

**REGIONAL FORMATION: SUMMER STUDY ON FRANCISCAN
SAINTS**

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI



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ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

1. St. Francis, like so many of us, had many challenges in his life. He was first a warrior and coming from a wealthy family was entirely drawn to the material world and its pleasures. He was extremely strong willed and followed his own desires. He, however, came to a tremendous conversion after having fought in a war and was taken prisoner. Lost, he began searching. In his searching, he encountered Christ. Christ told him to rebuild His church. He took this literally by working to rebuild an abandoned and dilapidated church. Eventually, Francis understood the real meaning of Christ's words. Francis knew he must renew the "CHURCH" inside of himself. He realized that he should now live a life of austerity, chastity, and poverty. He dedicated himself to preaching this new form of Christian life. He began to realize that the Holy Spirit provided to him a charism, a gift, to help renew the Church, the People of God, through the Holy Eucharist and unity within the Body of Christ. It is there that the Word of God resides in its fullness.

2. St. Francis was a gifted orator. He taught detachment from material goods and the importance of living a sober lifestyle. He shared the importance of Eucharistic Adoration, universal brotherhood, and love of Creation. He understood Nature as a language in which God speaks to us, in which reality becomes clear, and we can speak of God and to God.

3. St. Francis was a joyful, simple, humble, and loving man. He had a great love for God, Our Father. His goodness toward every man and woman was contagious. He brought gladness, joy, and holiness to all who encountered him. He gave guidance on how to love and serve the Lord and each other.

4. The life that St. Francis lived gives us hope and joy in knowing that Our Lord loves each of us, that we matter. That Christ's only desire is for all to be with Him in Heaven. Through his efforts,

he brought understanding between Christians and Muslims and helped to preserve the Christian Sites in the Holy Land, while under the control of Islam. These sites are still preserved to this day. He fostered such great love for all people in the Holy Land that even today Muslims frequently visit the Home of Our Lady in Ephesus.

Submitted by Mike Lenahan, OSF

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