

THE Caperone



Holy Week at San Lorenzo



From The Formators

Alleluia, Christ is Risen! Alleluia!

On Easter Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene encountered the Risen Jesus, but she did not recognize him. In fact, she did not know who He was until He called her softly by name: “Mary!” Then she responded with surprise and joy: “Rabboni!” When the novices went north in March for their silent retreat (as you will read about in this edition of the Caperone), the formators asked them to sit in silence and listen to the Lord’s voice, calling their names. There is so much noise and so many voices in our world, that taking time deliberately to be silent and listen for the Spirit’s “tiny whispering sound” is essential, though it isn’t necessarily easy! We were grateful for the wonderful atmosphere and gracious hospitality provided by the Franciscan Sisters at St. Clare Retreat. It is always a time we as formators look forward to.

We thank you again for your prayers and support as the novices continue to listen for God’s voice, and the direction the Lord wants to lead them. We also ask prayers for all of us, especially those who will be, with the novices, in transition this summer.

May the Lord bless and keep you!

- Br. Bobby



Calendar Of Events

April 4-6:

Scripture Part I

(Br. Jerry Johnson)

April 11-13 and 18-20:

Franciscan Prayers

(Br. Bobby Barbato)

April 26-27:

Day of Reflection

(Br. Bob Herrick)

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Comments and Questions

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Holy Week

Each year the Church gives us the period of Holy Week as a visible, tangible expression of our faith in the resurrected Christ, who is above all, the center of our life. By encountering the events of the passion, death, and resurrection anew each year, we try again and again to increase our understanding, declare our faith more loudly, and augment our hope in the Risen Lord.

Holy Week here at San Lorenzo is an especially significant time for us, for it is ultimately the Risen Christ that we novices are trying to follow in our discernment with the Capuchins Franciscan Order. Holy Week is a time of great grace and renewed enthusiasm, but it is also very busy. With Br. Bob as our head organizer and liturgist, all the novices came together in committees to plan the many liturgies that Holy Week entails. Many of us were doing this for the first time. It is a tremendous effort. Planning for Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, The Easter Vigil, Easter Sunrise Mass, and Easter Day required the help of every hand available. As it always is with big liturgies like these, the “devil is in the details,” but we were fortunate enough that all the liturgies ran smoothly and beautifully.

Our Holy Thursday Mass was celebrated by Fr. Frank. The foot washing was a highlight of the Mass. It was a profound experience to see one of our formators, who are usually at the head of things, bending down to wash the feet of community members, friars, and novices, and that’s exactly why Jesus gave it to us as a model and example to follow. It is a reminder to us that those who lead, must lead by serving. It is a lesson that we must take to heart as we continue to be formed in the Capuchin spirit. We processed with the Blessed Sacrament to the altar of repose in our back chapel, and kept vigil there for a good part of the night. We concluded Holy Thursday with a midnight Night Prayer, remembering Christ’s agony in the garden and the apostles there with him. We tried our best to avoid falling asleep as they did.

Good Friday was a solemn day at San Lorenzo. Our service of the Lord’s Passion took place at the usual 3pm, with a noonday Stations of the Cross beforehand. Throughout the day we kept a general atmosphere of silence and reflectiveness, aiming to remain in accord with our remembrance of Calvary.





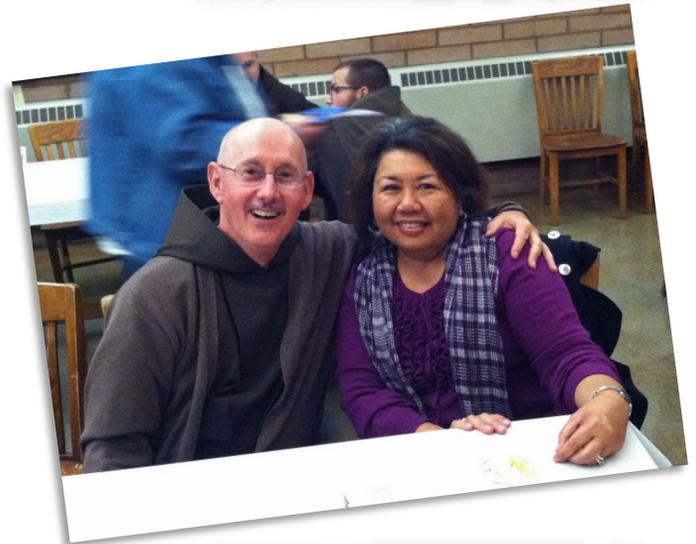
Holy Week

All day Saturday there was an air of anticipation for the Easter Vigil liturgy. A lot of work had gone in so far, and throughout the day many were at work to prepare the decorations and the necessary liturgical elements like the fire pit, and the kitchen and dining room were abuzz with preparations for our post-vigil social.

