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Capuchin Vocation Update Province of St. Joseph

The **BIG** question by Tien Dinh, Capuchin Postulant

WHAT AM I CALLED TO DO WITH MY LIFE?

This is the big question I pondered for a very long time, and I think I have found my answer in the Capuchin way of life. One of the purposes of the Capuchins is to serve others however they can. Throughout my years with the Capuchins, I experienced many good services that they do for people, especially for the poor, homeless and needy in the United States. The Capuchin Soup Kitchen in Detroit is just one of many examples.

As a Capuchin postulant, I too have the privilege of working with and helping needy people at my ministry site in Chicago: St. Rose Center. My ministry there has helped me better understand my Capuchin way of life, confirming it as a good choice for me.



Tien with a guest of St. Rose Center

St. Rose Center is sponsored by the Daughters of Saint Mary of Providence. It is a day training program for adults with developmental disabilities. Even though it is a Catholic facility, the center turns no one away because of their religion, background, or social status. Sister Theresa Tamburo is in charge of the center, and its goal has always been to help disabled adults strive for their highest potential while being involve with the community.

During my high school years at Saint Lawrence Seminary in Mount Calvary, Wisconsin, I had worked with adults with disabilities in a ministry called the Arch of Fond du Lac. I basically helped the adults enjoy bowling, an ability most of us take for granted, but one very challenging to these special people. When Sister Theresa explained what the center is all about, I knew that it would be the ministry I desired as a postulant.

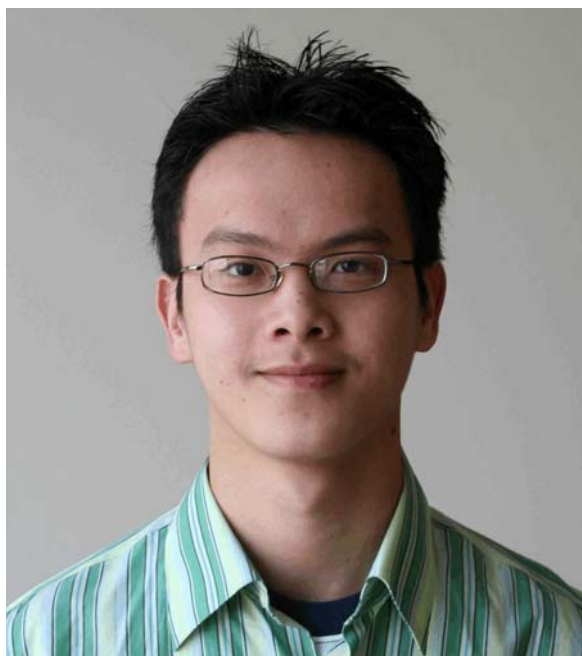
When my first day of volunteering at St. Rose arrived, I was both excited and nervous because so many things were new for me. With time, I have become very comfortable volunteering there and have grown in my enjoyment of it. I admit that I'm surprised how everyone still eagerly greets me when I arrive each morning. It's a great feeling to know that I am always welcome and to know that the people there are just as excited to see me.

When I work with the adults in the classroom, I have to be patient. But that is what makes it fun and enjoyable for me. What others learn in a flash, my special adults learn with

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extra time and repetition. I really enjoy explaining and showing them the correct ways of doing certain tasks because it helps them to reach their goals. With this new knowledge, they are better able to deal with their daily life situation. Working with them also boosts my confidence in my speaking ability and shows me that I do my best to help others reach their highest potential. Working with the people has taught me many aspects of life I never knew before.



Capuchin Postulant Tien Dinh was born in Vietnam and immigrated to the United States with his family, which now lives in the New Orleans area. He is a graduate of Capuchin-run St. Lawrence Seminary in Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin. Before becoming a postulant, Tien participated in the Capuchin College Program at St. Joseph College Seminary on the campus of Loyola University in Chicago. Tien is applying to the Capuchin novitiate which will begin July 29th.

I began this reflection by asking, “What am I called to do with my life?” However, I believe the real question should be, “Is the Capuchin way of life what I want for myself?” As I reflect on the last seven months as a postulant, I notice that I have learned very much about community life, the Capuchin-Franciscans, the church and my faith. But it is at St. Rose Center where I put all my learning into practice and action. It is the test that will indicate whether the Capuchin way of life is really for me. By working at St. Rose Center, I have learned many things about myself. It teaches me to accept others the way they are and helps me know that I am concerned about others and care for them. I want what is best for them and try my best to help them gain more knowledge about life. That learning might take us a long time and demand many sacrifices from me. But I don’t mind. As I learned from many Capuchins, we are all brothers and sisters.

As the end of volunteering at St. Rose Center draws closer, I know that working there has helped me with my discernment as a Capuchin. By working there, I know what I really want to do with my life, and that is to serve people who need my help. That is exactly what Capuchins do in their lives, service to people.



Tien started his Capuchin Postulancy last August. He is pictured here with the seven other men who started that postulancy and their directors.