



21 May 2007, #119

Capuchin Vocation Update

Province of St. Joseph

The mysterious path of a vocation

Men thinking of a possible vocation as a religious or priest often wonder how one knows what he should do. Those already living those vocations often wonder what they should do to encourage other vocations. Upon the recent first profession of Bro. Zoy Garibay at St. Bonaventure Monastery in Detroit last December, his own journey illustrated the mysterious path a vocation often takes. To profess his first vows, Zoy returned to that place where he first met the Capuchins with no intention of considering a Capuchin vocation. He recalls with gratitude two Capuchins among many who particularly impacted the future direction of his vocation.

Zoy was a nurse at Ford Hospital in Detroit at the time. He worked the night shift in Intensive Care for 12 hours at a time and was looking for a morning daily Mass he could take in before returning home and going to bed. Given the changes in Detroit parish life recently, it was hard to find a church with a convenient Mass. Searching the Internet, he discovered the Solanus Center and the weekday morning Mass at exactly the best time. On top of that, it was on the way home from work.

Zoy recalls that he was not considering the Capuchins at the time, though he was considering diocesan priesthood. He had attended a high school seminary in the Philippines, an experience that probably shaped his expectations around diocesan priesthood. Still, he remained open to almost any possibility.

Capuchin Pat McSherry noticed the “new face” in the assembly at St. Bonaventure during Zoy’s first morning Mass there. Pat had no idea who he was or what was his background. He had not thought that Zoy might be a prospective Capuchin. But because he was new, Pat welcomed him warmly as he would any new face in the crowd.

Soon, it was clear that Zoy was a “regular” at the morning Mass. Sometimes he would ask Pat about a point in his homily that day, and he struck Pat as “someone who was serious about his faith and his life’s journey.” However, Pat still had no inkling that Zoy might someday be a Capuchin. So, when Zoy asked for some vocational literature, Pat was a bit unprepared, but found a Prayer for Discernment card that the Capuchin Vocation Office had distributed. It contained the office’s contact information.

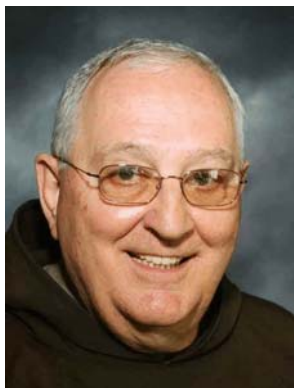


Capuchins Philip Naessens (left) and Pat McSherry stand with Zoy Garibay on his first profession day in front of the door he walked through for his first Eucharist at St. Bonaventure’s.

capuchinfranciscans.org

1-920-753-7502

Vocation Update



Philip Naessens is a spiritual director and confessor at the Solanus Center in Detroit.



Patrick McSherry is the provincial archivist for the Midwest Capuchins.

After contacting the vocation office, Zoy began spiritual direction with another Capuchin at St. Bonaventure's: Philip Naessens. Philip recalls being struck by Zoy's spirit of service. It seemed to be a value that permeated every aspect of Zoy's life, professionally, socially, and at home.

Philip was energized by his spiritual work with Zoy and found Zoy's attitude unusual even for others considering religious life. He believes that other Capuchins in Detroit and the wider province were both surprised and thankful for such a candidate. Phil had high expectations for Zoy only because he believed Zoy had high expectations for himself. He encourages any new inquirer or candidate to learn how to do it from Zoy.

Zoy remembers those early events from the different perspective of an inquirer. The first time he entered St. Bonaventure's he remembers entering a large and dark Church, wondering if he had made a mistake, but then discovering that the weekday masses were in the friars' smaller chapel behind the big public one. "As I entered the smaller room, I saw the figure of an old man in a brown habit sitting in prayerful silence in one of the pews, conveying an air of holiness with his mere presence. Chills immediately came running down my spine, and I knew I was entering into a very special place. That image left an indelible mark in my memory and turned out to be a providential one because that friar, whom I later came to know as Bro. Philip Naessens, subsequently became my spiritual director."

Zoy also remembers Pat McSherry going out of his way to thank him for coming to Eucharist with them that day. Zoy remembers wondering why a friar would thank him for doing something that was not that spectacular. "Nevertheless, his actions spoke volumes to me about the Capuchins. He showed by his sincere appreciation that the Capuchins are a warm and down-to-earth people to whom I can very well relate. First impressions are crucial, they say, because they determine the course of your actions."

Pat's welcome did shape the future course of events for Zoy. He immediately wanted to return again, eventually with frequency, and that eventually brought Zoy to consider the Capuchin way of life for himself. Thinking back on that first meeting, Zoy reflects:

"Now that I am one of them, I cannot help but see the hand of God at work through all of them. I consider that day when I first went to St. Bonaventure for Mass a graced period in my life. I believe that, a long time ago, God planted in me that seed of desire to serve him in the church. I may have taken a detour at some point in my journey, but I was never lost. Maybe God allowed my wandering to happen. Perhaps that was necessary so that I may gain whatever it is that I needed to have to be prepared for the task that God has in store for me. When the time had come again, God called. I heard the promptings of his voice. I followed them and was led to the doors of St. Bonaventure Monastery.



Provincial Minister Dan Anholzer blessing Zoy at his profession.

It's not too late to attend tomorrow's Chicago BBQ welcoming new candidates.

Contact Fr. John Holly quick!
Jholly1953@yahoo.com
920-915-4400



Please pray for candidates applying to postulancy and the admissions board that meets June 24-25th.