

 St. Francis takes his vows

 On April 16, 1209, Pope Innocent III approved the first Franciscan Rule

 and the Franciscan Order received it canonical status.

 Renewal of Profession for the Secular Franciscans

 of the St. Elizabeth of Hungary Fraternity

 Sunday, April 18, 2021

INVOCATION:

Praised be to You, my Lord,

**All:** with all your creatures.

O God, come to my assistance

**All:** O Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit

**All:** As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever

*SONG: “My God and My All”*

Franciscan Psalm 7:1-5

Antiphon: Give the Lord glory and honor.

1. Clap your hands , all you peoples;

 raise to God a shouts of exultation and joy.

1. Because the Lord is the Most High God,

 The awesome, great King over all the earth

 For the most holy Father of heaven,

 Our King before all ages,

 sent the beloved Son from on high,

 Who planted salvation in the

 center of the earth.

1. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit
2. As it was in the beginning is now and will be forever. Amen

**All:** Antiphon: Give the Lord glory and honor.

**GREG:** SAINT FRANCIS AND THE FRANCISCAN RULE

One of the real treasures of the older, Franciscan *Omnibus of Sources* edited by Marion Habig\*, suggests that it was on April 16, 1209 that Bernard of Quintavalle and Peter Catanii joined Francis and became his first brothers.

*Anonymous of Perugia* 2:11 takes up the story this way. The three brothers had a priest open the gospels for them. Upon hearing the passages, *If you wish to be perfect, Whoever wishes to come after me,* and *Take nothing for the journey*, caused them to exclaim, "This is what we want, this is what we were seeking." Francis then announces to the brothers before the San Damiano Cross, "This will be our Rule."

He then led the group of 12 disciples to Rome to seek the approval of [Pope Innocent III](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Innocent-III-pope), an important step that demonstrated Francis’s recognition of papal authority. At first Pope Innocent III was hesitant, but, following a dream in which he saw Francis holding up the church of San Giovanni in Laterano, he gave oral [approbation](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/approbation) to the Franciscan rule of life. This event, which according to tradition, occurred on April 16, 1210, marked the official founding of the [Franciscan order](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Franciscans). (The [Friars Minor](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Friars-Minor), or Lesser Brothers)

**TONI**: Tradition Of Renewal of Profession for the St. Francis and the Followers

On April 16, Franciscans renew their vows in honor of St. Francis and his companions who made their vows into the hands of Pope Innocent III on this day in 1209.

Traditionally, the brothers would kneel in a circle around the altar after the celebration of Eucharist. They each carried a burning candle and prayed for the help of the Holy Spirit. While they did this, the local minister encourages them to renew their profession and the Blessed Sacrament is exposed. In the name of all the friars, the local minister thanks God for the gift of being called to follow St. Francis, asks forgiveness for any sins against the Rule, repeats the vows of his solemn profession and then asks for the grace to persevere in the Rule until death.

This form as expressed in the Rituale Romano-Seraphicum in 1955 has been modified by various communities today but still contains these essential elements of renewal of vows, the importance of the Eucharist, and the emphasis on the community life. The renewal of vows and promises is intended for Franciscans to recommit themselves to what they have already vowed and promised to God that they would do.

***BRO. PHILIP:*** *Brothers and Sisters, it has been a tradition each year on April 16 – the day on which Francis made his profession into the hands of Pope Innocent III to Renew Vows – we gather on April 18 and renew our Franciscan profession of promises. The purpose of this renewal is to recall the origins of our Rule, to recall the devotion of St. Francis and his companions as they promised to follow the holy Gospel, to recall our own fervor as we began this way of life, and to resolve to commit ourselves again to these ideals. Let us pray that with the help of God and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Francis, so that we may regain our initial fervor and re-commit ourselves to the life we have professed* – from **Franciscans at Prayer**

*Psalm 21*

Antiphon: Praise, glory and honor be to Jesus Christ, our Lord.

1. In your strength, O Lord

I rejoice in you my beloved.

And in your presence

my heart finds rest.

1. You heed the heart’s desire,

Answering the cry of the soul,

And you bestow blessings upon

blessings.

1. Your love is as crown of fine

gold upon my head.

I asked for life; and life

You did provide, and eternal

 life comes through your love.

1. All glory be yours, O loving Presence,

Splendor and majesty are your

raiment.

 *Yes Lord, your blessings are forever.*

1. Glory to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
2. As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen.

