



Franciscan

Friars

# CONVENTUAL

EST.  
1209



FRANCISCANVOICE.ORG

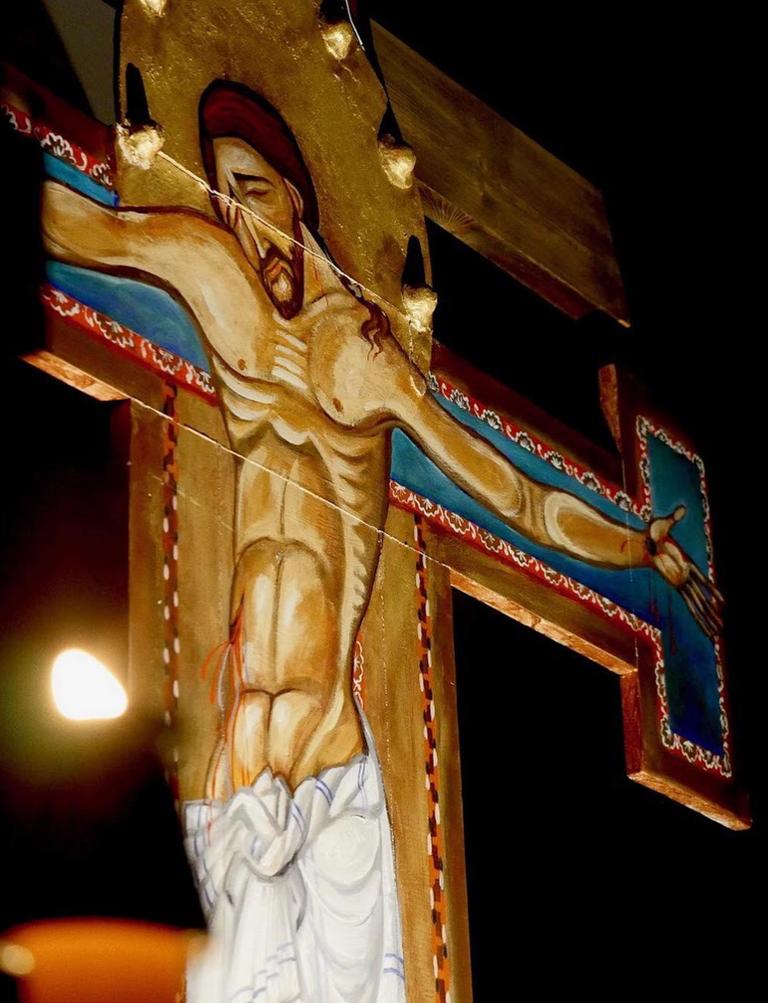
CHAT W/ OUR  
VOCATION DIRECTOR

[vocations@olaprovince.org](mailto:vocations@olaprovince.org)

202-681-6051

Franciscan Friars Conventual  
Vocation Office  
1359 Monroe St. NE  
Washington, DC 20017





*Pax et bonum!* Peace and all good!

If you've made it as far as this page, it likely means you've been feeling God tugging at your heart lately.

This viewbook offers an introduction to the **Franciscan Friars Conventual**, a religious order that has been part of the life of the Roman Catholic Church for more than eight centuries. Inside, you'll learn about Francis of Assisi, Franciscan spirituality, the Conventual charism, our ministries, and the process for becoming a friar.

A verse from the Divine Office calls Saint Francis a "thoroughly Catholic and apostolic man." Francis' legacy was his refreshingly *authentic Catholicism*, which manifested the joy of the Gospel. We strive to follow Christ in that model of our founder: to be refreshingly **Real** and thoroughly **Catholic**.

We hope this serves as but a starting point for your deeper exploration of our brotherhood.



Saint Francis was born in the Italian town of Assisi in 1181 or 1182. His father was a successful cloth merchant with big plans for his son. He was only too happy to outfit Francis with the equipment needed to become a knight.

