

THE CAPERONE

VOLUME V ISSUE 6 - JANUARY 2014

**Dr. Martin
Luther King, Jr.**
his impact on one young
friar's vocation

Capuchins for Life
a novice share his experience
with the pro-life movement



MARCH *for* LIFE

“MORAL COURAGE IS A RARE COMMODITY”

ROBERT FRANCIS "BOBBY" KENNEDY

The landmark “I have a dream” speech first echoed upon 200,000 civil rights supporters in my hometown of Detroit, Michigan. The rally stretched throughout downtown Detroit and around the famous Woodward Avenue. You can probably guess how excited I was to hear that my grandfather, along with a few of my uncles, stood courageously among the crowd. After King saw how his words of “A Dream” electrified the multitude, he decided to use it a few months later to electrify the world in Washington D.C.



Sadly, as we all know, Dr. King never saw this vision come to reality. He never saw the millions of blacks that would go on to attend institutions of higher learning and then live out the American Dream by becoming politicians, sports entertainers, journalist, entrepreneurs, promoters of advancements in the in Military and to life saving medical technology. He never saw the first African American serve his second term as President of the United States.

Dr. King became the Black Icon of the Civil Rights movement of the 60's in America. But I should remind people the signs that supported segregation across the nation stated, “Whites only” and “Colored” (meaning everyone who wasn’t white). You see, Dr. King wasn’t just an advocate for the advancement of blacks; he proclaimed equal treatment be extended to people of all walks of life in this melting pot called America. So, in some way all citizens of America benefited from what he believed.

With Dr. King’s strong words of wisdom from our country’s past, I often wonder what King would say about our present day America? What would he say about the current arbitrary arguments surrounding same-sex marriages? What would he say to Islamic Americans who are being mistreated after 9/11, or even the mistreatment of Atheists? What would he say about



the War on Terror that has drones policing the skies of the Middle East? What words of encouragement would he have for the millions of Christians that are in support of the Pro-life movement? Or, for those millions of Christians that he himself pegged as theoretical atheists? These theoretical atheists are brothers and sisters who call themselves Christians, but refuse to live up to their Christian morals and oaths. Other rising issues include Immigration reform, healthcare and the lack thereof, over-populated prisons, and gun violence. These issues have been made an enclave from the tree that we call The United States of America. What words of moral courage would one of America's favorite children have to offer us today?

Love is our most powerful emotion. Dr. King led the conversion of many hearts with his messages of love. He saw hate as a sickness that could spread like a plague; but an act of love could be the antidote. Where there is love, God is present; and where there is hate lays the darkness of Satan. So, the minute we deliver a message or an act with our own ambition, it takes precedent, love is thereby set aside as well as God.

We all have had the pleasure of being taught by brilliant educators. We all have received many gifts and rewards we probably didn't deserve. But in essence, we remember all those who taught us and gave in love. Our favorite songs are those of love. Our favorite movies are the ones that have a love story. It is love that gives us the ability to dream. It's God somewhere present in a person that makes us fall in love with them. In 1 John 4:20, The Apostle John says, "If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen." This is found to be a very challenging scripture. It doesn't take a lot of courage to love someone who loves us, but is very difficult to love someone who hates us. It's even more demanding to change the heart of someone we love, but who hates us. In Gospel of John 13:34, Jesus said to his disciples: "This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." My challenge to you is to think of someone you dislike or who gives you some sort of discomfort. Ask God to reveal to you why he loves them and to show you how to love them as well. Our God has a personal plan for our happiness, but it will take love, moral courage, forgiveness, and humility. That is how Dr. King lived his life and I challenge every one of us to do the same.



Brother Joseph D. Taylor

MARCH FOR LIFE AND THE LIFE OF SERVICE

A couple years ago, the month of January was just another month for me; it had no significance, nothing that drew my attention to it as the frigid winter passed by.

I was in high school when I first learned of the Pro-Life movement, and of the harsh realities of growing up in a “culture of death,” as Bl. John Paul II coined it. I was a senior in high school and was filled with zeal to do something, to make a change, to stand up for what I believed in. I quickly learned about the March for Life in Washington D.C. and desperately wanted to be a part of it. I soon made plans to go to the 2011 March for Life with a small group from my parish. I was not prepared for what I was going to experience. My first March for Life left me with a great sense of hope; this movement was a movement of young people, young people excited about their faith and ready to stand up for it. Needless to say, from that moment on, January became a very important month for me. I learned more about the history of the March and about Roe v. Wade.

