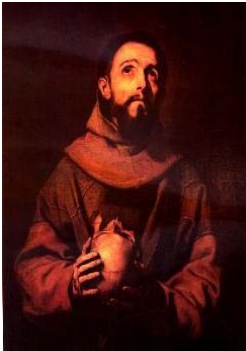


FRANCIS (www.ofm.org)



Francis was the son of a rich trader and lived from 1181-1226. His Father was an Italian cloth merchant and his mother was thought to be French. Throughout his early years he showed a great desire to help the poor and to work for the Church. This annoyed his Father who punished him and became increasingly angry. Eventually Francis renounced his inheritance and his ties to his Father. He quickly gained followers and they became famous for their devotion to the poor, to the Gospel and to nature. Francis was a friend of St. Dominic and was never ordained a priest. Rather he desired to be humble. He was ordained a deacon though, so that he would be allowed to read the Gospel in Churches.

The Franciscans are one of the largest and most respected orders of the Church. They are normally identifiable by their brown habits. Their numbers include ordained priests, brothers (both called friars), nuns and lay people. Their work includes education, parish work and work with the poor. The main group are the Order of Friars Minors, who have the suffix OFM after their names. There are also the OFMCaps, or *Capuchians*. A more recent addition is the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal (CFR).

Feast Day: October 4th