The Mass went beautifully. Our Schola, led by Br. Bob, did a wonderful job with music and cantoring. The chapel looked spectacular with the many flower arrangements. Every aspect of the Mass was profoundly impactful; the lighting and procession of the paschal candle, the many readings proclaiming the history of God's saving work, the renewal of our baptismal vows, and the celebration of the Eucharist all lifted us up into the mystery of the Risen Christ and invigorated our spirit of faith. Even better, after celebrating such a beautiful Mass, we were then able to continue the celebration in our beautifully decorated dining room with all sorts of goodies prepared by the novices. It was certainly the powerful summit of the Triduum.

But the celebrations weren't over yet. That morning the Easter mass at dawn began at 6:15am. The mass was celebrated outdoors where we would have a good view of the valley and the sun coming up over the horizon. Fr. Bobby preached about Christ's resurrection turning our darkness into light, and as we stood there in the darkness of the morning, hardly anything was visible, but over time the darkness turned to light and we were given clear vision of the scenery around us, something that was always there but that the darkness had hidden. Fr. Bobby made the profound connection of this phenomenon to our own faith lives.

Our final Easter Mass was celebrated by Fr. Joachim, and it was definitely our most attended Mass. The chapel was packed to capacity and we had to bring out nearly every chair in our closet to accommodate the flood of people flowing through our doors. Excitement was in the air, and the Mass was another experience of profound faith in the Risen Christ. A wild Easter egg hunt went on right after the mass as all the kids in attendance (and the novices) rushed out to scavenge for the goodies out in the field. We really enjoyed and appreciated having so many people with us to celebrate the joy of Easter. It was a day of high energy, excitement, and good food; a blessed time indeed.





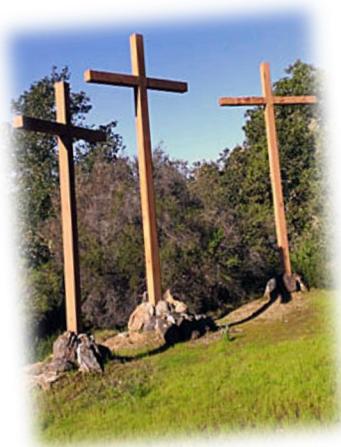
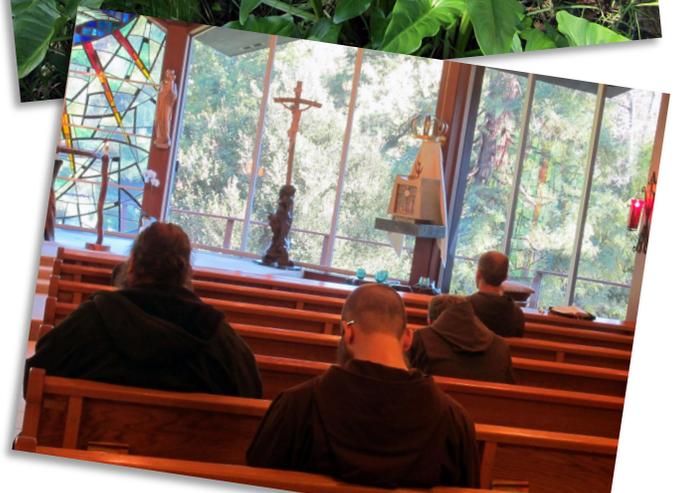
Silent Retreat

As we come further into the second half of our novitiate year, the prospect of taking first vows comes ever closer. In order to more fully discern our vocations on the path of Capuchin Franciscan religious life, the novices had the opportunity for a four day silent retreat to engage more earnestly in our discernment and to have some time for reflection with each of our formators.