**CHRISTOPHER**: READING: The Anonymous of Perugia

 On the sixteenth of April, after one thousand two hundred and seven years had been completed since the Incarnation of the Lord, God saw that the people…had forgotten His commandments and were ungrateful for His goodness… God enlightened a man who was in the city of Assisi, Francis by name, a merchant by trade…It seemed to Francis that divine grace had suddenly made him a different man…He strove with all eagerness to fulfill the task God had shown him. He walked not in the learned words of human wisdom, but in the display and the power of the Spirit. (AP 3,6,9)

**CHRISTOPHER**: RESPONSE:

-- Each one served and took care of the others, as a mother serves her child. (All Repeat)

 --They loved one another from the heart – as a mother serves and cares for her child.

-- Glory to the Father and to the Holy Spirit, (ALL) Each one served and took care of the other, as a mother serves and takes care of her child.

All: Antiphon: Praise, glory and honor to our Lord, Jesus Christ.

RENEWAL OF PROFESSION PROMISES – ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGRY FRATERNITY

(Please have a candle to light when you are Renewing your Promises)



 From the Exhortation of St. Francis of Assisi

 to the Brothers and Sisters in Penance.

**SUE:** All those who love the Lord with their whole heart, with their whole soul and mind, with all their strength, and love their

neighbor as themselves, and hate their bodies with their vices and sins,

and receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and produce

worthy fruits of penance.

Oh, how happy and blessed are these men and women when they do these things and persevere in doing them because “the Spirit of the Lord will rest upon them” and he will make his home and dwelling among them and they are the children of the heavenly Father whose works they do, and they are the spouses, brothers, sisters and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Oh, how glorious it is to have such a great and holy Father in heaven! Oh, how glorious to have such a beautiful and admirable Spouse, The Holy Spirit, the Paraclete. Oh, how magnificent is to have such a Brother, and Son, of the Most High God, Our Lord, Jesus Christ!

*RENEWAL OF PROFESSION*

**SUE:** My Brothers and Sisters, as our response to the Lord’s call to us, heard so clearly in the words of our Seraphic Father, let us together renew our commitment “to follow Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi.”:

**ALL:** “Let us bless our Lord and God, living and true; to Him we must attribute praise, glory, honor, and blessing and every good forever.”

We thank you, Lord, for calling us to the Franciscan Way of Life. We ask Your pardon for all our shortcomings, weaknesses, and transgressions against our commitment to the Gospel Life and the Holy Rule of our Secular Franciscan Order.

We pray Lord, that you will allow us to experience once again the fervor and readiness of that day when we responded to your grace of ongoing conversion by entering the Order of Penance after the example of St. Francis of Assisi. With all our hearts and the whole of our beings, we renew our Profess Commitment to the Gospel Way of Life according to the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order, until the end of our days.

Most high and glorious God, grant also that we may life in peace and harmony with all our brothers and sisters of the human family, and especially those with whom we share the Catholic, Christian Faith.

May we give and ever-more effective witness by our lives of simplicity, minority, humility, penance, and service to the great gift we have received from You: our Franciscan calling to “go forth as witnesses and instruments of the Church’s mission among all people, proclaiming Christ by our life and words” “All praise be yours, O Lord, through all that You have made.

**SUE:** My brothers and sisters, it is with great joy that we have renewed our Franciscan Profession Commitment to observe the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the Rule of our Order. Our seraphic Father himself encourages and blesses us in these words of his Testament:

**SR. LYNN**: May whosoever observes all this be filled with the blessings of the Most High Father, and on earth with that of His Beloved Son, together with the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, and the powers of heaven and all the Saints.” All: Amen

CONGRATULATIONS DEAR SECULAR FRANCISCANS, THE TRINITY, THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY AND ST. FRANCIS ARE SMILING DOWN UPON YOU TODAY!

**TONI:** INTERCESSIONS

O God, we have received your word and strive to follow you faithfully, Hear us

 we pray.

* Open our eye to your way O Lord – **help us to follow you without counting the cost.**
* Loosen our tongue to sing your praise; - **assist us to appreciate our vocation.**
* Free our ears to listen to your word; **so that we may hear your Word in the Gospel.**
* Strengthen our hearts and hand; - **make them responsive to your loving challenges and empowered in our desire to serve.**

FOR WHAT ELSE SHALL WE PRAY FOR:

CLOSING PRAYER FOR THE MEETING

O God, we marvel at your goodness to us whom you have called to be your people, inviting us to the fullness of life and joy in your presence. Keep us faithful to our promises and make our Franciscan service worthy of your calling. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, who lives with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

SISTER LYNN: BLESSING:

May the Lord bless you. **Amen.**

May the Lord look favorably upon. **Amen.**

May God give you peace. **Amen.**

May God bless you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

