

# The Caperone



## Capuchins on the Move

Lent has begun and so has the spring time weather. The novices have had a busy month with classes as well as a pilgrimage up the coast of California to San Francisco. Part of the novitiate program is to not only enter into a deeper prayer life to discern this way of life but also to learn more about our identity as Capuchins. Bro. Brenton reflects on two classes that showcase the identity that we are called to share with the world as brothers. Part of being a Capuchin is recognizing that we are all on pilgrimage to the Land of the Living (*Capuchin Constitutions* 62:2). Going on pilgrimages as brothers is in our DNA-history. Bro. Montie reflects on this history by sharing his experience and the Capuchin's longtime relationship with the Camaldolese as we visited their hermitage in Big Sur and the Franciscan influence with the missions up the coast. Bro. Sean shares our fraternal time in the vans as we trek up to San Francisco. Bro. Alex reflects on a Franciscan ministry, St. Anthony's Foundation, in the Tenderloin district of San Francisco as they minister to those in need. We hope you enjoy this month's *Caperone* as we continue to share the pilgrimage of this novitiate year with you, our friends.

-Bro. Jordan

### Novitiate Events

Feb. 16-17

**Secular Franciscan Order Intro.**

Rock and Jan DeSpain

Feb 18:

**Ash Wednesday Day of  
Recollection**

Bro. Bob Herrick

Feb 23-25:

**St. Francis Presentation**

Bro. Paul Dressler

March 2-4:

**Presentation on Triduum**

Bro. Bob Herrick

March 9-11, 16-18:

**Prayers of St. Francis**

Bro. Bobby Barbato

March 12-15:

**Religious Education Congress, LA**



# From the Formator's

St. Francis, echoing of the words of the apostle Peter (1 Peter 2:11), urged his friars to live in this world as "pilgrims and strangers." As Capuchin Franciscan friars, I think we get the "stranger" part correct, but we have to be reminded what it means to be pilgrims. This is part of the reason we take the novices each year on a pilgrimage to the national shrine of St. Francis in San Francisco, an experience they reflect on in this issue of the Caperone. On the road, we learned the lessons a pilgrim must learn. A pilgrim sees many wonderful and beautiful things (such as coastal panoramas and elephant seals!), and yet must continue on the journey. A pilgrim gets to experience the powerful faith of others (such as the Carmelite nuns or the Camaldolese monks), and yet must seek God's will in his own life. A pilgrim has to rely on the generosity of others (such as our friars in the Bay Area or the wonderful staff at St. Francis Retreat Center), and yet be open to the call to be generous to those he meets on the road. Most of all, a pilgrim has to learn to be grateful for the gift of each day. We ask you to pray for the novices (and all the friars) as they continue on their pilgrimage. God bless and keep you!

-Br. Bobby





## Exploring the Global Fraternity

Last month we had several classes related to our Capuchin identity as it looks and interacts internationally crossing cultural boundaries. We went through our *Constitutions* and discussed two Plenary Council documents. These are official documents that speak to the present concerns of our Order. The *Constitutions* of course have official legal authority over the way our Order governs itself. The Plenary Council documents, although have no official authority, are incredibly influential because they are an expression of the worldwide fraternity as it periodically meets to voice concerns. These sessions gave clarity and meaning to our communal life as an *evangelical fraternity*.

Bro. Jack Rathschmidt of the St. Mary's Province (New York) led us in the class on the Capuchin *Constitutions*. He developed thematic lenses to read the *Constitutions*. First he discussed the primary lens which is *fraternity*. Then he developed four more lenses which spring from *Fraternity: minority, contemplation, ministry, and JPE (Justice, Peace, and Ecology)*. Fraternity is our basic life-form and the four others are values that emerge from this source.

Bro. Jack was with us for two weeks. The first week he led the presentations, and for the second week he assigned to us various chapters for us to present during the class. Each province was assigned a chapter from the *Constitutions*. In our presentations, we all shared the unique personality and style of our respective provinces as it related to the particular chapter we were assigned. In the presentation we experienced the varied ways that our shared values as Capuchin Franciscans are expressed.

After the *Constitutions*, we discussed with Bro. Bill Hugo of the St. Joseph's Province (Detroit) two Plenary Council documents. These documents reflected on what poverty looks like within the Order communally and what minority means to our fraternity. Plenary councils meet periodically during a six-year term of a Capuchin General Minister. Capuchin friars meet from all over the world. The document on *poverty* attempted to implement a more just, fraternal economy. It articulated a way that provinces could collaborate to share resources internationally. The Order witnesses to the world by how brothers relate to each other personally, corporately, and even globally. The other document we discussed was about *minority*. The document doesn't define *minority* but it begins with the *Trinitarian* relational identity of God. It states that "The Trinity is the foundational relationship which creates Church." *Minority* places priority on relationship. The primary motivation for *minority* is building community that enacts co-responsibility.