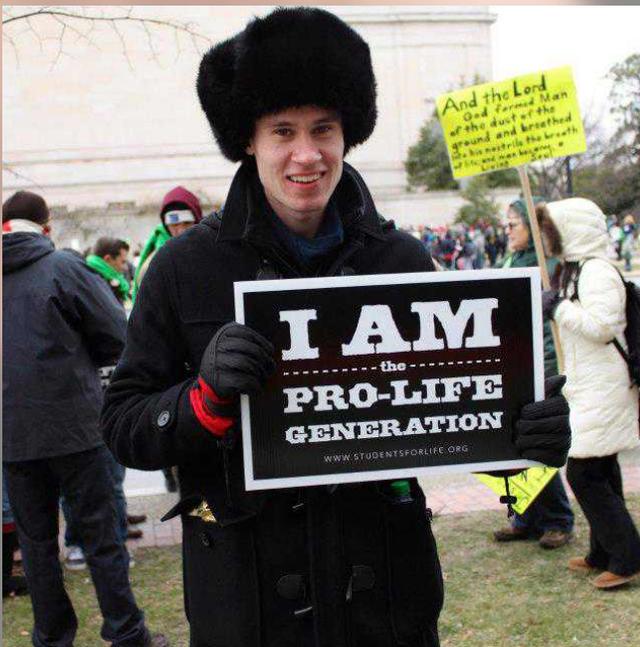
This year, in the novitiate, I have been blessed to participate, along with some of my brothers, in the 40 Days for Life campaign. This was my first time participating in 40 Days, although I have known about it for many years. 40 Days proved to be a powerful

experience of prayer. It was a joy to unite in prayer, for an end to abortion, with millions of other people across the country, and especially with the local people who stood with us in prayer across the street from a Planned Parenthood clinic.

Although I was not able to be at the March for Life this year, I was greatly inspired, yet again, to see that the March itself, and the Pro-Life movement as a whole is growing, especially among the youth. This year, despite the snow storm and freezing temperatures, hundreds of thousands of people, most of them young, marched for the right to life; they marched to defend that right from conception to natural death, they marched to stand up for what they believe, for their faith; they marched with joy, enthusiasm, and hearts on fire with the love of Christ.

“We are all here because we want to save the thousands of innocent children who are being executed by the very people whose mission should be to heal and protect life. The truth is that we can save those babies only by saving the mothers. When they experience God’s loving mercy then they will become capable of showing mercy to their children. The Pro Life Movement has to be about saving mothers. We need to focus on the women to try to understand what they are suffering.”

- Seán O’Malley, OFM Cap. March For Life Vigil Mass



Bro. Andrew Skonieczny

THE FAMILY PRAYER

"OUR FATHER, WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR LOVE, AND FOR THE MANY GOOD THINGS YOU HAVE GIVEN TO OUR FAMILY. HELP US TO SHOW OUR GRATITUDE BY LOVING EACH OTHER, AS YOU HAVE LOVED US.

GIVE US PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING TO BEAR WITH ONE ANOTHER; GENEROSITY TO SHARE OUR JOYS AND SORROW; HONESTY TO ADMIT OUR FAULTS AND CORRECT THEM.

WE ENTRUST OUR FAMILY TO YOUR FATHERLY CARE AND PROTECTION, AND ASK THAT WE MAY GROW DAILY IN WISDOM AND IN GRACE, SO THAT WE MAY ONE DAY SHARE THE JOYS OF HEAVEN WITH YOU.

JESUS, MARY, AND JOSEPH, HELP US TO BE A HOLY FAMILY."

