

The Caperone



Novitiate Class of 2015

The Caperone

Founded 2009

Newsletter of the North American Pacific Capuchin Conference Novitiate
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CAPUCHIN
FRANCISCANS

From the Formators

Peace and Good! Our pilgrimage with the novices to the National Shrine of St. Francis in January included a visit to the elephant seal sanctuary. In May, I was in the area again and stopped to see these magnificent creatures. There was a difference—in the spring the seals are shedding their skins as they prepare to return to the sea. Their skins had served them well, but they needed to change in order to continue on. Something very similar happens with our novices each year: when they profess their first vows, they take off the small scapular they've been wearing all year, called the caperone (hence the name of this publication), and leave it behind. This is a symbol of the change in their lives, the new stage they are entering in the adventure of their vocation following the Lord Jesus. We hope that the rhythm of novitiate life has helped each of them to deepen his relationship with the Lord as well as experience the various aspects of Capuchin Franciscan life. We on the team know that it is time for our brothers to move on and continue with their formation. It is a bittersweet experience, however: we are glad to see them commit themselves more fully to our life, but we are sorry to see them go after walking with them during this very intense year. Our Constitutions tell us that the primary formator of each brother is the Holy Spirit, yet we on the team know we are privileged to be collaborators with the Spirit, and we pray that our efforts have been of help. We are aware and grateful also for the way that our work with the novices helps us continue our own formation as Capuchin friars, servants of Jesus Christ. As always, at this time of year we express our gratitude to God, and to all who continue to make our way of life, and this novitiate program, both possible and joyful. May the Lord bless you and keep you always!

-Br. Bobby



**SAN LORENZO
FORMATION TEAM AND
FRIARY STAFF**

(from left to right)

Br. Jerry Johnson

Br. Bob Herrick

Br. Frank Grinko

Br. Joe Slominski

Br. Joachim Strupp

Br. Lance Love

Br. Alejandro Magallanes

Br. Bobby Barbato

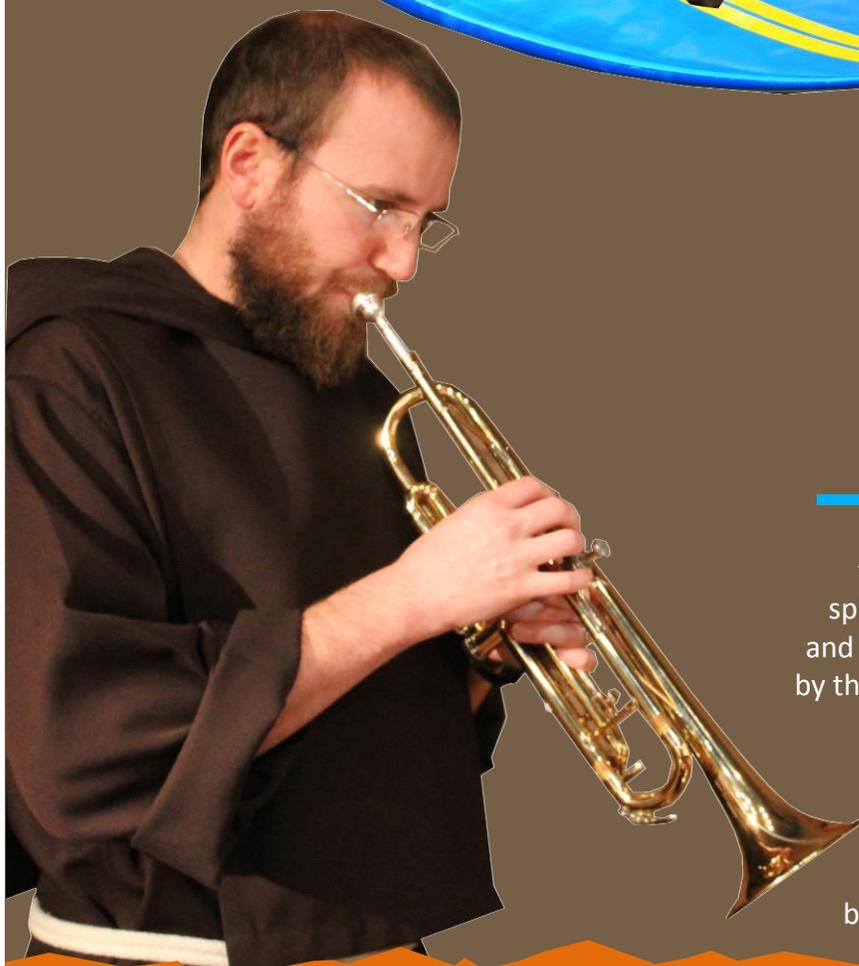
*Thank You
ALL
from the
Class of
2015!!!*



