

CAPERONE

JANUARY 2019



STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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MINISTRY
IN
FOCUS

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SEÑOR SANTO
NIÑO FIESTA

REFLECTING ON THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF NOVITIATE

FORMATOR'S CORNER

HAVE YOU BEEN TO THE MOUNTAIN?

By Br. William Talentino, OFM, Cap.

One of the things I love most about driving to Santa Barbara is going over the San Marcos Pass (Rte. 154). It is a beautiful drive over the Santa Ynez Mountains: first past Lake Cachuma, then over the top of the mountain range, and then looking down at Santa Barbara from the winding, descending road, maybe seeing even a glorious sunset. The experience never fails to lift my mind and heart to God. One of the exhilarating moments is reaching the top of the Santa Ynez Mountains and coasting down into Santa Barbara. There is something about getting over the top that makes my mind say, "I've got this trip licked, now I can coast to the end."

It is not like that in the spiritual life - the mountain top is not the half-way point, it is the end of the trip. As the psalmist writes, "Who can ascend the mountain of the Lord, or who may stand in his holy place? (Ps. 24)." In the spiritual life, we are always ascending, we never reach the top while we are on this planet. Of course, we can always go backwards to where we started, but there is no spiritual coasting, because there is always more purifying to be accomplished, more loving to be learned and acted on.

Here at San Lorenzo we are at the half way mark of the novitiate year, and the temptation is to coast rather than to strive to ascend higher in the vocation journey. It is not the time to slack off; rather it is time to go deeper and to see if you can make a serious commitment to this Capuchin Christian life. To make a commitment to living a superficial religious life is not really a commitment to anything; God does not call anyone to live a mediocre religious life. Strive to become a more fervent Capuchin, and then ask yourself if this is something you want to do for the rest of your life; is this what God is inviting you to live?

Are you willing to keep on climbing? "Who can climb the mountain of the Lord?" The psalmist answers his own question with these words: "The man with clean hands and pure heart, who desires not worthless things." Do you experience

being less attached to the things of the world? Can you live as someone set apart from the way the world lives? Is the possibility of being a Friar Minor still attractive to you? Can you live this way with true joy? Is it your heart's desire? "Oh God, you are my God, whom I seek; for you my flesh pines and my soul thirsts, like the earth, parched, lifeless and without water (Psalm 63)."

Finally, can you live this Capuchin way without fear and with trust? We are always working on this, for without trust in God the mountain will be impossible to scale. The climb takes great courage; there will be dangers, but the beauty at the top is absolutely astounding! When we reach the end of the journey, it will be the beginning of new life; then will be the time for rest, for coasting. It is true that many people have what we call "mountaintop experiences." But these tend to be brief, only reminders of what is promised at the end.

Martin Luther King, Jr. had such an experience, and I close with a passage from his final address:

"Well, I don't know what will happen now; we've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now, because I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to live a long life—longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And so, I'm happy tonight; I'm not worried about anything; I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord." (Memphis, TN, April 3, 1968)

The following day King was assassinated. Here is a man who kept on climbing despite many trials; and he did it without fear and with absolute trust in God. Perhaps that is why the moment at the top of Santa Ynez Mountains is so exhilarating - it is a taste of the mountain of the Lord, a taste of heaven.

MID-YEAR REFLECTIONS

As the calendar year turned to 2019, the novitiate reached its halfway point. Here are some reflections from the novices on the novitiate thus far.

How do you feel about your vocation after six months at the novitiate?



"After six months, the novitiate has really allowed me to enter more deeply into a relationship with God and experience profound grace and love in the midst of trials, and feel almost prepared for what's to come."

- Br. Aldrae Cruz



"I feel mainly at peace and confident about my choice of joining the Capuchin Franciscan half-way through novitiate."

- Br. Joe Morton



"I feel I am engaged in healthy discernment. This way of life fits well with my discernment thus far."

- Br. Jessie Quintanilla



"So far in my vocation, I have come to appreciate the ordinariness of the daily routine; from work projects, times of communal prayer and spending time with the brothers."