THE SILENCE OF ST. JOSEPH: A FRANCISCAN VALUE

A reflection by Br. Tommy Piolata

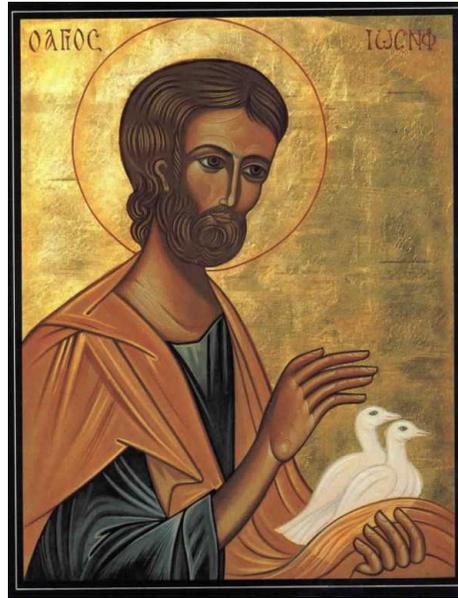
“Joseph was caught up at every moment by the mystery of the Incarnation... Joseph is a 'just man' (Mt 1:19) because his existence is 'ad-justed' to the word of God.” – Pope Benedict XVI

Reflecting on the figure of St. Joseph, Pope Benedict XVI highlights the saint's “silence” as an exemplary virtue lying at the heart of the Christian life. If we consider this silence of St. Joseph, we begin to notice a striking similarity to Francis of Assisi. In fact, we might say that Francis' great vision of humility and poverty is itself embodied in the silent manner and personality of St. Joseph.

Benedict explains that St. Joseph's silence is “permeated by contemplation of the mystery of God, in an attitude of total availability to his divine wishes. In other words, the silence of St Joseph was not the sign of an inner void, but on the contrary, of the fullness of faith he carried in his heart, and which guided each and every one of his thoughts and actions.” In this, we see that a total availability to the other, and in particular to the Divine Other, characterizes Joseph's silence. Like a sunflower which gazes only at the Sun, St. Joseph's heart is oriented toward God; the life of St. Joseph teaches us to follow God's Word with courage and trust.

We see this played out powerfully in Scripture. Recall that, while Joseph desired to divorce Mary privately, the Lord possessed a different plan. Rather than adhering to his own agenda, however, Joseph was clearly open to receive and realize the voice of God. In other words, not even a personal agenda got in the way of his availability before the Most High (see: Matt 1:20-24).

Thus, that Joseph consistently listened to the Lord's commands makes manifest the very life of poverty that Francis of Assisi envisions 1200 years later. Although he seemed to possess a particular agenda, Joseph's obedience illustrates that his life ultimately belonged to the Lord: he relinquished even his own will to God. This reminds me of Francis admonition, in which he identifies the appropriation of one's will as the primal, fundamental sin of Adam: “For that person eats of the tree of the knowledge of good who makes his will his own.” In another place, Francis goes so far as to identify one's self-will with “vomit”. In stark contrast, Joseph's silence



– far from the pathological self-enclosure of appropriating one's will – is “interwoven with constant prayer...[and] adoration” (Benedict XVI). Is this not the very fabric – indeed the culmination – of Francis' very vision? In the

penultimate chapter of the *Regula non bullata*, Francis writes ecstatically:

“With our whole heart, our whole soul, our whole mind, with our whole strength and fortitude, with our whole understanding, with all our powers, with every effort, every affection, every feeling, every desire and wish let us all love the Lord God... Therefore, let us desire nothing else, let us want nothing else, let nothing else please us and cause us delight except our Creator, Redeemer and Savior, the only true God... Therefore, let nothing hinder us, nothing separate us, nothing come between us.”

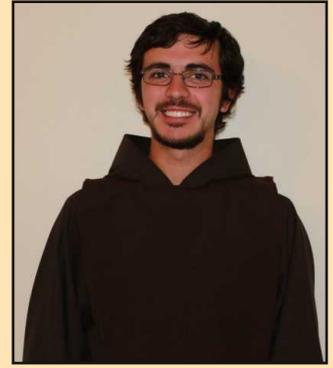
One of my favorite passages from Francis' writings, this passage puts to words the climax of a life focused in an absolute way on God. As soon as anything, any person, any idea, any agenda, any goal, any preconception — literally: anything at all — becomes private property, we fail to actualize a total availability to God. As soon as something becomes “mine”, I become available to it, and thus take away from an absolute availability to God. Consequently, rather than self-expropriation and so a life characterized by relationality, I exhibit self-enclosure and so a life of isolation. And for this reason, Francis prays and admonishes his brothers to want nothing else save God so that nothing might come in the place of God and His life-giving, redemptive, and saving love for us.

