

How to Start a Franciscan Youth Group In Your Parish



*Heavenly Father,
You clothe us with your love every day.
Help us to be aware of the needs of others.
Teach us to share with those who do not have enough.
We ask this in Jesus' name.
Amen*



FIRST THINGS FIRST

- Enlist the support of OFS Fraternity
- Be prepared to explain our Secular Franciscan calling to the pastor and parishioners, parents
- Talk to the pastor about starting a Franciscan Youth Group
- Ensure OFS Volunteers have Abuse Prevention Training
- Advertise in the Church Bulletin/Announcements & Poster Board visible to check out after Masses
- Tell the local school principal what will be happening – put a notice on school website

ENLISTING PARENTS' SUPPORT

Invite interested parents to come to a short meeting after weekend Mass if possible

Assess which age group is most likely to join

Talk to the parents about Franciscan spirituality and how a Franciscan Youth Group can help their youngsters or young adults grow in their faith

Give a brief outline of what will happen at a Franciscan Youth Meeting

Ask the parents when is the best day, time and frequency for the students to meet?

BASIC PLANNING FOR A MEETING

- Start with a prayer or a song
- Story or video about the life of Francis/Clare
- Active & Fun Activity – ping-pong, ball hockey
- Statue or Picture of St. Francis & Candle (if permitted)
- Game, craft, role play/pageant or study time on the life of Francis & Clare or planning a parish/community/outreach activity
- Snack
- Sharing – Ask participants - one thing to take away from session?
- Closing prayer & Good Byes - Reminder about next meeting date, place and time

Ideas For little Friends of Francis 5 to 8 years – 1 Hour Session

- Fun, Interactive - Invite family participation

Story about Francis & Clare

Active & Fun Activity: Hokey-Pokey or “Simple Simon Says”

Arts & Craft: coloring page/card/placemat, Dress-Up as Francis & Clare, Helping with Spuds & Splits refugee fund raiser, Franciscan Fine Arts & Poster Contest

Snack

Sharing Time : What was fun about being here?

Closing prayer and reminder about next session – Arrange date, place and time



Ideas for Friends of Francis 9 to 12 years

- Like to Join with Friends
- Need a goal or project to work on – solicit ideas from the students

Start with a prayer

Short story or DVD of Francis & Clare

Active & Fun Activity: floor hockey, ping - pong, charades from from lives of Francis & Clare

Arts & Crafts: card making for a senior, thank you card for a special person, learn to knit & sew easy projects, Franciscan Fine Arts & Poster Contest

Snack Time

Project Planning: Introduce students to the idea of participating in the life of the Parish by discussing how students can help with Children's Liturgy, be an altar server or a junior proclaimer or join a parish Children's Choir if available

Remind the students that they can have a helping role in the Community – plant a Community Franciscan Garden with a senior, be a gardener with grandpa or grandma, walk a neighbour's dog or shovel a senior's snow in the winter

Sharing time: A take home idea?

Closing Prayer and reminder about next meeting – date, place and time



Ideas for Young Franciscan Youth

13 to 16 Years

- Like to join with friends & may have questions about their faith
- Need a project to work on

Start with a Prayer

DVD or short movie or story about life of Francis

Active & Fun Team Building Activity: Ping – Pong, Floor Hockey

Arts & Crafts: Franciscan Apron making, knitting scarves for the homeless, Franciscan Fine Arts & Poster Contest

Project Planning: Student led ideas such as food bank drive, cookie bake sale, Franciscan Community Garden, Climate Strike Walk, Valentine's Tea with someone special, tour of the Church & Sanctuary & Scavenger Hunt – Introduce Liturgical Year, vestments, altar vessels

Also: Introduce teens to parish activities such as helping with Children's Liturgy and explore what young teens can do in the community – visit Seniors Lodge & talk to, read with seniors and help with computer skills, run errands, plant a garden with a senior

Sharing Time –A take home idea?

Closing prayer and reminder about date, time and place for next meeting



Franciscan Youth/Young Adult/YOUFRA

16 to 30 years

Who They Are and What They Do

Youth and young adults are concerned about the future and the environment and many global and local issues and want to make a difference in the world.

They often seek a deeper faith life. They ask questions like “Why be a Catholic?” and “Why follow in the footsteps of St. Francis?” and “How do I pray?”

As Secular Franciscans, we foster the growth and vitality of our Franciscan youth and young adults. The local Fraternity makes room for them and encourages them to meet our Secular Franciscan brothers and sisters and invites them to participate in specific ministries of the fraternity.

We know that the youth are social people who want to be with their friends so we provide peer-directed meetings with a Spiritual Assistant and a Secular Franciscan Fraternity Animator or Guide for the formation of the youth in their human, Christian and Franciscan dimensions. They meet weekly or bi-weekly to live together together their relationship with God and for prayer, formation, action, recreation and fun.

After a period of formation or study they make a Promise before God and their brothers and sisters to live and love the Gospel according to the example of St. Francis of Assisi and continue to be active in their Franciscan Youth/Young Adult/YOUFRA Fraternity.