- Br. Brendan Bourizk

What has been the BIGGEST challenge so far in novitiate?



"My biggest challenge so far has been contemplative prayer, to enter into it fully. Having an engineering mind causes resistance, but I know I have a lifetime to work at it."

- Br. Duy Tran



"Biggest challenge? = the biggest blessing... Living in community!! and lack of privacy."

- Br. Luis Vallhonrat



"The biggest challenge for me would be fraternity. Being an only child and then given 12 other brothers all of the sudden is quite a challenge. But, they have been my greatest gift as well. They have taught me to love through thick and thin and to learn better who I am."

- Br. Martin Ngo

What has been the BIGGEST reward so far in novitiate?

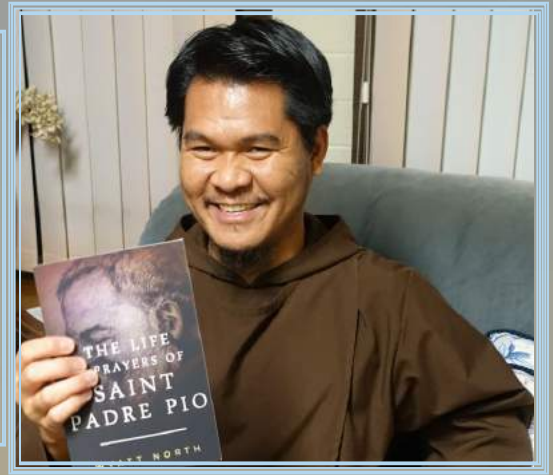
"My greatest reward these past months has been my encounter with Christ's Love and healing power."

- Br. Artie Vazquez



"For me, the greatest reward so far is being able to experience and to feel in a concrete way our Capuchin spirituality of 'preferential option for the poor.' Through my ministry at the hospital, I'm able to be among and minister to people who are sick, suffering and dying, and through it I'm able to recognize and love the face of the suffering Christ."

- Br. Heherson Alarde



"Growing together. With my brothers, we pray together, rejoice together, grieve together, grow together."

- Br. Luke Kim



How has the novitiate changed you in the past six months?

"I'm tempted to say that my tennis game has improved! More seriously, I have come to an increased awareness of life as a journey to be engaged in; not a mystery to be solved. Journeying with the brothers, I have found increased joy on the journey."

- Br. Peter Poel



"The novitiate has provided me a space to deepen my prayer life. That change has provided me with grace and love of God that I have never thought possible for me."

- Br. Javier Rodriguez



"The novitiate has definitely changed the lens through which I see the Love of God. What was once so narrow has been broadened now more than ever."

- Br. Jarred Elbaghd



MINISTRY IN FOCUS



WITH BR. PETER AND BR. BRENDAN

AT CATHOLIC CHARITIES - SANTA MARIA

WHAT IS YOUR MINISTRY AT CATHOLIC CHARITIES?

BR. PETER: My ministry at Catholic Charities in Santa Maria involves assisting clients who are in need of food or clothing, or other services. I work with the staff and other volunteers to meet people's basic needs.

BR. BRENDAN: Catholic Charities is a ministry to the hungry people of Santa Maria. It is a channel which the local people are able to receive foods (dairy, meats, vegetables and bakery products) and canned foods provided by the Federal government and local businesses. It works by having clients sign up and come every two weeks to the food pantry and monthly for the USDA food.



HOW IS MINISTRY HELPING YOU WITH YOUR DISCERNMENT?

P: I have the privilege of relating closely to the clients and hearing their stories of their life situations. This helps me to experience the Church's "preferential option for the poor" in very concrete terms and guides me regarding future involvement in this central aspect of Franciscan life.

B: This ministry has helped me in my discernment by deepening my understanding of the Capuchin charism of being a lesser brother.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE CAPUCHIN LIFE REFLECTED IN THIS MINISTRY?

P: The Capuchin charism of minority is reflected in this ministry through relationships with the clients and trying to live my day-to-day life in such a way as to be more in solidarity with them.