Our retreat took place at St. Clare Retreat, Soquel, CA, a beautiful 50 acres of woodland, with several meditative trails throughout the property. One of the many meditation points along the trails was a "Cathedral" of redwoods which enclosed a shrine to Mary. The area was certainly conducive to Franciscan contemplation. The retreat was very open in terms of our daily schedule; we met for meals, and for prayer 3 times each day, leaving the rest of the time open so that each novice could organize his day to best fit his personal prayer, reading, and reflection. Each day every novice met with one of the formators for an opportunity to ask questions, reflect on experiences, and receive feedback on their discernment so far.

It was a very blessed four days, with many graces received by all, but we can all say for certain that it was equally a blessing when the silence was lifted and we were able to talk once again. It was all the more joyful for being St. Patrick's Day; we had our own little celebration there at the retreat center.

On our way back home to San Lorenzo the following day, we stopped by an unlikely place off Route 101: San Antonio Mission. Being so far off the highway (about 18 miles), and on the opposite side of an army base, it is the least visited of all the missions in California. Not many even know it is there. We stopped by for a quick picnic lunch and to visit the church and cloistered garden, which holds some of the oldest and rarest grape vines in the state. We were glad for the chance to visit another of California's beautiful and historic missions, and we are grateful to God for all the blessings and graces bestowed throughout the whole week.





Life in the Novitiate

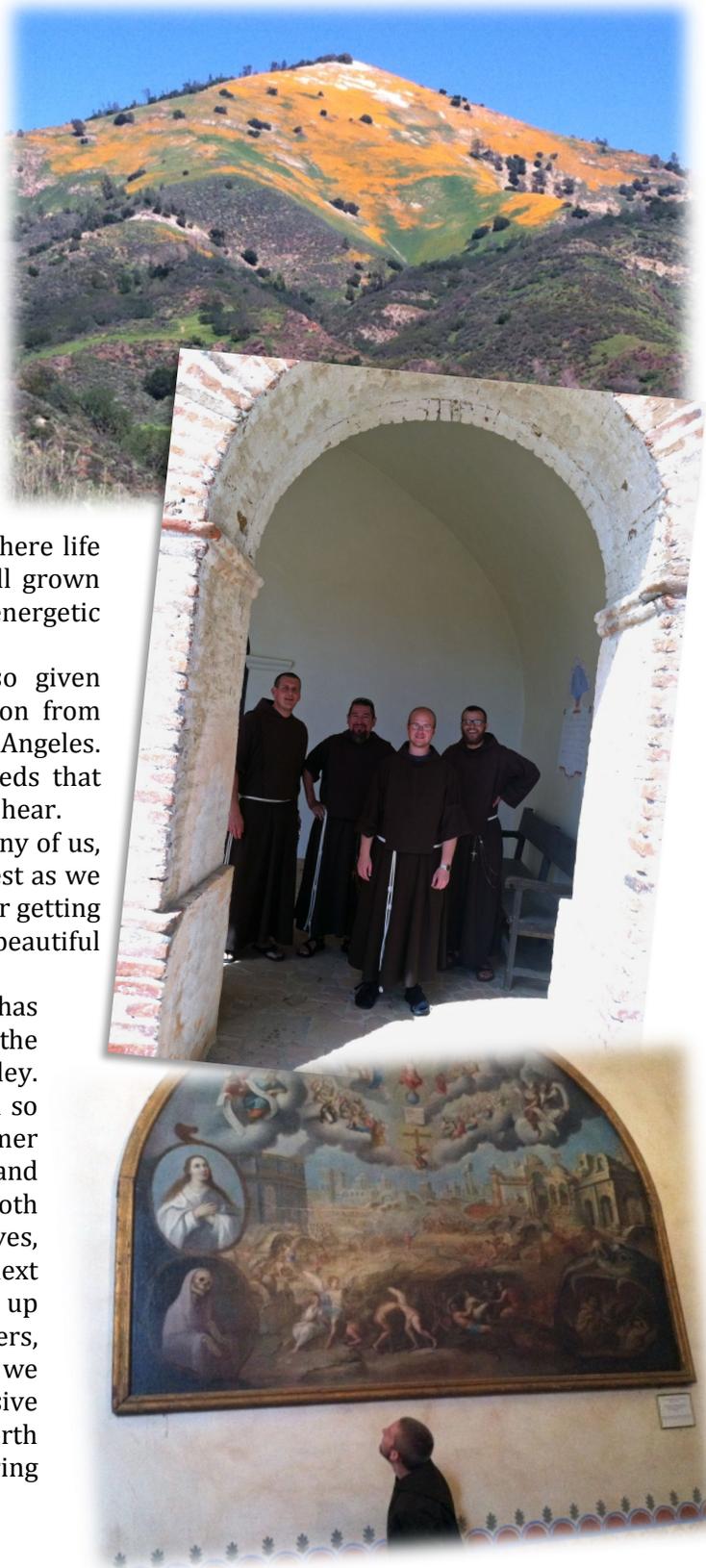
This month has been a busy one. We began the month in preparation for the Holy Triduum and ended the month with just the same. After a few classes on the aspects of the Triduum itself, we went right into planning; because of our upcoming silent retreat, we would have very little time before Holy Week would be upon us.