These two documents have broadened my view on *poverty* and *minority* beyond the private and individual parts of the spiritual life to a more social dimension which calls for greater responsibility. Those few weeks of discussions were incredibly illuminative for me. It helped me gain a much larger perspective of our Order on a global scale. It also helped clarify the distinguishing marks of our way of life, especially our charism of *evangelical fraternity*.

-Bro. Brenton



# On the Road with my Brothers



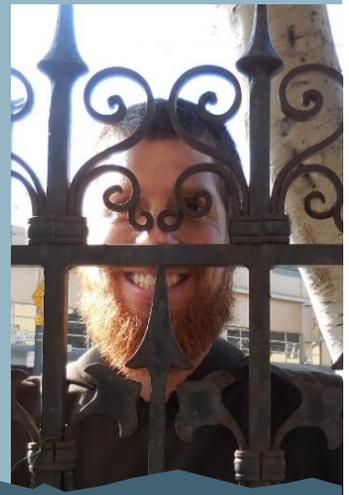
I had been thinking of the pilgrimage to San Francisco for weeks before we went, wondering what to expect or if it would affect me at all. I can say that it has affected me. Not in the way that I expected it to, or even in a way that would be of any importance to anyone else. It would however come across on a personal level that is attributed to God's divine providence.

The expectation was that we would be in the same group throughout the trip. Since it was a packed car of friars, it was presumed that ultimately it would end in bloodshed, but that's not what happened at all. It was calm, fun, musical, and, since Bro. Alex was in the car, full of endless information about tropical diseases and remedies. In many ways, the car ride was the most beautiful part of the pilgrimage: not because of the activities or anything else, but the basic fact of fraternity and brothers simply being brothers.

By the time the well of formator impersonations ran dry, we were dodging out of a full car looking for any sign of a restroom or food. You've never known the struggle unless you've experienced going to a restaurant with fifteen brothers, ordering your food first and getting it last. But, in the words of Bro. Frank, "I digress."

The days that followed were full of visits to shrines, churches, and Chinese restaurants, but the experiences would never have been much to me if I hadn't been with my brothers. These are the men I have chosen to live this life with; in whom struggle and holiness coincide and become instruments of God's love to me. I am thankful to God for his care for me and calling me to live this life of fraternity to all people.

-Br. Sean Rodriguez



# A Spirit Filled Journey

Our pilgrimage began early Monday morning on. We all piled into our designated vans and began our drive to the first destination. After making a quick pit stop, we found ourselves looking over Highway 1 at some huge marine mammals, *Mirounga angustirostris*, more commonly known as elephant seals. After seeing these huge mammals, some weighing over 5000 pounds, we again hit the road to our next stop at New Camaldoli Hermitage near Big Sur. In our Capuchin history we have had a unique relationship with our Camaldolese brothers, going back almost 500 years. At the beginning of the Capuchin reform, the Camaldolese hermits gave the first Capuchin friars refuge. In gratitude, we took their pointy hood, which is the hood of a hermit, as part of our habit. This was one of my favorite places we visited because of these historical ties. I felt that we still held our relationship even after 500 years. We continued, after a delicious lunch, and tour to Mission San Carlos Borromeo, located in Carmel-by-the-Sea, California. This is a beautiful mission, founded by soon-to-be St. Junipero Serra in 1770. We had the great of praying at his burial spot, located in the mission. We then continued on our journey to San Francisco.

