



22 April 2008, #160

# Capuchin Vocation Update Province of St. Joseph

## Strength through Community by George Real Bird, Capuchin Novice

*(George Real Bird continues our series in which the newest members of the Midwest Capuchins and those aspiring to join them describe what they seek in Capuchin religious life.)*

The expression of our Capuchin fraternity is essential and valuable to my understanding of God's desire for me. The Capuchin way of life is about relationship. As Franciscans, we strive to create community, fraternity, or sister-brotherhood with all of God's creation.

I'm very much a follower of St. Paul's theology on Jesus Christ. Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, he exhorts us. Starting from our baptism into the Body of Christ, we were set apart to be a Christian community. Our parishes exemplify what it means to be a Christian community, and that's a common calling from our God. As Capuchin Christians, the Lord Jesus calls us to form community, to be community, and to be united in God's love for us and for the world.

Ultimately, I am about community. I was sold on Capuchin when I explored other congregations, institutes, and societies in the Catholic Church. All these other orders express community, but I want to express the Capuchin concept of community. Our buildings aren't our communities; it is the people inside that count. I can say that I love my brothers, yet I may not like all of them. "To be devoted to one another in brotherly love," (Rom 12:10) is bringing about God's kingdom in our communities, our Capuchin

province, our church, and our world. When we love one another, our Midwest Capuchin values of joyful service, hospitality, justice, compassion, empowerment and partnering are an awesome witness to how we express Capuchin fraternity.



George Real Bird

Specifically, the Province of St. Joseph has expanded its concept of community to include our partners in ministry. Basically, we've had partners all along. However, we never realized the potential of our volunteers, employees, and benefactors as partners. All these individuals contribute to our Capuchin way of life and manner of doing ministry, and express our Capuchin charism. However, to be truly Capuchin, our ministries need Capuchins. They need us throughout the

organization, not just at the administrative levels. Both of us are needed—Capuchins and partners.

Now that my novitiate is almost at its conclusion, I want to thank all my brothers and sisters, Capuchins and partners for their prayers during my postulancy and novitiate. That's what's important, to pray for one another. For me its truly Capuchin, Catholic, and even the Crow Indian way. This is what a Christian community does, and we will do it in a Capuchin way.

Until I see you again.

capuchinfranciscans.org  
1-773-475-6206