Of course this vision seems impossible and for some continued at the top of page 5..

Silence of St. Joseph, cont. from page 4

maybe even destructive. But when we reflect on St. Joseph, we see not a destructive life at all. We see, instead, a life whose availability to God led Him to protect without hesitation Mary and Jesus, and thus to truly actualize his being as a spouse and father. Entering into a co-natural relationship with God leads to the fullest realization of our life today. In some

way, we will always settle for less if we distrust God or place more value on anything else save His Word. So with Pope Benedict, let us pray: "Let us allow ourselves to be 'infected' by the silence of St Joseph! We have much need of it in a world which is often too noisy, which does not encourage reflection and listening to the voice of God."



Q&A: "Being halfway through novitiate, what experience has helped you to grow as a Capuchin friar?"



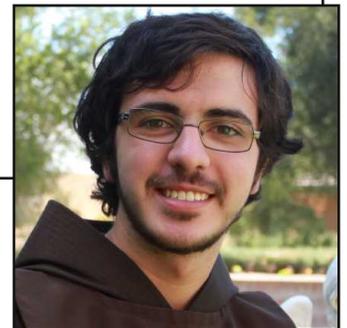
Bro. Lance Houck

I have learned how to trust in God....to completely trust in my closest friend, Jesus. There have been many different experiences in the novitiate in which I didn't know what to do, or why I had to do something, or why someone said something.....and then I would say, "I'm going to trust you. I'm going to trust that you know what your doing, Lord." Every time I felt a peace I've never felt and I always ended up growing in my ability to love, which is the most important for me in my life.



Bro. Tommy Piolata

The contemplative dimension of the novitiate has certainly helped me to grow as a Capuchin Franciscan, as well as entering into deeper fraternal relationships with some of the brothers. The Franciscan charisms present in my brothers help my own identity as a minor friar come to fruition. In addition, personal time for study and reflection -- which helps me to enter into the breadth and depth of our tradition -- provides great nourishment and guidance as I continue to enter into the novitiate experience.



Bro. Jason Chargualaf

I think for me, with half of the novitiate now complete, there are so many things that i have experienced that have helped me to grow as a Capuchin Franciscan. Some of the things that have helped me are the fraternal life of the community , our praying together, all of the different gifts and talents that the brothers have shared with the community, learning about the different cultural backgrounds of each brother andvwhere they are from, and even just the time we have spent together from the begining of this journey. I can say that my life has been truly bless because God gave me such wonderful brothers to journey with in becoming a Capuchin Franciscan.



BIRTHDAY ROASTINGS



In January, the friars celebrated birthdays for Bros. Joshua, Alejandro and Lance Love, as well as Bro. Jacob on Feb. 1st. This class's birthday celebration ritual originated in the Saint Augustine Province postulancy where, under the guidance of Bro. Paul Kuppe, the postulants gave each other gag gifts. The tradition has since taken a life of its own,

expanding into a procession with a multilingual birthday song and makeshift costumes. Each birthday is a celebration of the characteristics that make the friar special, with particular attention given to their idiosyncrasies (hence the "Roasting"). Our brother Alejandro, one of the professed, wise elders of the community, specifically asked to be roasted. We thank him for his fraternal spirit. The birthday boys enjoyed receiving their gifts almost as much as their brothers enjoyed giving them.

JANUARY CLASSES HIGHLIGHT DIVERSITY OF ORDER



The novices started the new calendar year with a class on the Capuchin Constitutions taught by Bro. Jack Rathschmidt of the Saint Mary's Province. Rather than go line-by-line through the document, his objective was to give us a "lens" with which we could read and study them further ourselves. This approach made for a very interesting class. Bro. Jack

emphasized the multicultural, multinational reality of our order and having visited Capuchins in various countries, had many stories to illustrate his point. For the last few sessions of the class, the novices were grouped by province and presented on the different chapters of the constitutions. In this way the class was able to see how the different provinces concretely live out the document.