BROTHER

Cody Lizama

I started out with the intention this year, "... to grow in love of God, self, and neighbor..." I feel that this whole year was dedicated to that. It was while working on my love of God, I noticed that it was all connected. I started to fall more in love with people all around me because God loves them. Then I couldn't help but be pulled to the wisdom that God loves me. So yes I felt a real change for the better in my life. It was thanks to living the Capuchin way of life out here at the Novitiate. Through prayer, fraternity, ministry, and our instruction I was able to grow in this Love I originally set out to grow in. I know though that the journey has only begun and that I only have more room to grow. But with God's grace I know that it is all possible.



BROTHER

Hank Fagnant

This year I have grown in self-knowledge, interior freedom and in pastoral ministry. With the help of spiritual direction I have come to better know myself and my personality type. In prayer, I have been helped by the writings and meditations of Henri Nouwen. With the gift of his meditations I have drawn closer to Christ and found direction in my life. At the hospital in Santa Maria, CA, I have improved my relational and listening skills in my interactions with the patients and chaplaincy staff. It has truly been a blessed year for which I am ever grateful for.



BROTHER
Andrew Corriente

My biggest growth this year is a deeper sense of responsibility. I've come to realize that if I become upset with a person or situation, the unsettlement in my heart is not due to anything but myself. True faith, hope, and love is a patience for God's will, and my anger is an indicator of my impatience. The Desert Fathers say that if one truly has peace within then no external circumstance can disrupt that calm. Even psychologists say that we tend to project our own anger onto others. Through prayer and in my time studying Scripture, spirituality, and modern-day psychology, I've accepted that I'm not yet at that center where St. Paul says the Kingdom of God dwells. I wish I could say that I've come to that peace, but I've only begun the journey and it's a journey I'm grateful God has shown me because of this year.



BROTHER
Alex Hostoffer

Growth is such a hard thing to see from within where the forest appears as it always has been. Often times it takes someone from without the forest to notice its growth. Sometimes I notice the growth of a particular tree, a particular area in my life, where new branches have appeared and leaves have reached toward the sun. So let me speak then on one such tree in my forest, silence. I believed that my attraction to religious life initially included an attraction to silence but I am far from a silent person and life today is even farther from silent. The year here, as a novice, has been a discovery then of silence and its beauty. I feel thankful for the attraction turned longing turned reality; for the grace to notice this small sapling in the forest and to nourish it and watch it begin to grow.

**BROTHER**

Paul Fesefeldt

As I come to the end of my Novitiate year, I can really appreciate the gift that this year has been. I've shared often with the other novices that no one gets a year like this in the world and we should take the opportunity to enter into it wholeheartedly. To take time to deepen my prayer life and my commitment to my Capuchin vocation has been a real blessing. Although it has been tough to be separated from my home Province, I have grown in a greater appreciation of the larger Capuchin Order. Living and praying with other novices from all over North America and the Pacific has been a blessing and it gives me great hope for the future of the Order to have such quality people from all over. I look forward to continuing my Capuchin journey as I return East and begin my studies in Boston.