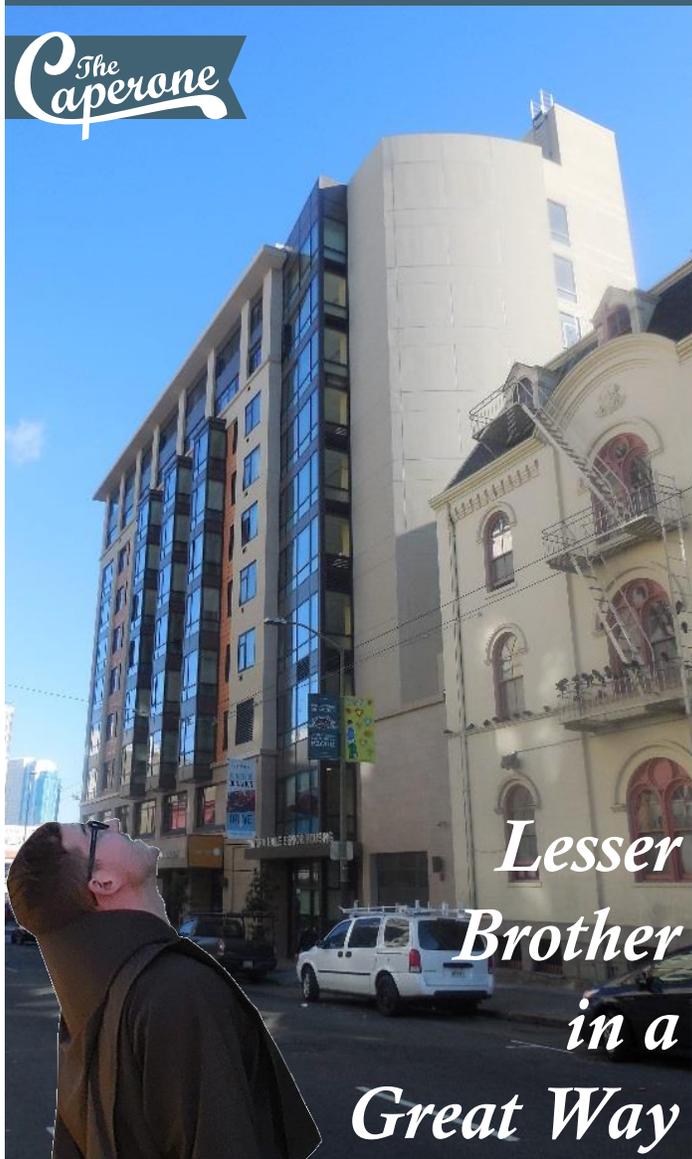
The main purpose of our pilgrimage was to visit the National Shrine of St. Francis. At the shrine is a replica of the Portiuncula, the ancient church dedicated to Mary under the title of Our Lady of the Angels, located in Assisi, Italy. St Francis had a special devotion to this church and it is also the place where he died. This was one of my favorite places on our pilgrimage, being able to see this beautiful church as well as pray and continue to ask for the gift of discernment.

On our way back home to San Lorenzo we paid a visit to Missions San Miguel and San Juan Bautista. Taking time to pray at all the mission churches going to San Francisco and coming back as well as the Shrine of St. Francis, made me recognize the Franciscan spirit that they were founded on and that continues to be witnessed by the lives of my fellow brothers and me, as we continue our own pilgrimage of novitiate together.

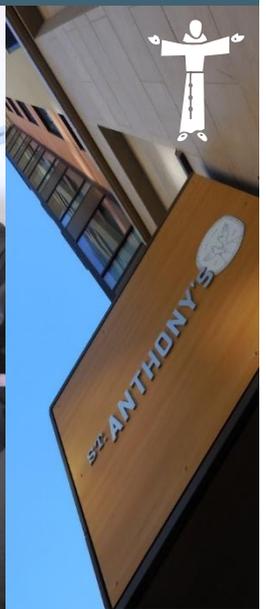
-Bro. Montie

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## Lesser Brother in a Great Way



The trip up to San Francisco was a long drive, with scenic views on coastal highways and many new photo opportunities or sightseeing stops. The drive alone up California 1 was worth the trip to San Francisco on its own merits. Thankfully, the Lord blessed us with still more beauty and wonderment once we arrived. I could write pages on the weeklong trip and still not exhaust all that struck me. Instead I will share one of my favorite experiences.

Saint Anthony's Foundation is a soup kitchen, education center, free medical clinic, clothing store and so much more for the homeless and less fortunate of San Francisco. I once heard that location is everything for a business to be successful, and oh my does St. Anthony's take this seriously. It is located smack dab in the middle of downtown San Fran and takes up most of a city block. St. Anthony's is a reminder to everyone who drives through the downtown area that there are people in need and that there are people willing to give from their surplus. What struck me was the size of the operation. It has multiple levels with varying functions; all in service to those who need them. I was told that there is a large homeless population in San Francisco and as such St. Anthony's has grown and tried to meet the need. The foundation was established by Franciscan friars but now is mostly run by lay people who live the spirit of St Francis in great ways. I would like to conclude by just saying this: It is beautiful to see the way of the lesser brothers lived out in such a great and public way.

-Bro. Alex Hoster