B: This ministry reflects one of the core aspects of the Franciscan spirituality which is the "preferential option for the poor". By emptying ourselves of ourselves and entering into the poverty of the world, we are able to act justly by working together with the poor and not to have power over them.

HOW DO YOU SEE GOD IN THIS MINISTRY?

P: I see God in this ministry in the faith and trust of the clients in

God's providence, and their deep sense of gratitude. I see God in the generosity of the donors and in the kindness of the staff and volunteers.

B: I experience God in this ministry when I see the truck full of grocery items waiting to be distributed. Also, seeing how the clients trust in God's providence is also edifying. With the bags of groceries, the poor and hungry are able to tangibly experience God's presence in their life and this sometimes brings people to tears.



WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART IN THIS MINISTRY?

P: My favorite part of this ministry is connecting with the individuals and families I encounter at Catholic Charities and working as a team with Br. Brendan and all the staff and volunteers.

B: My favorite part of this ministry is seeing the many bags of grocery items leave the back pantry in shopping carts ready to be picked up by the clients. Once they receive the items, their faces light up with thankfulness and gratitude.



NOVICE SPOTLIGHT



BR. LUKE KIM



Province: Saint Augustine (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)

Hometown: Seoul, South Korea **Age:** 40

Name a book/movie/song that you think describes you: L.V. Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, 1st movement. This symphony describes how I understand every single creature that God has created...and to understand the whole picture of creation, I am still in confusion.

What were you doing before you entered Capuchin formation?: I managed a Korean barbeque restaurant back in Seoul.

What brought you to the Capuchins?: My discernment time leading up to my decision to join had been a long one. In the latter part, I read a book about St. Padre Pio and I was inspired after reading it and this encouraged me intensely to make that leap of faith and join the Order.

What is your ministry this year and what do you enjoy the most with it (and why?): I minister at Alpha Resource Center of Santa Barbara for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. In my past, I was just a bystander for them; now I am able to be among them and understand the beauty and dignity of their life despite their circumstances.

Who has influenced your life/spirituality (any person in particular?): My mom, who even in her life's struggles has never wavered in her perseverance in prayer. Through prayer, her life has changed and she has learned to accept the different ways that God manifests His love.

What is something that our readers probably don't know about you?: When I was 38, I thought I had lost everything I worked hard for. Then I realized it was all for vainglory. But God had given me a new opportunity in life when He showed me the true meaning of what it is to live in the world.

In terms of guilty pleasures, I enjoy homemade butter-cream donuts!

For this month's feature question, how have the classes (studies) enriched your Franciscan life and helped you in your Capuchin formation so far?: Through studying our Capuchin Constitutions, I've gotten a glimpse of what the Capuchin life is. In understanding the life of poverty, chastity and obedience, I have begun to step out of my fence and make a real step in my journey especially in the area of fraternity where living with brothers can be a challenge and a cross. But in the mystery of love which Jesus shows in His relationship with us, I am encouraged to persevere and to build up in me this fraternal life which I could live joyfully.

Province: The Sacred Stigmata of Saint Francis (New Jersey)

Hometown: Charlotte, North Carolina **Age:** 39

Name a book/movie/song that you think describes you: I think I choose 'The Hobbit'. The story of Bilbo Baggins is reminding me more and more of my own journey and adventure.

What were you doing before you entered Capuchin formation?: I was working as a Medicaid case manager for the Department of Social Services in Charlotte, NC.

What brought you to the Capuchins?: As a teenager, I was greatly inspired by the life of St. Francis of Assisi. I read every book I could my hands on and watched every movie or documentary I could about the life and spirituality of the 'Poor Man of Assisi'.

What is your ministry this year and what do you enjoy the most with it (and why?): So far, it has been Catholic Charities in Lompoc, although I am assigned to work at the Lompoc Correctional. I haven't been able to start there yet due to a delay in the training. I enjoy most the direct contact I have with the poor and marginalized, and the chance to be present to them and help them in their needs.