**BROTHER**

Anthony Kote-Witah

With the help of our Lady, the brightness of my active contemplative growth as friar is reactivated. Undeniably, my call to the Capuchin way of life is much clearer now. Indeed, fraternal relationship and Catholic Charity's ministry to share God's love and joy to my clients was great. These have become an affirmative growth concerning my Capuchin Franciscan identify. This is what I hope Jesus is calling me into. I strive to make every effort to embrace Christ's mission with a compassionate love to become a servant for his people. Liturgically, my continuation of communal and private prayers, and the music practices, have also stirred up the delight of my prayers. Contemplatively, this intuitive awareness has led me to writing quite a few poems. Indubitably, the underlining faithfulness of my vows' "objective," is the continuation to love and to be of good service to God's people by using my gifts wisely.



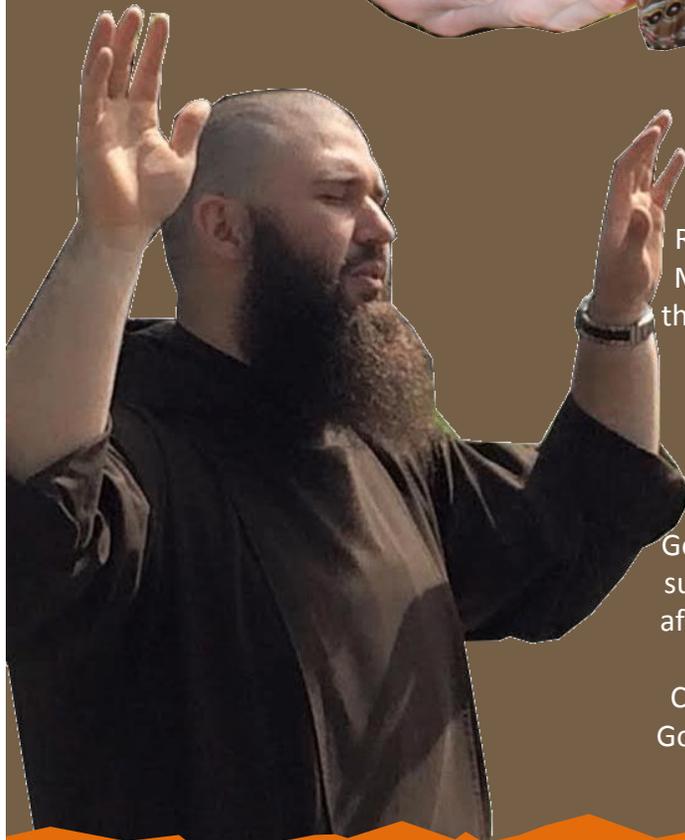


Jordan Schmeidler

I began this year with a dream fulfilled of being clothed in the garment of poverty representing our minority to the world. Since that day my life has been fulfilled in many ways. I have discovered and have learned to love myself through the desires of my heart. God has graced me with a faith in His never failing presence that I have come to believe in. I too have grown to appreciate my vulnerabilities and weaknesses and how they are manifested into something far greater. But most of all this year has revealed to me the greatest gift: brotherhood. These brothers have shown me face of the living Christ and for that, all I have left to say is, Thanks be to God.



Augusto de Moura



Recently a friar asked me: "So, how does it feel to be in a habit?" My response to him was: "Well, it fits!" I didn't simply mean that the tailor had done a great job, but that this truly fits on me, and I in it. I meant that all that this habit represents fits with what my relationship with the Lord has led me to desire. Its simplicity fits my desire to live poverty in humility and minority. Its uniformity affirms my desire to live and be part of a family community. Its symbol of service fits with my desire to labor to bring about God's kingdom and to espouse God's Church and her mission. The support I have experienced from the brothers of this province has affirmed and assured me that I too fit in it even with my flaws and shortcomings. As I now prepare to profess the vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience and to more fully immerse my self in this Gospel life, I praise God for inviting me to live such a beautiful and challenging life! Praised be Jesus Christ, Now and Forever!

