope to inspire others to encounter Christ in a deeper and personal way. We pray together in common the Liturgy of the Hours, come together for devotions and the Sacraments, and have private time to pray throughout the day.

Discernment

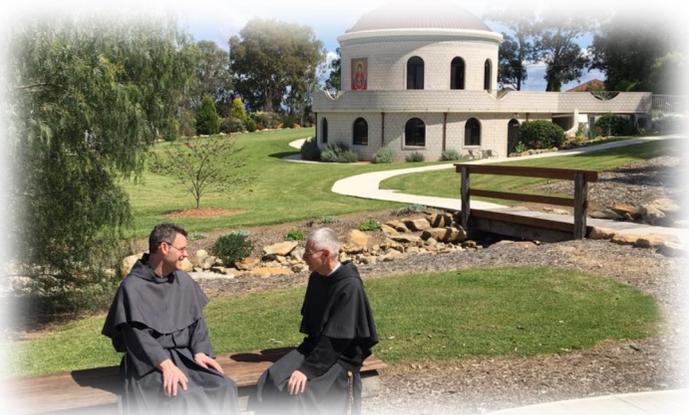
Thinking and praying about where God might be leading you can be a frightening thing, and you may not be immediately ready or willing to take that step.

It is important that before making any decision that you take time to **dialogue with God**. You should maintain an active prayer life—Communication is key to any relationship, including with Him who is guiding your heart and mind and wants to use you as an instrument for his peace and love.

A **good spiritual director** is a neutral party, a priest or religious, who is able to regularly meet with you to discuss the feelings and inspirations you might be encountering during this time is strongly encouraged to assist you in your discernment and give an informed perspective on things you may be unsure about.

Once you feel ready and comfortable enough to take the next step, **contact the Vocation Director** of our Australian Delegation. He has had much experience journeying with men like yourself who are considering a vocation to the Franciscan Order and is here to walk with you through this period of discernment. The Vocation Director will help to encourage and guide your discernment, spiritually and informatively. He will invite you to 'Come and See' weekends or special events to give you a better feel for the community.

If you and the friars believe that the Conventual Franciscans are indeed where the Lord might be calling you, then, with the help of the Vocation Director, you would undergo the **application process** and complete any requirements before officially beginning Formation within the Order.



Requirements

Single Catholic men aged 18-40 may apply to the Order. Before you can begin formation there are a few necessary requests that have to be fulfilled to ensure you are ready or able.

During the application process you will need to provide some **letters of recommendation** from your Parish Priest, and at least two others. You will also need to provide any **High School or Tertiary Education transcripts; Sacramental certificates; undergo medical, dental, and psychological examinations**. Any outstanding financial **loans should be paid off** before joining the order. Talk to the Vocation Director about these requirements.

This might sound like a lot, but this is to ensure that all who apply to the Order are of sound mind and heart and are here for the correct reasons. It is a great preparation and you do learn a lot about yourself through this process. Once your application has been reviewed and approved by the Vocation Board, you will then be able to take the next step in your Franciscan Discernment.

The Formation Process

Initial formation within the Order usually takes about five or six years, broken up into three stages (Postulancy, Novitiate, and Post-Novitiate), regardless if you are discerning to be a Franciscan Brother or Priest. Each stage allows you to deepen your discernment and to gradually introduce you to the life of a Franciscan Friar and the daily routine of prayer, ministry, and community living. Throughout formation it is important to continue seeing a spiritual director for guidance and support. At each stage you will have a team of dedicated Directors to assist you in your formation and to be good role models of Franciscan living. It is important to take every advantage of these blessed experiences. For more detailed information please see our website.