Who has influenced your life/spirituality (any person in particular?): Early on it was St. Francis of Assisi. Obviously my parents very early on. I also had a good friend named Randy who was a significant influence on me between 2008-2015.

What is something that our readers probably don't know about you?: I like the study of history, especially military history.

For this month's feature question, how have the classes (studies) enriched your Franciscan life and helped you in your Capuchin formation so far?: The different classes have given me a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Capuchin charism and the meaning and importance of the religious vows of poverty, chastity and obedience - especially poverty as I try to apply it in my life. This has given me an appreciation for our Capuchin identity.



BR. LUIS VALLHONRAT



A NOVICE'S JOURNEY

By Br. Javier Rodriguez

Class is in Session

When I finished law school almost 16 years ago, I thought I was done with school. Yes, I knew that I needed to do some continuing education courses. But those are more in a seminar environment that last two days max.

Then, God had other ideas for my life, and brought me to the Capuchins. With a new life and a new beginning comes new education. So, since I entered postulancy last year, I've had to accept the fact that I'm a student again! At 43 years old!

At novitiate, we are in class about three days a week for about two hours each day, an improvement from postulancy, which was five days a week. The classes are on different subjects, including prayer, the Church, the Franciscans, the Capuchins and the vows. All are aimed to assist us, novices, to discern religious life and see if this Capuchin life is the life for each of us.

How has these classes helped me so far?

Having an analytical mind, I like to have information. These classes provide me that information. However, more importantly, the classes have led me to reflect on my life and how my life experiences fit into religious life, more specifically the Capuchins. They are wisdom imparted onto me so I can really and fully discern if God is calling me to be a Capuchin. Thus far, the classes and instructors have done a magnificent job at getting me to reflect. Also, I feel that in a way having these scheduled classes are somewhat preparing me for the next step, theology school. God willing!



If you ask my brothers, they probably would say that the classes are an excellent time for me to nod off and try to catch up on sleep! I wish I could say the same about the time we spend on work projects.



SAN LORENZO SCOOP

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT THE NOVITIATE SO FAR...

BELOW ARE SNAPSHOTS OF RECENT EVENTS, ACTIVITIES, AND VISITS OF PRIESTS, LAITY AND VISITING FRIARS FROM DIFFERENT CAPUCHIN PROVINCES.



ALBERT LE & ANDREW CANTON



BR. JOHN PETRIKOVIC (SA)



BR. SCOTT LEET (SM)



BR. JACK RATHSCHMIDT (SM)



BR. KIP LEDGER (SA)



BR. JOSEPH WOOD, OFM CONV.



RAMON POSADA



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY,
BR. HEHERSON!**



HAPPY AUSTRALIA DAY!

Viva! Pit Señor, Santo Niño!

By Br. Heherson Alarde

It was a cold and rainy winter afternoon of the 12th January when Br. Aldrae and I made our way to St. John Neumann Church in Santa Maria to be a part of this centuries-old Filipino tradition. Being of Filipino descent, we were quite excited to take part in this celebration. Upon entering the church, our eyes were treated to a



bright and festive tapestry of people wearing traditional Filipino dresses accentuated with red and golden motif. The heavy rain pelting against the stained-glass windows of the church did not dampen our spirits – we were there for one reason – to show our love and

devotion to **Señor Santo Niño**, to call upon Him in our necessities and to celebrate the humanity and divinity of Jesus as Child-King. The Filipino Catholic Society of Santa Maria Valley and Its Vicinity who spearheaded the celebration marked its 25th Silver Anniversary of spreading this devotion in the area.

Catholics the world over love the Child Jesus – Infant Jesus of Prague, Santo Niño de Atocha, Niño Dios de Mexico, Santo Bambino di Aracoeli, and Santo Niño de Cebu – every Catholic culture and nation has its own way and tradition of honoring the Holy Child.