**BROTHER**

Sean Rodriguez

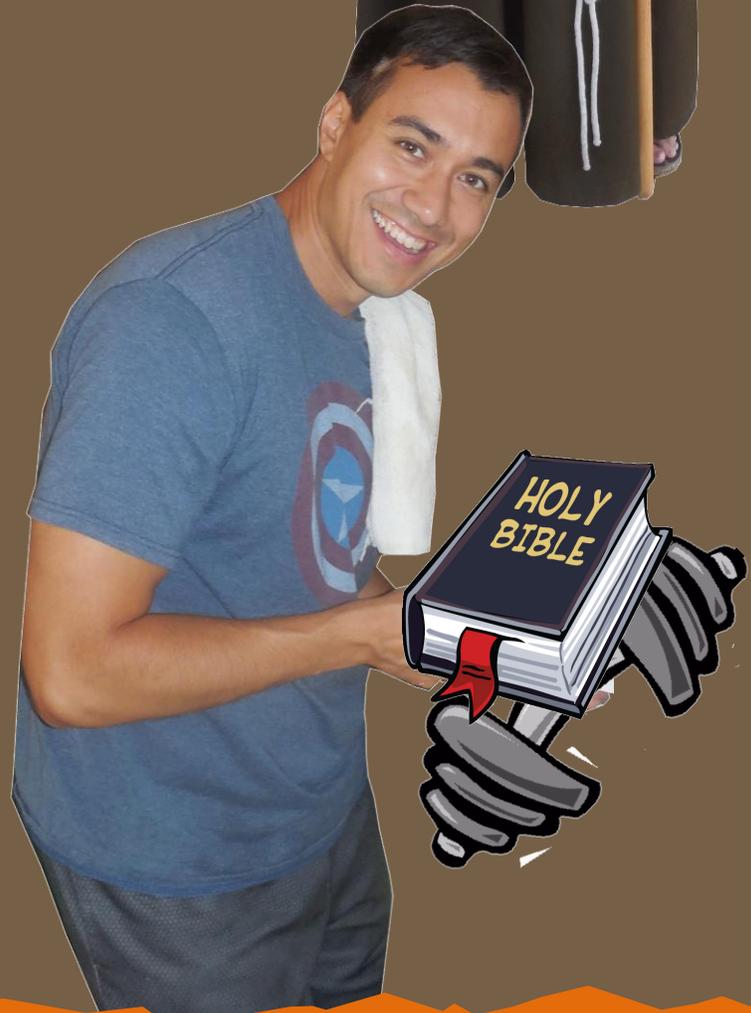
I came to the novitiate knowing what to expect but at the same time not knowing. I knew that it would be hard, full of frustration, homesickness, and self-doubt. But how could I have known in the beginning that the Lord would have been so gracious as to bless me with these brothers? These brothers who made me grow in a way that only brothers could do. I used to think that the novitiate period was a waste of time and I should've just received final vows because the order was lucky to have me. My how things have changed. If you want to be a friar you have to be humble, work together with your brothers, and make sure that everyone contributes to make the fraternity that will foster simplicity and brotherhood.

**BROTHER**

André Repucci

All things work for the Glory of God...

As I'm sitting in the dark before the blessed sacrament I decide to step out of the pew and make my way toward the door of the exit in the chapel. As I open the door the light from the sun radiates on my habit and I'm relieved to have escaped the darkness realizing that I must travel through the darkness to get to the light. This would personify my experience throughout the novitiate. During those dark moments where I had to face all of my inner struggles with temptation and doubt, I found the light and I realized that what St. Paul said was true-"all things work together for good to those who love God." I can't see what's up ahead but I'm confident that no matter what situation I'm in God is right beside me, guiding me through it all.