Francis' military glory was short-lived; he was captured and spent a year as a prisoner of war. This sobering failure led Francis to reexamine his dreams.

On a reflective walk one day, Francis stopped to pray in the crumbling chapel of St. Damian. There, he had a mystical experience of Christ speaking to him from the crucifix. *"Repair my house, which you see is falling into ruins."* Francis took this literally and began to rebuild the little church. Such behavior brought his father's anger, especially when Francis stole cloth to raise funds for the repairs. Dragged before the bishop, Francis renounced his inheritance, declared God his only father, and entrusted himself to the Church.

Francis encountered much ridicule, but also started to attract other young men from the town, who recognized in Francis something they'd been lacking. They joined him in repairing churches, ministering to lepers, and preaching penance.

In 1209, with more men joining Francis and his companions in their life of ongoing conversion, the group visited Pope Innocent III to ask the Holy Father's permission for this new brotherhood. Very quickly, the Franciscan Order spread beyond Italy.

# ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI



BASILICA OF SAINT FRANCIS, ASSISI, ITALY

# FRANCISCAN SPIRITUALITY

## INCARNATION

“Hold back nothing of yourselves for yourselves, that He Who gives Himself totally to you may receive You totally!”

- Francis of Assisi, “Letter to the Entire Order”

## PENANCE

“Do penance, performing worthy fruits of penance, because we shall soon die.”

- Francis of Assisi, “The Earlier Rule”

## EUCCHARIST

“O sublime humility! O humble sublimity! The Lord of the universe so humbles Himself that for our salvation He hides Himself under an ordinary piece of bread!”

- Francis of Assisi, “Letter to the Entire Order”

## THE PASSION

“But we can boast in our weaknesses and in carrying each day the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ”

- Francis of Assisi, “Admonition V”

## MARY

“Holy Virgin Mary, among the women born into the world, there is no one like you: daughter and servant of the Most High, mother of Christ, spouse of the Holy Spirit.”

- Francis of Assisi, “Office of the Passion”