The oldest and most popular Santo Niño image in the Philippines is the **Señor Santo Niño de Cebú**. This image is particularly revered by the Cebuanos – people in the central region and around Cebu City which was the first

colonial capital established by the Spaniards when they first arrived in the Philippines in 1521. The statue of the Santo Niño was a gift to Humaway, chief wife of Rajah Humabon, after she was baptized and named Juana by Padre Pedro Valderrama. This miraculous statue is known to have survived many calamities dating as far back as 1565 when it was found

unscathed among ruins of burned houses in a conflict between the natives and the Spanish explorers. Since then, and after more than half a millennium later, this same statue was kept and can be found now enshrined in the Basilica Minore del Santo Niño in Cebu City.

This statue represents the Child Jesus as King. The original statue



is made of wood, dressed in loose velvet garment, red and golden woolen hood, with a gilded neck chain and a gold biretta crown. These elaborate vestments signify the Santo Niño's kingship. On His left hand He holds a *globus cruciger* (an orb surmounted by a cross) which denotes He holds the world on the palm of His hand while His right hand is slightly raised in a gesture of blessing.

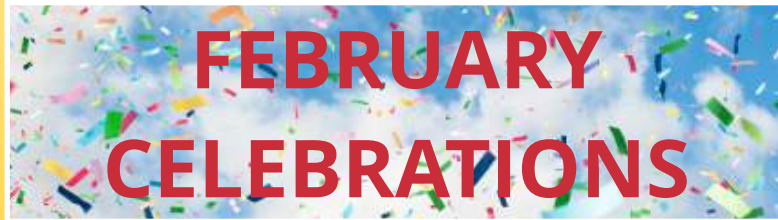
Traditionally, every third Sunday of January, Filipinos around the world celebrate the Santo Niño with the *Sinulog* Festival with processions, colorful parades and the *Sinulog* which is



the ritual prayer-dance honoring Señor Santo Niño. The word *Sinulog* comes from the Cebuano adverb "sulog" which roughly means "like water current movement". It describes the forward-backward movement of the dance which mimics the movements of the river from a popular legend-miracle manifested by the Child Jesus through His statue that was gifted to Queen Juana. While dancing and holding a statue of the Santo Niño, the devotees chant "*Pit Señor! Viva Pit Señor!*" to the rhythm of musical instruments and staccato steps of the *Sinulog* dance. "*Pit Señor*" is the short form of "*Sangpit sa Señor*," a phrase in Cebuano that means, "to call, ask, and plead to the King."

At the homily of the Mass presided by Fr. Jeejo Vazhappily, he highlighted the qualities of the Child Jesus, who like any other child, was meek, gentle, innocent, trusting and obedient. As a Niño, he is an exemplar for every child. This same Child grew to manhood and proclaimed the Kingdom of God; He performed countless miracles, suffered an ignominious death out of His great love for all and in perfect obedience to the will of the Father. Truly, a perfect Son. Fr. Jeejo encouraged us to be childlike - full of trust and confidence to our Father in Heaven - for the childlike is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom belongs to them. (Matthew 19:14)

After the Mass, the Anniversary celebration followed at the parish hall. We truly received the well-known Filipino hospitality. Our palates were treated to a variety of sumptuous traditional Filipino dishes and desserts. We also enjoyed the various musical and traditional Filipino folk dance numbers showcased by the attendees. And of course, we venerated the Santo Niño image while doing the *Sinulog* dance. Br. Aldrae and I felt that we were back in the Philippines that time. What a great blessing it was to be part of this great tradition, and with gratitude in our hearts, we join the many devotees around the world and exclaim: "*Viva! Pit Señor, Santo Niño!*"



- 2 - Presentation of the Lord (F)
- 12 - Br. Robert Stewart (PV)
- 22 - Chair of Peter, Apostle (F)



KEEP CALM AND KAPAYAPAAAN AT KABUTIHAN

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ABOUT US

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SAN LORENZO NOVITIATE

1802 Sky Drive
P.O. Box 247
Santa Ynez, CA 93460
805.688.5630
thecaperone@gmail.com

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Br. Phil Bernier OFM, Cap.

NOVICE CO-EDITORS

Br. Heherson Alarde OFM, Cap.

Br. Javier Rodriguez OFM, Cap.