



VOCATION STORY: Friar Matt Foley, OFM Conv.

My name is Friar Matt Foley and I'm the new Director of Campus Ministry at St. Francis High School in Hamburg, NY. I am originally from the Boston area and I come from a large Irish Catholic family. I am the second of seven children. My parents worked hard to provide us with a Catholic education. When I was in high school, I figured out that I was going to go to college in Washington DC, study politics, and attend law school.

I attended the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC and it was there that I met the Franciscan friar who served in the Campus Ministry Office. He encouraged me in my discipleship and to pray more. I started to attend daily Mass and adoration. His goal for me was holiness, not to be a priest or a friar, or a husband and father, but instead to figure out what God wanted me to do and then do it to the best of my ability.

I started to meet more of the friars and they impressed me. They were men who loved God and those who they served. I was even more impressed seeing them in community: praying together, ministering together, even teasing each other. I felt that it was with these men that God was calling me to minister to his people.

I graduated from CUA and I started in our formation program. Each year has brought new blessings and challenges. I have learned a lot about God, the Church and myself. There have been numerous opportunities that I would not have experienced were I not a friar. I have been blessed to work with young people, teaching them and preparing them for the sacraments, working with the poor in the United States and Honduras, being immersed in the Hispanic culture and Bolivian church and the Franciscan family. I worked with the sick and dying at hospice and as a hospital chaplain. I have received a fantastic theological education, which has deepened my relationship with God and how I pray. Each of these moments, I have been blessed to share with my brothers. They are and continue to be there to pray with me, laugh with/at me, or they are there when I need an ear to listen.

All these experiences have made me the friar I am today: for better or worse! I am grateful to God for his goodness to me by giving me brothers.

If you are interested in Franciscan Life, please contact fr. Russell, Vocation Director at: vocations@olalprovince.org, www.franciscans.org @conventuals1223 or 718- 510-5822.