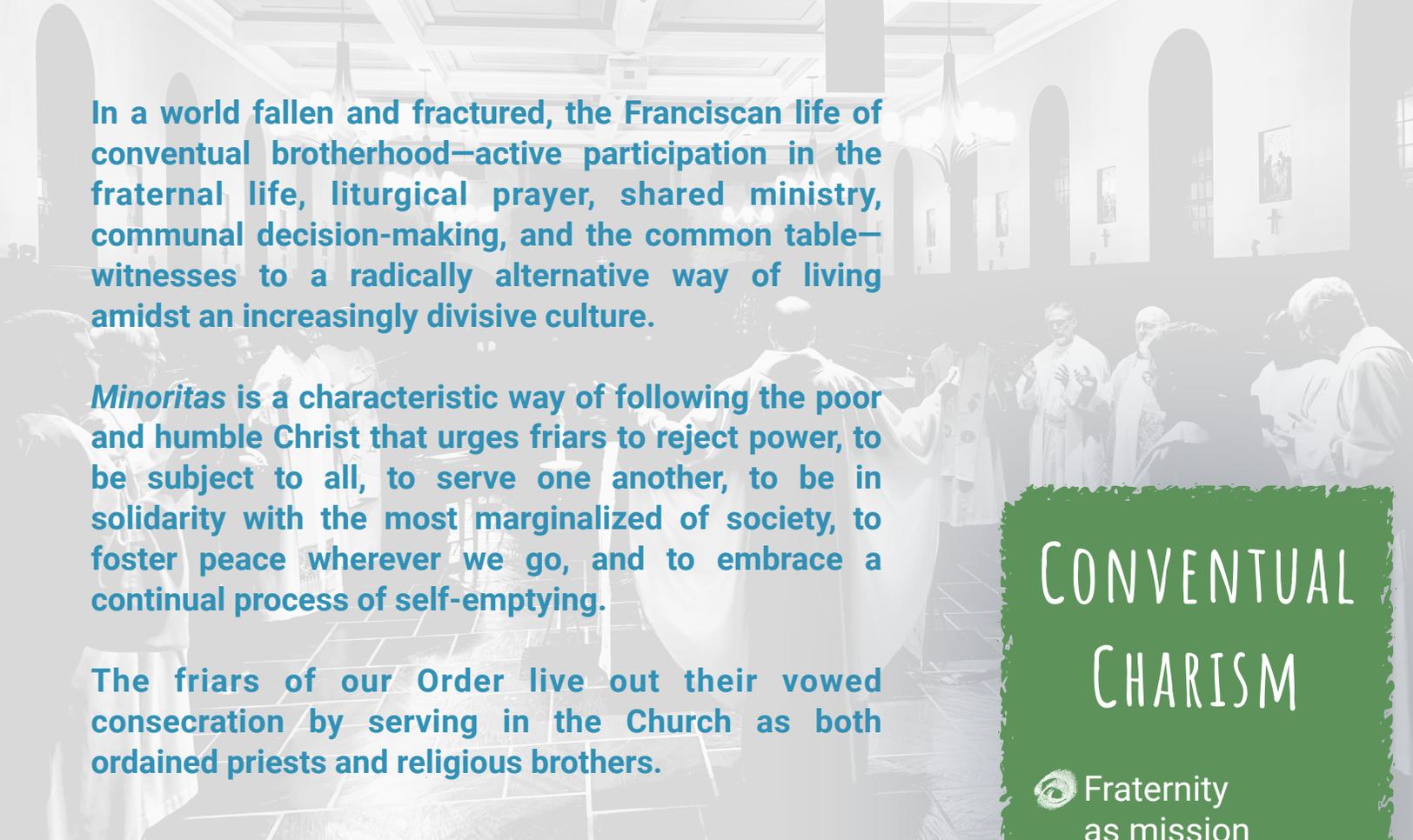
# CONVENTUAL TRADITION



The Franciscan Friars Conventual (sometimes referred to as the “Grey Franciscans” due to the color of our habits) is one of the three branches of the First Order of St. Francis. The word *conventual* comes from the Latin meaning *to come together*; we live together in *convents*, usually called *friaries*.

Francis indicated two fundamental Gospel values as essential to the spiritual charism (the way a particular group puts faith into action) of the Order: **fraternitas** and **minoritas**.

In his final Testament, Francis rejoiced in the fact that “*the Lord gave me some brothers.*” Franciscan spirituality gives primacy of place to the fraternal life of the friars. From the Conventual perspective, our life in *fraternitas* is the primary ministry we offer to the life of the Church. For most religious orders, community life is the means to an end; it makes doing ministry more practical. For Conventual Franciscans, community life is an end and ministry in itself.



In a world fallen and fractured, the Franciscan life of conventual brotherhood—active participation in the fraternal life, liturgical prayer, shared ministry, communal decision-making, and the common table—witnesses to a radically alternative way of living amidst an increasingly divisive culture.

*Minoritas* is a characteristic way of following the poor and humble Christ that urges friars to reject power, to be subject to all, to serve one another, to be in solidarity with the most marginalized of society, to foster peace wherever we go, and to embrace a continual process of self-emptying.

The friars of our Order live out their vowed consecration by serving in the Church as both ordained priests and religious brothers.



## CONVENTUAL CHARISM

- 👁️ Fraternity as mission
- 👁️ Fidelity to the Magisterium
- 👁️ Service to the outcast & marginalized
- 👁️ Emphasis on the nobility of the liturgy
- 👁️ Care for Creation
- 👁️ Academic development
- 👁️ Peace-building
- 👁️ Flexibility in ministry



## MINISTRY AS A FRIAR

Many religious orders were founded to exercise a specific apostolate within the Church. The Franciscans were not. Francis formed a fraternity, whose members often continued the trades they practiced before joining the community. If the work you do serves Christ and helps rebuild His Church, it's work you can do as a friar!

