



15 April 2008, #159

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# Capuchin Vocation Update

Province of St. Joseph

## Changing the World by Vito Martinez, Capuchin Candidate

*(Vito Martinez continues our series in which the newest members of the Midwest Capuchins and those aspiring to join them describe what they seek in Capuchin religious life.)*

I recently submitted my application to join the Capuchin Postulancy this fall; however I still continue to discern God's plan for me on this Earth. For most men and women in my situation, the call of a religious vocation is nothing short of miraculous. It is also quite extraordinary. The Lord has a funny way of asking the impossible, and allows us to find a way to do His work. God asks us to cast down our nets and become fishers of men. He asks us to rebuild His church and to carry His cross in our hearts.

When I first felt called to a vocation, I was a successful car salesman at the top of my profession. I had a good job, a great girlfriend, a nice apartment...all the things that society says you must have to be successful. During that fall, I realized God had other plans for me. Like those called before me, I realized there was a fire in my soul—a yearning to do much more with my life. It was a call to be an example of what Jesus meant by loving each other. What wondrous task did God have for me? Quite simply, to help change the world.

Initially, this idea of changing the world is daunting. I'm neither a politician nor an activist; I don't have the charisma or the leverage to lead crowds of people in a revolution. Yet to bring about real change, someone must show others a new way of life; they must show them a better way to treat each other, one that benefits society as a whole. How am I, a simple man, to change the world?

To the surprise of others in my field, I left the car business so I could pursue my vocation. While I never tried to convert any of my colleagues, the topic of my discernment allowed people to open up about their spirituality; they feel comfortable talking to me about their relationship with God, even though the sales business leaves little room for such discussions. Already I had started to change the world's view about what it meant to give everything up in service to God.

There are times I feel I am living the life of St. Francis: giving up the nightlife and the riches to live amongst the lepers and the outcasts of the world. But while Francis' friends were neither supportive nor compassionate, the reaction I've gotten has been quite different.



Vito on the job

# Vocation Update

Even those acquaintances that don't believe in God are proud of what I am doing and are amazed at the way my life has changed. Simply by walking this long road of discernment, I've managed to touch the lives of different people from a variety of backgrounds.

The Capuchin lifestyle compliments my calling in every way. As a Capuchin, we are asked to look at the world in a radically different view from what many of us have been taught. Rather than looking at each other in terms of *success* and *failure* as is so prevalent in our country, we look at everyone as the creation of God. As such we treat each other with a sense of humanity, regardless of social status, income, culture, race, sex, or affiliation. For those who are disenfranchised from

mainstream society, we remind them that they are still part of this world, and we are all brothers and sisters in God. Instead of making excuses for the poor or simply dumping money into charities, Capuchin life is about reaching out, just as Jesus did. St. Francis tried to imitate the life of Christ: the greatest "change candidate" the world has ever known.

These days, I know I will help change the world. I just don't know how or when I will help. But having heard the wondrous stories of Francis and Jesus' lives, I know that when we reach out to people who've been thrown away by society, we preach the gospel to *all* people as Jesus and Francis did.



Vito with other candidates at the Feb. weekend for those applying to postulancy.

The Admissions Board meeting for those applying to the 2008-2009 postulancy class is May 1-2.

Your prayers for all those applying and the Admissions Board is appreciated.

Every three years, Capuchin provinces gather their members in what is called a chapter. That's a meeting during which the members of the chapter elect leadership for the next three years and conduct other business.

This year, the Midwest Province of Capuchins will discuss fraternal life within the province.

The chapter occurs June 1-5.

Your prayers for the success of the chapter are appreciated.