There was a lot of excitement (and some dread) about the silent retreat in the days preceding it. We knew that it would be a time to really go with the Lord in prayer and seek His will, not necessarily knowing what exactly He might say to us. It was in the midst of this that, the day before we were to head out to Santa Cruz, our brother novice Hahm Gang announced that he had decided to withdraw from the novitiate program. It was sad to see him go, but we know that he will be blessed and graced no matter where life leads him. Every departure is difficult, but we had all grown especially fond of Hahm, who was a fun, loving, and energetic part of community. He will certainly be in our prayers.

It was around this time that we were also given the news of the decision of Fr. Alejandro's transition from San Lorenzo to St. John of God Retirement Home in Los Angeles. We knew and understand the many reasons and needs that factored in to the decision, but it was still a sad thing to hear.

The discernment retreat was refreshing for many of us, and tiring for some, but there was not much time to rest as we entered right into the full swing of Holy Week soon after getting back. Holy Week was an enriching time, with so many beautiful liturgies to lift up our hearts to God in worship.

As spring comes upon us the warmer weather has initiated a magnificent bloom of flowers all across the property of San Lorenzo and throughout the valley. One particular hill in the distance was blanketed with so many poppies it looked blood red. Along with the warmer weather is a new growing season for our vineyard and garden. Renewed weeding has been going on in both places. The vines have begun to sprout new leaves, the first stage of growth for the grapes which next year's novices will harvest. Vegetables are popping up all over the garden. Potatoes, onions, chili peppers, fava beans, broccoli, and carrots are a few of the crops we have growing this spring. There has been a massive amount of work involved, but the fruits are always worth the labor, a lesson we've all come to appreciate during this novitiate year.





Friars' FYI

Fr. Alejandro's Transition

Fr. Alejandro Magallanes, a senior friar of the California province who lives here at San Lorenzo Seminary, has been struggling with increased difficulties in mobility these past few months. Fr. Alejandro has been using a wheelchair in conjunction with a walker to move around the various buildings of the novitiate campus. However, he has found it more and more difficult to walk, and at times struggles to simply transfer from his power chair to the a wooden chair at the table for meals. Because the novitiate is spread out among various buildings, it is difficult, and at times dangerous, for Fr. Alejandro to be moving around so much; he has fallen a few times just in these recent weeks. Therefore, Fr. Alejandro himself has made the decision that the best course of action at this point is to transfer to a new location which would be able to accommodate his needs, both in environment and nursing staff.

After much research and an in-person visit, St. John of God Retirement Center in Los Angeles has been chosen as his new home. Not only is it adequately equipped for Fr. Alejandro's needs, but it is close enough to the friars in L.A. so that he will be able to receive plenty of visits during his time there. The province emphasizes its desire to keep Fr. Alejandro a continued presence in our Capuchin community as much as possible.

The friars and novices at San Lorenzo will sorely miss Fr. Alejandro's presence. His continued faithfulness to prayer, to concelebrating the Mass each day, and to being a part of our own discernment journey has been an inspiration for us, and a model of Capuchin spirit which all of us can learn from. He is as strong willed, dedicated, and loving as it gets, and he has touched our lives in countless ways these past 8 months. He has a place in each of our hearts, and he will not soon be forgotten. His move took place soon after our celebrations on Easter Sunday. We ask all of you to keep him in your prayers, as we will in ours.



Creative Capuchins

"The 13th Station"

Marker

by Br. Matthew Timonera

