



**Franciscan Friars  
Holy Name Province  
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**For Immediate Release**

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**PHILADELPHIA FRANCISCAN PRIEST AT ST. FRANCIS INN  
MARKS 50 YEARS AS A FRIAR WITH HOLY NAME PROVINCE**

PHILADELPHIA — June 22, 2010 — The Rev. William DeBiase, OFM, a team member of St. Francis Inn ministries here, is marking this month 50 years as a member of the Order of Friars Minor in July, more commonly known as the Franciscans. He is affiliated with Holy Name Province, headquartered in New York City, and serves the hungry, the homeless and the poor at St. Francis Inn, the Province's 30-year-old soup kitchen.

The Brooklyn, N.Y., native was a missionary for nearly three decades in Japan, from 1966 to 1994, ministering most recently at the international Franciscan Chapel Center in Tokyo. He also served as missionary in the Holy Land, and for a brief time in India.

Over the years, his ministry has included work at Siena College in Loudonville, N.Y., a Franciscan college sponsored by the Province, and as a hospital chaplain; he now serves part-time at Lourdes Medical Center in Burlington, N.J. He is also a preacher with Food for the Poor, a relief agency serving the Caribbean and Latin America, and is an active Internet blogger, evangelizing through his postings called "Franciscan."

DeBiase, 78, earned his bachelor's degree from St. Bonaventure University in Allegany, N.Y., and a master's degree from Siena College. Philosophy and theology studies were completed at St. Francis College in Rye Beach, N.H., Holy Name College in Silver Spring, Md., and at St. Joseph Seminary in Callicoon, N.Y.

**About St. Francis Inn**

St. Francis Inn is a Franciscan community that ministers to the poor and homeless of Philadelphia. Formed in the spirit of the Gospel and inspired by the life and compassion of St. Francis and Clare of Assisi, it tries to meet the immediate daily needs of the people it serves with food, clothing and hospitality. It empowers people to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty, and address structural injustices.

**About Holy Name Province**

Holy Name Province is one of seven provinces in the United States that belong to the Order of Friars Minor. Holy Name is the largest U.S. province, with ministries in 12 states along the East Coast. Its more than 350 Catholic priests and brothers serve in colleges, parishes, urban ministry centers and a wide variety of social ministries, as well as in overseas missions.

The Order, founded in 1209 by St. Francis of Assisi, commemorated its 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary last year. Today, St. Francis, whose feast day is Oct. 4, remains one of the most widely-known saints, revered for his affection for nature and care for creation.

Information about Holy Name Province can be found on [www.hnp.org](http://www.hnp.org)

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