



Opening and Closing Prayers  
for Fraternity Meetings and Gatherings

The prayers suggested below are given only as examples.



### Opening Prayers

When the members have gathered together in a suitable place, before any business is taken up, the minister of the fraternity may begin the community prayer in a manner similar to this.

**Minister:**

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.**

**R: Amen.**

**Minister:**

**Most High, all powerful, good Lord,  
Yours are the praises, the glory,  
and the honor, and all blessing.<sup>1</sup>**

**R: Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks  
and serve Him with great humility.<sup>2</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> Saint Francis of Assisi, “Canticle of the Creatures” in *FA:ED* 1:113.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

**Minister:**

Let us pray. (Pause)

**Let us bless the Lord God living and true!**

**Let us always render Him praise, glory, honor, blessing  
and every good.**

**Amen. Amen. So be it. So be it.**<sup>3</sup>

**R:** Amen.

Or,

Let us pray. (Pause)

**Most High, glorious God,  
enlighten the darkness of our hearts  
and give us true faith,  
certain hope, and perfect charity,  
sense and knowledge,  
Lord, that we may carry out  
Your holy and true command.**<sup>4</sup>

**R:** Amen.

A short reading may follow from Sacred Scripture or from the writings of Saint Francis (See Appendix I).

At some point during the gathering, it is appropriate to include a liturgical celebration, especially Morning or Evening Prayer from the *Liturgy of the Hours*. See Appendix III for other options.

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<sup>3</sup> Saint Francis of Assisi, "The Office of the Passion" in *FA:ED* 1:141.

<sup>4</sup> Saint Francis of Assisi, "The Prayer Before the Crucifix" in *FA:ED* 1:40.

## ❖ Closing Prayers

If it is opportune, there may be a time for spontaneous prayer or for intercessions for the general needs of the Church and the particular needs of the fraternity. Then the minister of the fraternity offers a prayer of Saint Francis, for example one of those below (See also Appendix I):

### **Minister:**

**Let us pray.** (Pause)

Almighty, eternal, just and merciful God,  
 give us miserable ones  
 the grace to do for You alone  
 what we know You want us to do  
 and always to desire what pleases You.  
 Inwardly cleansed,  
 interiorly enlightened  
 and inflamed by the fire of the Holy Spirit,  
 may we be able to follow  
 in the footprints of Your beloved Son,  
 our Lord Jesus Christ,  
 and, by Your grace alone,  
 may we make our way to You,  
 Most High,  
 Who live and rule  
 in perfect Trinity and simple Unity,  
 and are glorified  
 God almighty,  
 forever and ever.<sup>5</sup>

℟: **Amen.**

Or,

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<sup>5</sup> Saint Francis of Assisi, "A Letter to the Entire Order" in *FA:ED* 1:120-121.

**Let us pray. (Pause)**

**Most generous God,  
you are the giver of peace and the lover of charity.  
Grant to us your people true harmony with your will,  
and help us to overcome all temptations  
that could disturb our peace.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.**

**R: Amen.**

If the spiritual assistant is a priest or deacon, he concludes the prayer by conferring the traditional blessing of Saint Francis. If the spiritual assistant is not ordained, any priest or deacon present should be invited to confer the blessing.

***Priest or Deacon:***

**May the Lord bless you and keep you.**

**R: Amen.**

**May his face shine upon you,  
and be gracious to you.**

**R: Amen.**

**May he look upon you with kindness,  
and give you his peace.**

**R: Amen.**

**May the Lord bless you,  
+ the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.**

**R: Amen.**

In the absence of a priest or deacon, the presider concludes by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross.

**Presider:**

**May the Lord bless us and keep us.**

**May his face shine upon us,  
and be gracious to us.**

**May the Lord bless us,  
and give us his peace.**

**℟: Amen.**

**National Prayer for Vocations to the  
Secular Franciscan Order**

**O Good and Gracious God,  
God of mercy, compassion, generosity, and love,  
as we live our lives today in the model of St.**

**Francis,**

**choosing daily to live the Gospel life,**

**Help us to help others hear Your call.**

**Help us to help others to recognize**

**their vocation as a Secular Franciscan**

**that You have already planted in their**

**heart. Help us, so that together we all may work  
to bring the Gospel to life. Amen!**

**Composed by Marian R. Crosby, OFS  
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in Scottsdale AZ**