IDEAS FOR FRANCISCAN YOUTH/YOUNG ADULT/YOUFRA MEETINGS



The Franciscan Youth/Young Adult/YOUFRA member:

- Enjoys being with his/her peers
- Likes to know he/she is contributing to the group
- Is discerning his/her calling in life
- Loves to help others
- Gives input on the format of the meeting

Suggested Format:

Ice-breaker

Prayer, song or movie on the life of Francis

Active & Fun Activity to build teamwork: ping-pong, floor hockey, charades

Snack

Formation and Group Work

Participants report on involvement in Community and Church Activities

Sharing Time – A take home idea from the meeting?

Closing Prayer and reminder about date, place and time of next meeting

Community Activities:

Visit a Seniors Lodge and sing, play music with the residents. Read to a senior or tell stories about Francis and Clare to young children at a local school, volunteer at the food bank, work at a Friendship Meal with local OFS fraternity members

Church Activities:

Become a Proclaimer, Eucharistic Minister, join the choir, start a Children's Choir, lead the Children's Liturgy, Volunteer at Parish social and fundraising events

Future Project Planning Ideas for Franciscan Youth/Young Adult/YOUFRA:

Share a meal and small gift with OFS Fraternity, An Evening of Reflection and Eucharistic Adoration, faith testimonials, guest speakers, organize a "Greccio" Christmas Pageant, create a Youth Speakers Bureau, plan a retreat with other Franciscan Youth Groups, go on a pilgrimage or a World Youth Day or a retreat to a friary or a monastery, host a Blessing of the Animals Day, plant a Franciscan Garden with produce going to the local food bank, organize a children's "Canticle of the Creatures" work bee and family concert

Resources available at Universal Church Supplies, Edmonton, AB & Holy Family Catholic Gift and Book Store, Langley, BC

Franciscan Youth:

Francis of Assisi - Keeper of Creation ISBN 978-0-7648-2327-5

Francis of Assisi – The Saint & His Wonderful Story ISBN 978-88-270-0606-1C

Saint Francis of Assisi ComicColor Saints ISBN 8- 8198-7113-3

Francis and the First Nativity ISBN 9780882713007

St. Francis of Assisi CTS Children’s Books ISBN 978 -1-86082-562-0

St. Clare of Assisi CTS Children’s Books ISBN 978-1- 86082-848-5

Emeline the Cat And Brother Francis Who Taught Her Love ISBN 978-2-89688-506-0

How to Be a Hero – Train With the Saints ISBN 0-8198-3453-X

Audio CD Cat Chat for Kids Vol. 3 Amazing Angels & Super Saints

Young Adult/YOUFRA

Live Like Francis – Reflections on Franciscan Life in the World ISBN 978-1-61636-971-2

Living & Serving in the Way of St. Francis ISBN 978-1-61956-466-4-51295

To Live as Francis Lived ISBN 0-86716-396-8

Christus Vivit - Pope Francis’; Apostolic Exhortation to Youth & Entire People of God ISBN 13: 978-1-68192-491-5C

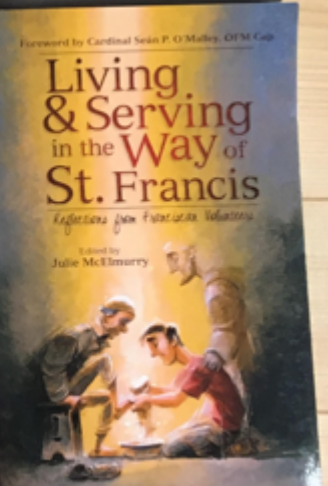
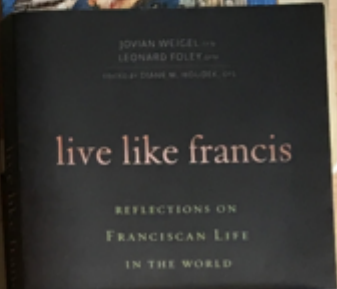
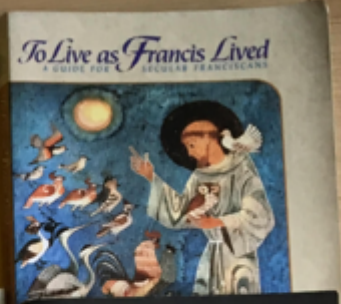
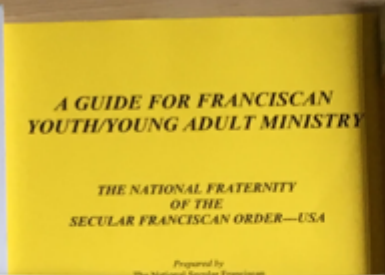
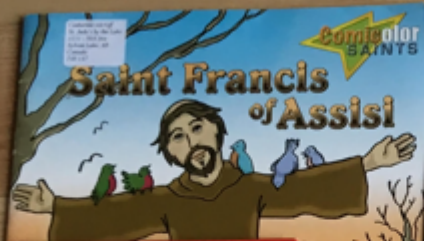
You can also order this worthwhile resource for your Fraternity:

A Guide for Franciscan Youth/Young Adult Ministry

Smoky Valley Printing /USA.

Contact Person: Linda at 785-227-2364

COST: About \$20 U.S funds /mailing added



BENEDICTION OF SAINT FRANCIS

*Now, wherever we are,
and in every place,
and at every hour,
throughout each time of each day,
may all of us honestly and humbly believe.*

*Holding in our hearts,
to love, honor,
adore, serve,
praise, bless,
glorify, exalt,
magnify, and give thanks
to the Most High and Eternal God,
Trinity and Unity.*

Amen