



9 June 2009, #192

## Capuchin Vocation Update Province of St. Joseph

### How Do I Know?

This is the most common question asked of Vocation Directors. It's not new, and guides for discernment continue to suggest the same kinds of steps toward an answer.

Such a guide was thoughtfully provided by Jesuit Charles Jackson in the fall edition of *Review for Religious* (63.3 2004). He situates inquirers' discernment within a call by God that goes well beyond what they are called to do. Rather, their call "describes the persons they are called to *be*." This includes "the personal qualities God intends their lives to have and ultimately defines them as persons." Discernment is based in "faith's understanding that God is ever 'at work' in our lives—inviting, directing, guiding, drawing us into the fullness of life." This type of discernment examines our responses to everyday life-events. Do they evoke joy, sorrow, peace, or anxiety? By examining our responses, we uncover God's direction and guidance. To do this successfully, Jackson says discerners need six preconditions:

- ◆ *Ability to reflect on the ordinary events of one's life.*
- ◆ *Ability to describe what one experiences.*
- ◆ *A habit of personal prayer.*
- ◆ *Knowledge of oneself.*
- ◆ *Knowledge of one's deepest desire.*
- ◆ *Openness to God and to God's direction.*

Those who possess these preconditions can begin their discernment by informing themselves about each option to which they feel drawn, praying for enlightenment, and repeating a process of evaluation, prayer and clarification that should move them toward a decision. Jackson provides three ways to do this:

- ◆ *Determine the reasons for and against each option.*
- ◆ *Reflect and pray about these reasons.*
- ◆ *Seek additional information or clarification.*

This reflection and prayer can pay attention to our responses to each life-option. In our responses, we discover the spirit that is at work in us. For instance, the Spirit of God works to encourage, and gives joy and peace. Whereas other spirits interject discouragement, anxiety, and fear. Jackson summarizes: "In other words, people seeking God can discover his direction and guidance by being sensitive to the affective responses their considerations evoke in them."

Another way to hear God's voice is to place ourselves in the presence of the suffering; whether that be through prayer, volunteer work, or by simply being aware of those around us in every day life who are ignored. By treating the often ignored with respect, like a sister or brother, we begin to know that ache of love God has for all people.

# Vocation Update

## They've arrived in Kansas! 2009 2-Month Novitiate Preparation Program



**Front row:** Vito Martinez (SJ), Nate Santos (Star of the Sea), Anthony Monahan (SC), Michael Greco OFM Cap (SM, team member), Parker Tiffany (SJ)

**Second row:** Ken Cole (Mother of the Good Shepherd), Quan Nguyen (SJ), Christopher Iwancio (OLA), Alan Trotter (SA), Brian Stacey (SA), Harvey Dinkel OFM Cap (SC, Treasurer), Matt Stillman (SM)

**Back Row:** Rich Reinhardt (SJ), Erik Lenhart (SM), Jim Froehlich OFM Cap (SA, team member), Frank Grinko (SC, team member), Manuel Chavira (OLA), Matthew Anselmi (SA), Matt Janeczko (SM)

**Awaiting the arrival of:** Jude Makin, John Nguyen, and Keirin Cummins (Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Province - Australia)

**Key:** SJ = St. Joseph Province, SC = St. Conrad Province, SM = St. Mary Province, OLA = Our Lady of the Angels Province, SA = St. Augustine Province

## Candidate Rooftop Cookout!

Saturday, July 11,  
4 P.M.

St. Clare Friary in Chicago

Contact Fr. John Holly 920-915-4400

[jholly1953@yahoo.com](mailto:jholly1953@yahoo.com) or

Br. Jerry Johnson 773-322-6561

[Vocation@capuchinfranciscans.org](mailto:Vocation@capuchinfranciscans.org)

For more information about the process to become a Capuchin

[www.CapuchinFranciscans.org](http://www.CapuchinFranciscans.org)