Friars minister as **parish priests**, high school teachers, school presidents, university campus ministers, professors, directors of religious education, nurses, lawyers, administrators of food pantries, social workers, counselors, retreat house directors, hospital and fire chaplains, EMTs, media specialists, scholars, and even bishops!



# MORNING

- ☀️ Wake-Up Routine
- ☀️ Morning Prayer
- ☀️ Mass
- ☀️ Breakfast

# DAYTIME

- ☀️ Ministry
- ☀️ Midday Prayer
- ☀️ Lunch
- ☀️ More Ministry

# A FRIAR'S DAY...

- ☀️ Personal Time
- ☀️ Night Prayer
- ☀️ Bedtime Routine

# NIGHTTIME

- ☀️ Evening Prayer
- ☀️ Dinner
- ☀️ Fraternity

# EVENING



## POSTULANCY

**WHAT IS IT?** An immersion experience, living & learning the friar lifestyle

**HOW LONG?** 1 year

**WHERE?** Chicago

## NOVITIATE

**WHAT IS IT?** An intense, retreat-style, deep-dive into your Franciscan vocation

**HOW LONG?** A year and a day

**WHERE?** Arroyo Grande, CA

## POST-NOVITIATE

**WHAT IS IT?** Studies\* and training for ministry as a priest or brother

**HOW LONG?** 3 - 7 years

**WHERE?** Washington, DC or San Antonio, TX

RECEPTION OF THE HABIT

PROFESSION OF SOLEMN VOWS & LIFELONG COMMITMENT

FIRST PROFESSION OF VOWS

ORDINATION

### \*BROTHERHOOD PATHWAY

- Undergraduate degree
- Graduate study or professional training for chosen field of ministry
- Ministry Experience (1 year)

### \*PRIESTHOOD PATHWAY

- Undergraduate degree
- Pre-Theology (2 years)
  - 30 credits Philosophy
  - 12 credits Theology
  - 6 additional credits (usually language)
- Graduate Theology (4 years)
- Ministry Experience (1 year)
- Diaconate Experience (6 months)

# THE FORMATION JOURNEY

# THE PATH AHEAD...

## APPLY.

When you—in dialogue with the vocation director—feel you're ready to take the risk of following the Lord's call, you'll go through an application process. Basically, it's a lot of paperwork.

## ARRANGE A VISIT

to one or more of our friaries. You wouldn't discern marriage without dating, so how can you discern religious life without getting to know a community?

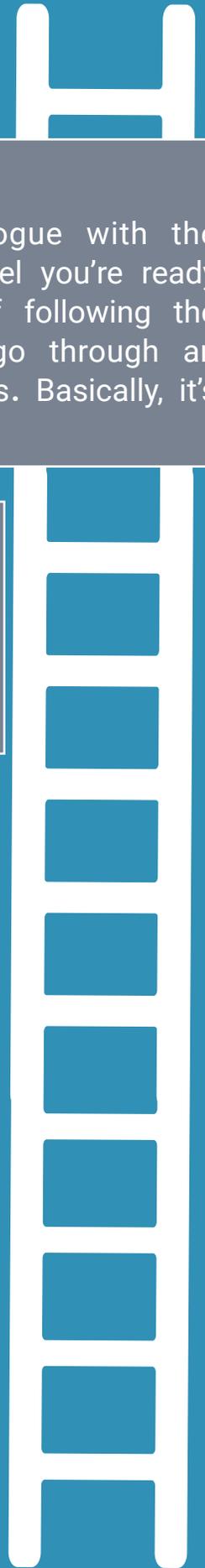
Email our **VOCATION DIRECTOR**, who is happy to offer guidance and companionship along your discernment journey.

