

Example by StudyDriver

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St. Francis of Assisi Example

Saint Francis of Assisi Throughout the history of the Catholic Church, there have been only a few people fortunate and deserving enough of the title of “saint”. Originally named Giovanni Francesco Bernardone, St. Francis of Assisi is honored as the patron saint of animals and ecology. He lived a life of complete obedience, humility, and poverty. He was a guy who was truly in love with the Lord and wanted to follow in his teachings. He was a man willing to give up his belongings to help those less-fortunate.

Despite his death many years ago, his life still continues to have a tremendous influence/impact on the Catholic Church today. Born in Italy in the year 1182, Francis was a determined and very spirited child that any father would be proud of. As a child, he had a lot of good qualities and a lot of wealth which attracted many friends. Growing up, he had planned to pursue a trade following in his father’s footsteps, but due to a vicious public dispute, at about age 20 he stepped away from his father and joined into the military.

As part of the military during a battle in the year 1201, Francis was taken prisoner of war and held captive for almost an entire year. This event took a toll on his body and he became so sick that he nearly died and it took him several months to recover. This was a crucial turning point that would change the life of St. Francis forever. It was

during this period of captivity that, for the first time in his life, he did some serious meditating on the lord. He truly began to fall in love with God at this point. One day after a strange vision, Francis returned to Assisi to care to the sick.

After taking a pilgrimage to Rome, Francis had a dream in which God called him to repair his Church. He interpreted this literally as a command to physically repair the Church of San Damiano, a ruined Church near Assisi where he would occasionally go to pray. Therefore, Francis went to the Church with his tools and tried to repair many Churches. Soon, however, Francis would grow into the realization that God wanted him to be an advocate, and eventually a leader, of the Catholic Church by carrying out God's mission.

After a few years, Francis heard a sermon that changed the way he lived his life. The sermon was of Matthew 10:9, in which Christ tells his followers to go out and proclaim the Kingdom of Heaven and not take any money with them. This inspired Francis to live a life of simplicity and apostolic poverty by giving up all his rights and possessions and preaching repentance. A townsman named Bernardo di Quintavalle soon joined Francis in this life of poverty and repentance. Shortly within a year, Francis had about eleven fellow followers and they became somewhat of a brotherhood in Assisi.

The brothers lived a very simple life, full of cheer, spending most of their time wandering around Umbria, Italy. Everywhere they traveled, they left a deep impression on all those willing to listen. In about the year 1209, Francis and his eleven followers went to Rome to seek permission to form a new religious order. Reluctantly, Pope Innocent III agreed to informally admit the brotherhood. Over the course of time, the brotherhood increased in size and numbers and eventually became what is known as the Order of Friars Minor (the first order), more commonly known as the Franciscans.

After founding the order, the Franciscans traveled all over Italy preaching for people to live a life of Christ; they emphasized simplicity, poverty, and relying on God's will. St. Francis's influence on the Catholic Church did not stop with the foundation of the Order of Friars Minor. In the year 1212 Clara Sciffi, a girl from a noble family in Assisi, became so enriched and mystified by the teachings of Francis that she left her family to join him and his

followers. Being the only woman, her dedication to holiness and poverty had inspired the Franciscans to accept her.

She was transferred to a convent and after about four years, she founded her own order based on the strict principles of severe poverty set by Saint Francis. This order eventually became known as Poor Clares, or the Order of Poor Ladies (the second Franciscan order). This order quickly began to spread and, as of recent, there are an estimated 20,000 Poor Clare nuns in over 76 countries around the world. Throughout his life, many married men and women wanted to embrace St. Francis' lifestyle as well.

However, due to the fact that they were married, they were not able to enter into the first order, the Friars, or the second order, the Poor Clares. Therefore, as a result, St. Francis founded a secular order in which married men and women could belong to and live by the Gospel. Today, this third order of Franciscans is known as the Secular Franciscan Order. In the year 1982, the Franciscans saw the potential for an effective Franciscan input at the United Nation. By 1989, Franciscans International was recognized as an official non-governmental organization, effectively uniting the voices of the Franciscan brothers and sisters around the world. It serves not only Franciscans, but the entire global community as well, by incorporating Franciscan ethical and spiritual values into international organizations. Franciscan International follows in the footsteps of St. Francis and St. Clare, as they attempt to put their ideals into action at an international level. Sadly, the beloved St. Francis died on the evening of October 3, 1226. Although born into wealth, his life became one of simplicity, poverty, and humility that became instilled in many. He worked only for God, caring for the poor and unfortunate.

Thousands of people were drawn to his eagerness and enthusiasm for a life of Christ. Through his actions, St. Francis sought to demonstrate a life similar to that of the Gospels. He was always able to find God in anything and everything that he did. As St. Francis once said, "If you have men who will exclude any of God's creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who deal likewise with their fellow men. " Even after his death, his establishments/foundations continue to keep his name alive and continue to have an influence on Catholicism.

Around the world the traditions of St. Francis continue today with Franciscan-run schools, hospitals, shelters, and many other services to help the poor. Bibliography 1. [https://www. franciscansinternational. org](https://www.franciscansinternational.org) 2. [https://www. newadvent. org/cathen/06217a. htm](https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06217a.htm) 3. [https://conservation. catholic. org/st__francis_of_assisi. htm](https://conservation.catholic.org/st_francis_of_assisi.htm) 4. [https://www. franciscanfriarstor. com/archive/stfrancis/stf_detailed%20biography%20of%20st. %20francis. htm](https://www.franciscanfriarstor.com/archive/stfrancis/stf_detailed%20biography%20of%20st.%20francis.htm) 5. [https://www. catholic. org/encyclopedia/view. php? id=4838](https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=4838)