Continuing our study in the documents that shape our order, Bro. Bill Hugo of the Saint Joseph Province presented us with a class on the Capuchin Plenary Councils. These councils are attended by delegates from Capuchin circumscriptions around the globe in order to reflect on the various aspects of our charism -- minority, poverty, brotherhood, mission, formation, prayer and prophetic presence. Having participated in one of these councils himself, Bro. Bill had many interesting anecdotes to share and like Bro. Jack, helped us to better understand the international depth of our order.

In the final week of January, we shifted away from writings and towards art with a class on the frescoes inside the basilica of Saint Francis in Assisi. This was not your typical art history class, however, as our very charismatic teacher, Bro. Paul Dressler from the Saint Augustine Province, intertwined his own personal spiritual journey with the painting in the Church. He emphasized the importance of emotions and desire in the life of Francis and in the charism of movement, urging us to be friars full of passion and life.

Thank you, Bros. Jack, Bill and Paul for a very intense month of rooting us deeper in our Capuchin vocation !

Half Time !

January 15th marked the halfway point of the novitiate year. Here are some fun facts about the first half of our novitiate :



The varied styles of food shared by the novices and San Lorenzo's beloved cook

Ricardo, reflect the diversity of the community.



The novices came together for prayer every day, several times a day. Total

time spent in common prayer, liturgy and meditation: 528 hours 55 minutes.

As featured in the article at left, the novices soaked up lots of knowledge with the help of both onsite and guest formators. Total time spent in class the classroom: 156 hours.



Each novice had the responsibility for the upkeep of a particular area of the

fraternity (conventionally referred to as "chores"). In addition, they worked on several "special" projects including the harvesting of cow manure for the garden. Total time spent on manual labor : 208 hours.



Time spent by Marley and Roxy, our two canine

novices, in physically strenuous activity : 0.01 hours

The Formator's Corner

“Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, who is very useful and humble, precious and chaste...”

St. Francis, Canticle of the Creatures

Here in California we're learning once again how precious sister water truly is. While some of the novices delight in telling their snowbound families how they are out playing soccer in shorts and tee shirts, the warm weather and blue skies have us worried. January and February are the middle of our "rainy season," and yet we have had very little rain. Usually the friars are able to delight in the wonder of watching our brown hills (or "golden," as some like to call them) receive life-giving rain and are transformed into a landscape which, if not as green as Ireland's, is still a miracle of green grass and wildflowers. The seeds are there, and the thirsty ground is crying out, but without the gift of water from above, there is no transformation.

The sacrament of baptism, of course, reminds us that the same thing is true with our lives: we need the gift of life-giving water. We need God's grace. Formators are more like farmers than builders. We know that we must help the novices prepare the soil and plant the seeds, by prayer, teaching, and example. Yet, none of this will

bring fruit without the grace of God. We can teach them how to say the psalms thoughtfully, how to take time in silence, how to understand more deeply the words of scripture. But only God can give them "the grace of prayer."

What we try to do with the novices is help them be ready for that gift of grace. Then thirsty ground will find life, and dormant seeds will bloom. This is why the prayers of all our friars, friends, and benefactors are so important, both for the novices and for their formators. This year's class has passed the half-way mark, yet much work remains to be done, and much waiting. St. James tells us to have the patience of farmers in waiting for the life-giving rain of God's grace (Jas 5:7). And so all of us, novices and professed friars alike, echo the prayer of Br. Lance Love, that we have "patience in all things."

God bless and keep you always!

Br. Bobby

(Last minute note: as I was finishing this up today, it began to rain. Thank the Lord for his goodness.)

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SACRED HEART
(EASTERN CANADA)

MARY, MOTHER OF
THE GOOD
SHEPHERD
(CENTRAL CANADA)

OUR LADY OF
ANGELS
(WESTERN AMERICA)

OUR LADY OF THE
ASSUMPTION
(AUSTRALIA)

OUR LADY STAR OF
THE SEA
(GUAM-HAWAII)

SAINT AUGUSTINE
(PENNSYLVANIA)

SAINT CONRAD
(MID-AMERICA)

SAINT JOSEPH
(MIDWEST-DETROIT)

SAINT MARY
(NEW YORK-NEW
ENGLAND)

STIGMATA OF SAINT
FRANCIS
(NEW JERSEY)