

## Saint Francis of Assisi

**Directions:** Read the biography and answer the questions.

Saint Francis of Assisi grew up as a rich and charismatic young man. He lived a lavish lifestyle thanks to his father's successful business. He dreamed of fame and fortune as a knight fighting in the twelfth-century crusades. Much to his father's disappointment, however, Francis never achieved the glory of a knight or the success of a businessman. Through a series of encounters with the Lord Jesus Christ, Francis was called to deny his wealth and let God provide for him instead. He renounced his father's business and support to choose instead a life dependent on God and the generous donations of the people who saw him begging in the streets. While praying before the Cross of San Damiano, Saint Francis heard God call him to "rebuild my church." At first he interpreted this to mean physically building up the church in Assisi, but later he realized God was calling him to rebuild the Catholic Church, whose leaders were giving in to temptations of greed and selfishness. Francis is the founder of the religious orders of Franciscan friars and nuns that have become a significant influence in the Church for hundreds of years. Franciscans dedicate their lives to poverty, preaching, and praying to continue Saint Francis's mission to rebuild the Church.



1. What did God call Saint Francis of Assisi to do with his life?

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2. What possessions would be the hardest for you to give up if you were to become a poor Franciscan?

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3. Why do you think people followed Saint Francis of Assisi so passionately?

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