

Brother Giles Maria of Kankakee

I was born on January 24th, 1980 in the small town of Kankakee, IL. For the majority of people who do not know where this is, Kankakee is an hour south of Chicago. I was raised in the middle of the country. My parents, Ken and Michelle, have been the youth ministers in my home parish for over 20 years. I have one older brother, Brent, who is a police officer. He was just recently married on September 29th. I went to a small public grade school and a Catholic high school. I played baseball growing up and I played football and wrestled in high school. I was very involved in the Church growing up through my high school days. The youth group my parents are the head of gave me many opportunities to serve the poor in the community.

I attended Illinois State University and received a degree in history. I then attended graduate school at Western Illinois University for a year. At this time in my life I drifted away from the Church. I left graduate school to build homes for the poor in Juarez, Mexico. While doing this work, I had a big conversion back to the Lord. With this conversion came a call to religious life. I started to investigate this call slowly. I spent a year and a half working with the poor and then moved back to Illinois to discern the call. After some spiritual direction and a few recommendations, I found the friars.

Living this life has been great so far. The prayer life, our brotherhood, and our work with the poor are drawing me closer to Christ every day. Many people have already asked me about the name I took so I feel that I should explain. Blessed Giles of Assisi is my patron. He was one of the original companions of St. Francis(the third one to join). He was known for his simplicity, humility, and his deep prayer life. There are many stories of Blessed Giles but his living of the Franciscan life is a great model for myself.

Blessed Giles of Assisi . . .Pray for us.