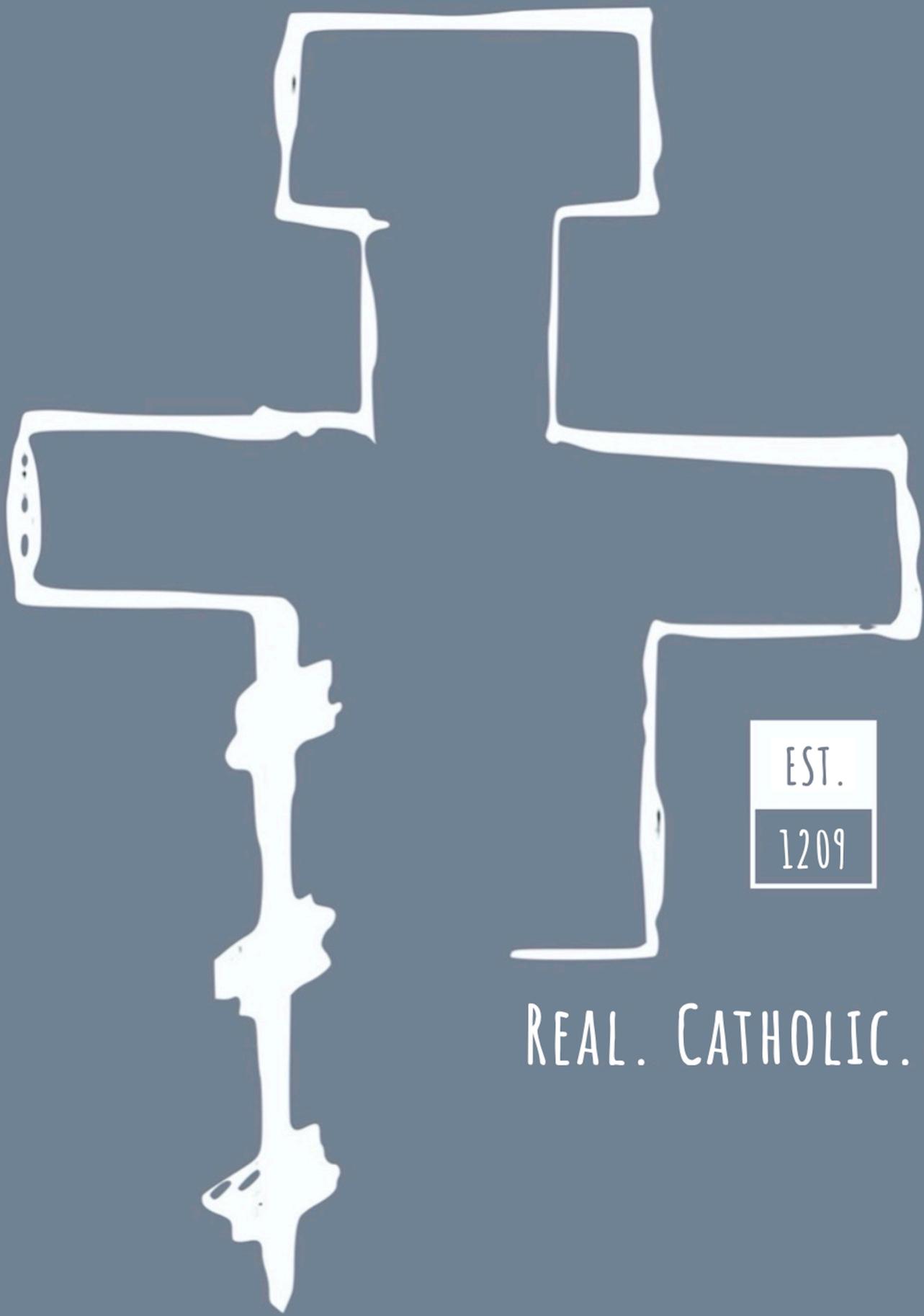
## Get a **SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR**.

Don't have the first clue how to go about finding one? Your parish priest or a vocation director can help.

## PRAY.

You can't discern how God is working in your life without talking with Him about it.





EST.  
1209

REAL. CATHOLIC.