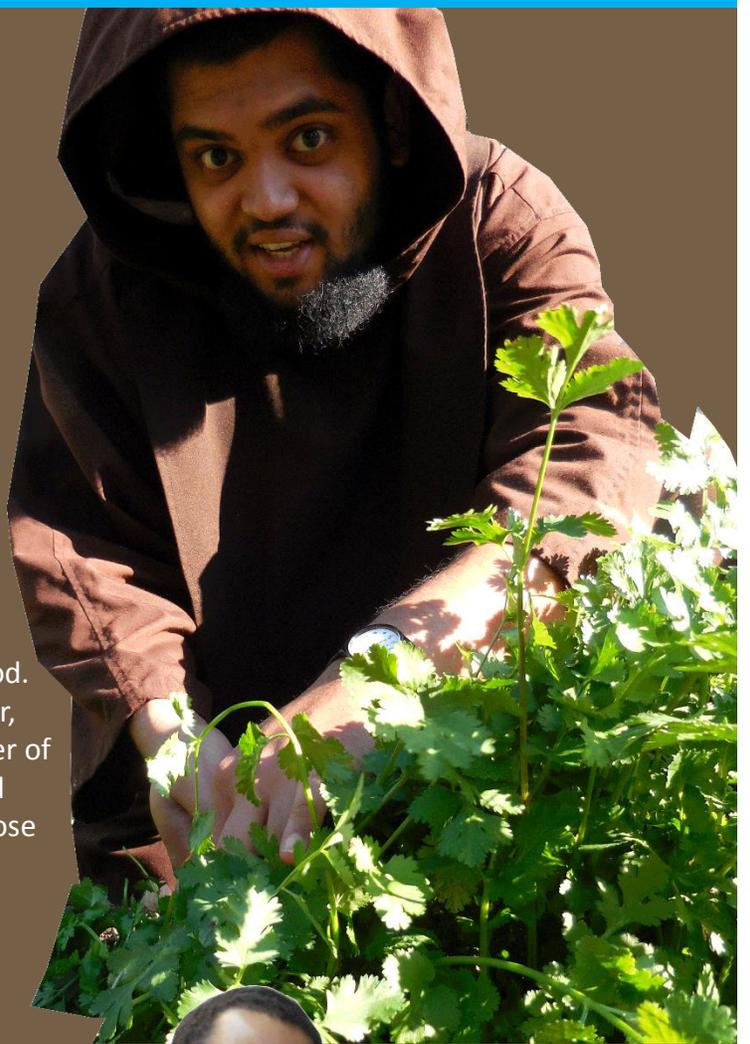




BROTHER

Merwyn D'Silva

"Gratefulness" is the first word I used, when asked what I felt looking back on this Novitiate Year. I started out the Novitiate Year hoping to learn more about the Capuchin charism to live as Brothers in Christ. Before the Novitiate Year, the idea seemed a little confusing to me. As the year went on, our daily life as brothers made me understand more and more each day of the importance of a Brotherhood. Not only did we go out, eat, and spend time with each other, most importantly, we prayed together. Our communal prayer of the Divine Office and Holy Mass strengthened our unity and love for each other, and helped us to spread that love to those we met outside. At this point of the year, I feel nothing but gratefulness for having been given the opportunity to have grown and nurtured in the Catholic faith, not just by myself, but with Brothers.



