

University of Notre Dame
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What Is The Third Order ?

St. Francis of Assisi, himself not a priest, founded three orders -- the first for priests ... the second for nuns ... the third for men and women, married and single who, though occupied in trades and professions in the world, want to live a more nearly perfect Catholic life.

The Third Order is truly a religious order for people living in the world. It offers to lay men and women a clear definition of what constitutes their spiritual perfection. It provides ideals, aids, and advantages that direct and assist members toward the perfection of their state in life.

The Third Order presents a system of life by which the Gospel teachings can be practiced more intelligently and effectively by laymen. Members are urged to offer Mass and Holy Communion every day -- however, the Rule requires Mass and Holy Communion only once a month. The Third Order Office, consisting of 12 Paters, Aves, and Glorias, is to be recited daily by members. There is a meeting every month that members are required to attend even at some sacrifice. Each tertiary always wears his habit -- a brown scapular, and the white Franciscan cord -- under his ordinary clothing. Members have the privilege of being buried in the full outer habit of the Order.

No rule of the Third Order binds in conscience. By failing to follow any of the prescriptions of the rule one simply forfeits the spiritual benefits attached to observance.

There are over 100,000 "tertiaries" (Members of the Third Order) in the United States alone. The local campus group had its canonical beginning in the spring of 1937. Great characters of history have been among members of the Third Order: Christopher Columbus, Raphael, and Michael Angelo, St. Thomas More, Daniel O'Connell, and Terence McSweeney, Francis Thompson and Matt Talbot. The popes have enthusiastically encouraged the spread of the Third Order.

The Third Order does not exclude a normal Catholic lay life. As a matter of fact, that is exactly what it fosters. It does not exclude membership in any other Catholic society such as the KC's, or St. Vincent de Paul, or Liturgical Life, or Y.C.S. It encourages Tertiaries to join in the work of such organizations.

Third Order members, although aiming primarily at their own sanctification, devote themselves to the Spritual and Corporal Works of Mercy... Notre Dame Tertiaries take turns visiting sick students in the infirmary, tending to their needs, and informing rectors and roommates of their wants. Tertiaries also help the Prefect of Religion in whatever capacity they are able -- canvassing the halls for First Friday adoration, leading the recitative Mass, etc.

If you are interested and want further information, come to Room 15 in Sorin hall anytime before January 28. Candidates will be received shortly after that date.

Prayers Requested

Deceased: father of Loretta Brennan (Arts & Letters office); Michael Brezas, '52 (jet crash in Korea); William Shea (Alumnus); father of Sister Margaret Anne, CSC (Infirmary); aunt of Mike Ward of Dillon; father of Ed Gilbert of Morrissey. Ill: aunt of Leo Petalle (Off-Campus); grandmother of Bill Tolle of Zahm; Joe Bihn of Cavanaugh (operation); father of Prof. Vincent Smith (Philosophy Department).