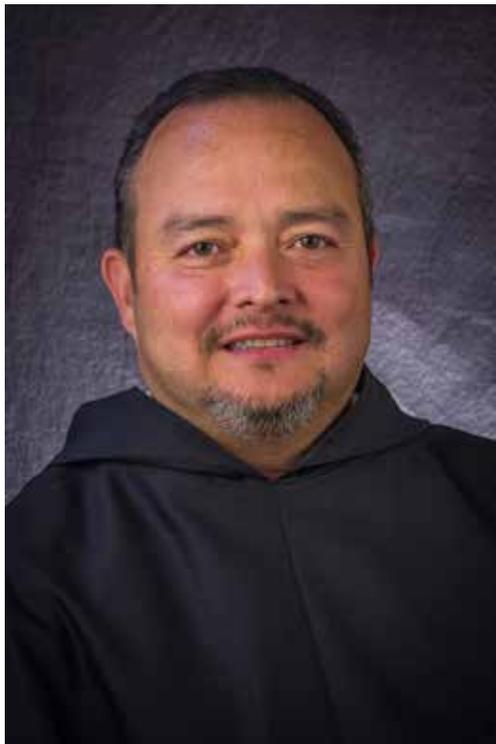


# GATHERED INSPIRED SENT



## CALLED TO SERVE

ORDER OF FRIAR SERVANTS OF MARY  
Vocation Newsletter



**A** religious brother is a member of a Religious Order and commits himself to following Christ in consecrated life. We commit ourselves to the church through the vows of Chastity, Poverty, and Obedience. As a brother we exercise our priesthood by virtue of our baptism. We are not ordained, but we consecrate our hearts in service of God and discern our particular calling to serve God's people based on our unique talents and gifts. My

parish priest and mentor when I was a young man shared with me this thought on what a brother is, he said, "being a brother means building and breaking bridges, celebrating victories and mourning losses together. Being a brother means so many different things to so many people, but it all comes back to passion and compassion."

It is this passion and compassion that keeps me rooted and in the center of the lives of people I sit with in the pews. I like to say that I enjoy sitting and ministering to the people of God directly from the pews. I feel one with them and with their needs. Being a brother is a journey that enriches my life every day, and I see that in the eyes of the people I come in contact with; especially when my interaction with them has been a positive and life (God) giving one.

My vocation story and decision to become a brother is unique. I found myself in my early 30's working as a business manager at a Servite parish in central Florida. The pastor at the time invited me to a Vocation Retreat which was to be held in Chicago. I

must say my reaction to that invitation was as I said earlier, unique. I recall answering to the invitation by saying "I don't want to be a priest." The reply from my pastor was one I had never expected. He said, "In order to be a religious, you don't have to be a priest; you can be a Brother." I recall that something stirred within me... something like an awe moment where it all made sense. I said to my pastor, "give me a couple of days while I think and pray about this." Afterwards, I recall talking with three people very dear and near to me, at the time, about this invitation to attend a vocation retreat and each affirmed what I knew all along. It was at this moment that my discernment journey began, a journey to discover what God had intended for me.

The first part of that journey was getting to know better the Order Friar Servants of Mary, and that was initiated through another invitation to join the Secular Order of the Servites. So, while I discerned to enter the Servites I became a promised member of the Secular Order. It was there where I discovered that our Blessed



Mother Mary had something special in stored for me. It was within that journey of discovery that I found my Yes to follow in her footsteps as a disciple and follower of our Lord. And in the spirit of total self-giving and service everything came to fruition and I attended the vocation retreat and my life was forever changed from that moment on. That Yes became the driving force behind my call as a Consecrated Brother.

As a Solemn Professed Brother I have been blessed with the support of my brother friars at each of the communities I have been assigned to. Whether a Brother or a Priest, living together in community, we are equals because we all made the same religious vows. We find support and nurturing in our common hood as Friars, as Brothers. We pray together, celebrate Mass in community, eat together and work earnestly with much zeal as servants to each other, and to the people of God.

God of mercy and compassion, thank you for the extraordinary life, witness, and ministry of Religious Brothers in our Church. In your wisdom, you have called these ordinary men to generously serve, pray, and share your healing love with others. As we prepare for our annual Religious Brothers Day, deepen our appreciation for the vocation of Religious Brothers, their congregational charisms, and their commitment to vowed community life. Strengthened by our baptismal call to holiness, inspire us to invite men to consider religious life as a Religious Brother. Grant all Religious Brothers the grace and perseverance they need to proclaim your Holy Word for the life of our Church and our world. Amen.

**Vocation Directors**

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**follow**



That Yes led me to begin my formation as a pre-novice in Chicago, then to Italy for the novitiate and back to Chicago and finally to Anaheim, Ca where I made my Final Vows. My ministerial experience has been focused in education and catechesis, but I've also worked as vocation director for the Order. I spent some time as a theology teacher to high school freshmen, followed by a very life-enriching and fulfilling journey as Director of Religious Education for two Servite parishes. Working both with students and people in schools and religious education programs gives me much hope for the future of the Church. I am blessed to have planted these seeds and pray daily that through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and of our Blessed Mother Mary these fruits come to fruition.

As you can see this is only a glimpse of my vocation journey and life a Religious Brother. Along the way I had many people around me who truly supported and prayed for my vocation. If you find yourself contemplating on becoming a Religious Brother start with your closest friends whom you think will be open to understanding your desires from union with God and service to others. Talk with your parents, your pastor, and the vocation director of the communities in which you are interested in.

Fraternally,

Bro. Arnaldo M. Sánchez, O.S.M.

Currently I sit on the Provincial Council as part of the leadership team and my ministry is to the Province and the Friars as Provincial Secretary and Treasurer.

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