BROTHER

Montie Chavez

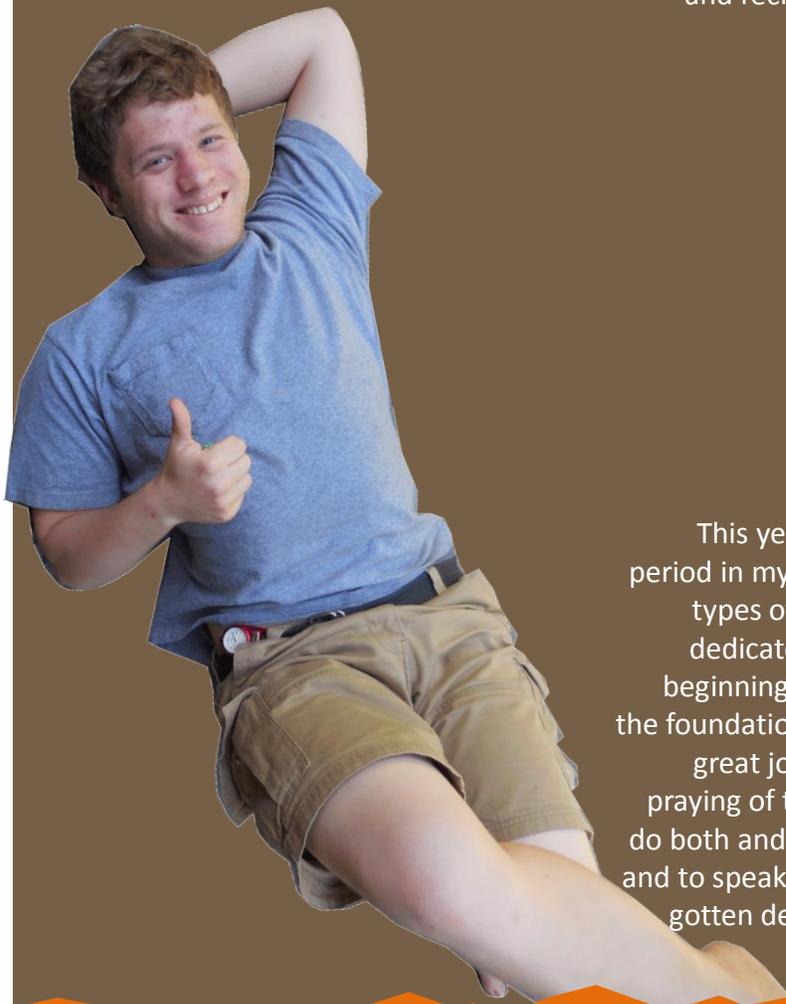
Throughout this year, there have been many ways of growth for me. I have been able to meet my goal I set at the beginning of the year, by growing deeper in relationship with Jesus through the footsteps of St. Francis. A large part of this has been through the amount of time being able to spend in prayer and doing the daily tasks within fraternity. Being part of an international brotherhood has really helped me also grow as an individual, continuing to improve on my communication and relationship skills. Although I will miss this year, from the beautiful landscape, the great people I have met and of course the different brothers, I look forward to what is in store next.





BROTHER
Brenton Ertel

This novitiate experience has challenged me most in the area of emotional health. Throughout this year I have developed skills that are not necessarily tangible but, I believe, relational. A way to integrate the spiritual and personal areas of my identity more organically is affective maturity. This kind of maturity allows me to feel and explain the emotions which I experience daily. I am able to express honestly what I desire so I can take responsibility for my life's decisions. Affective maturity, also, helps me to communicate more transparently in my personal relationships. I believe the spirit of Jesus is challenging me to be honest with myself. With that honesty I am able to offer completely my entire person to God and for others. God is looking for a relationship that is both mutual and reciprocal. An open relationship with God nurtures healthier relationships with my sisters and brothers.



BROTHER
Nicholas Martinez

This year has been the single biggest spiritual, relational growth period in my life. This year has taught me to be accepting of different types of people and different personalities. I have become more dedicated and enlivened by communal and private prayer. In the beginning of the year my goal for this Novitiate year was, "To build the foundation for the rest of my religious life." I believe I have done a great job at achieving this goal. I enjoy daily Mass and made the praying of the entire Liturgy of the Hours a non-negotiable. I love to do both and think of them as opportunities to listen to God in my life and to speak to God, getting ever closer to praying always. I also have gotten deeper in touch with my heart and my vocation during this year and there is no going back.



BROTHER

David Domanski

As I reflect on this year of discernment I can see that it fits into a process of transformation which encompasses my entire life. It has been a unique opportunity to be removed from the busy-ness of life, understand myself better, and grow in relationship with God and others. Through these experiences, I've gained faith in my Creator and courage to seek and follow His will in all things. Prior to entering Novitiate, my goal was to "trust in the goodness and presence of the Lord." This trust or lack of it has steered many choices in my life and I've come to better understand the fears which can keep me from it. By being open and willing to engage with the abundance of resources the year has provided (time for prayer, spiritual direction, formation advising, fraternal relationships, workshops, and ministry, to name a few) I am continually awakened to the life God desires within and around me.

SISTER

"Foxie" Roxie

I must say the year has been a little ruff at times, but in the end my brothers have been great at getting me out of the dog house. My favorite experiences have been joining in fraternal grilling time and testing that the flavors of the meat are just right for the "family" I love so much! I haven't shared this much with my Formation Advisor Frank, but I think he would fully support my efforts ;)



Remember... **St. Louis**





Cody Love

