



20 July 2010, #247

Capuchin Vocation Update

Province of St. Joseph

St. Anthony Spirituality Center

by Dan Crosby, O.F.M. Capuchin

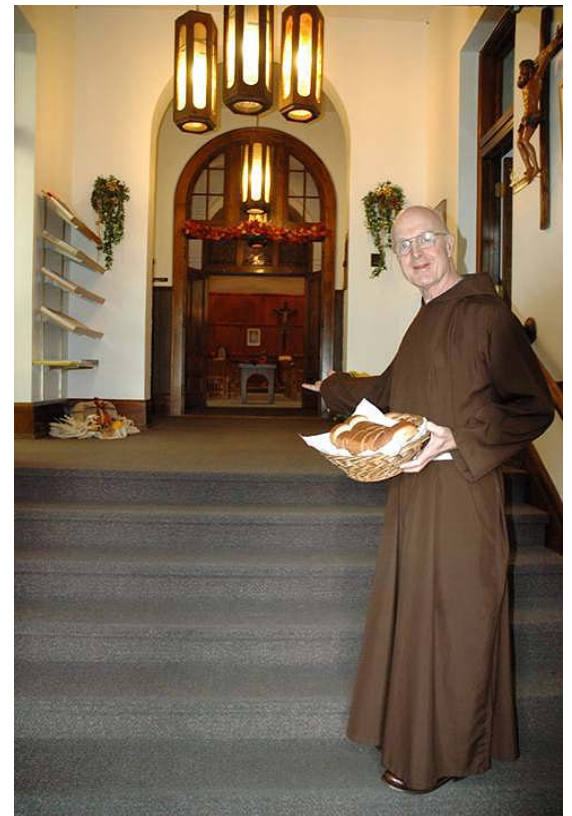
(Dan Crosby has been a Capuchin Franciscan Friar for over 50 years. When he was young, he thought he would be a Jesuit. They were smart and people looked up to them. But then during high school Dan transferred to St. Lawrence Seminary at Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin and through Capuchin professors and Brothers, he discovered St. Francis, with his poverty, peace and joy. "That changed everything - for life!" says Dan. "Francis is still my inspiration and challenge, my way to Jesus. I thank God for my vocation and all the Capuchins who have shown me the way.")

I've been asked by my Capuchin brother, Jerry Johnson, to share another part of the riches of our Capuchin Franciscan life and ministry. I'm delighted to do that.

For eighteen years I was enriched by living among the poor (you probably know this is an important part of our life as followers of St. Francis). I learned so much from them – first of all, at St. Benedict the Moor Parish and Meal Program in Milwaukee. I was enriched further – and for a longer time – by ministry among the Northern Cheyenne Indian people in Montana. God knows that I received more during these years than I gave, and I will be forever grateful to our Capuchin community for these life-deepening opportunities. They helped me experience something of an essential part of our Franciscan life: being with the lepers, the poor, people others look down upon.

For the last eleven years I have been enriched by another essential part of our Capuchin tradition: preaching the Good News of Jesus at one of our spirituality centers – Saint Anthony's Spirituality Center in Marathon, Wisconsin, ten miles from Wausau. As you know, Francis was a man on fire with the love of Jesus. Perhaps it would be truer to say that Francis simply opened himself to the fire of love Jesus had for him and for all people. "Look at the humility of God," he used to tell the friars; look at how humble God is in wanting to have us close to him; look at the love, the humility, the goodness! And then, brothers go out and let everyone know about this. This will change people's hearts; this will bring them the peace and goodness they long for – whether they are lepers or anyone else. Go out, two by two, the way Jesus sent out his disciples. Preach the Good News and *live* the Good News!

So, for the last eleven years my Capuchin brothers and I have been trying to do exactly this at Saint Anthony, just as other brothers are doing at our two other spirituality centers of our Capuchin



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Vocation Update

Province. What a hunger there is for this Good News – especially for the simple, down-to-earth, lived-out way Francis brought it to people. So often what people hear (even at times from churches where they come with their hunger and thirst) turns out to be *bad* news: feeling condemned for not being perfect, for not “living up to” all the requirements, rules and regulations of genuine Christian living. How people hunger for the Good News of the Gospel and how eagerly they drink in the hope, peace and joy it provides. It’s a privilege to be part of this Capuchin ministry, just as it was a privilege to be part of the Capuchin ministry at St. Ben’s or on the Reservation.

Thousands of people come through our doors every year seeking this Good News. Over and over again they tell us with a big smile and a sigh of relief: “It feels so great to be back home again.” Through their time with us, through our prayer together, conferences, spiritual direction and lots of quiet to be alone with God, they come to be even more at home. At home with themselves and this God who loves them unconditionally – and then asks them to go back and bring that same Good News to others in their homes, their workplaces – especially to those who might be considered “lepers” in their areas: the poor, the immigrants, those looked down upon.

Just as we Capuchins cannot carry on our ministries with the poor without the help of many devoted partners, so too in our spirituality centers: we could never do this all by ourselves. Many wonderful lay people who have caught the fire of Jesus’ love come as staff or volunteers to help us share this Good News with all the hungry, thirsty people coming to our doors.

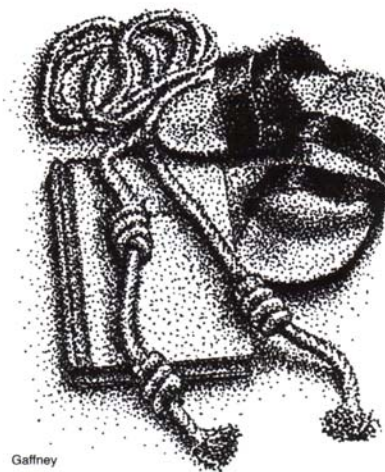
Hopefully, as you learn more and more about the riches of our Capuchin tradition and the many ways we try to be true to Francis’ fire, you might also find yourself at the doors of St. Anthony’s or the doors of another of our spirituality centers. You’ll always be welcome; we know you’re hungry and thirsty for Jesus’ Good News – and we love sharing it with you. To learn more, look up our websites: www.sarcenter.com (and then Monte Alverno’s in Appleton, Wisconsin and Capuchin Retreat’s in Washington, Michigan).

First Profession of Vows Ceremony

Saturday, July 31, 2010
St. Francis Parish, Milwaukee
10:30 AM Mass

Discerners who would like to attend, please contact:

Fr. John Holly 920-915-4400
jholly1953@yahoo.com or
Br. Jerry Johnson 773-475-6206
vocation@capuchinfranciscans.org
or visit www.CapuchinFranciscans.org
and click on <How to Begin>



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