



13 October 2009, #209

Serving as a Community:

Post-Novitiate Friars Serving at P.A.D.S (Public Action to Deliver Shelter)

Last spring, Capuchin friaries throughout the Province engaged in a process called “Appreciative Inquiry” that was designed to help friars dream together in new ways. When the process was facilitated by Ed Foley at St. Clare Friary in Chicago (mainly a student house of post-novitiate friars in theological studies) the men there decided that they would like to do an additional ministry in the community. What was new about the idea is that they wanted to do it *together*. All of the friars have individual ministries that are part of the formation program requirements. As good as these ministries are, the men still wanted to do this ministry in common at least twice per month. The guys take turns cooking for each other every night, so why not cook and serve meals for a local homeless shelter?



For this first visit, mashed potatoes, Cuban chicken breasts with red bell peppers, Cuban black beans and broccoli were the main dish. Rice crispy treats were the dessert. The friars will take turns preparing the meals approximately twice per month.

The dream came to fruition on Wednesday, October 14, when friars prepared food for most of the day and then served and shared the meal with folks at P.A.D.S. on the near south side of Chicago. P.A.D.S. is an emergency shelter and assistance center for people having difficulty in securing permanent housing. For the friars it wasn't just about the serving. It was about the give and take of sharing. You could hear Tom Nguyen's cackling laugh and see how gently Kent Bauer sat and spoke with people. You could hear Todd Wieschowski talking with people by name as he sat and ate with them while John Holly washed dishes in the background. It was a lot like a big meal at the friary, its just that the table was a little larger and the family was a little more diverse.

Was everything perfect? Of course not. Some of the people there were taking turns visiting with a volunteer foot doctor because diabetes was affecting blood circulation in their extremities. Some folks, rightfully so, really weren't interested in talking, which is fine. Many of the friars were already stressing about the school and work load still waiting for them back at the friary. You could often sense an awkwardness when two people who didn't know each other were trying to start up a conversation. As with any volunteer work in a service situation, there are times when guys didn't know exactly what to do. Yet, in this sea of human frailty, God has a way of healing, making all of us better, and moving all people forward, *together*.



Vocation Update



Tom Nguyen put on a 30 minute magic show after the meal. He was having too much fun.

Where are they ministering individually?

David Hirt- Port Ministries. David teaches little kids arts and crafts while their parents learn English. He is also an after school tutor for school kids. When needed, he helps with the "Bread Truck"; a mobile meal program for area people.

Tien Dinh- R.E.S.T. This organization provides shelter and social services for homeless men and women.

Mark Romanowski- St. Clare of Montefalco Parish. Mark does pastoral care work at the parish and helps out extensively in Milwaukee during tax season helping the elderly and poor fill out tax documents.

Mitch Frantz- Marillac Social Center. Mitch helps the center in a variety of ways including after school tutoring.

Zoy Garibay- S.P.R.E.D. (Special Religious Education) Zoy helps train catechists so that kids with special needs and gifts can be incorporated into regular parish celebration. In addition, he works with Faith and Fellowship, a parish based outreach program for adults with mental illness. He is also the local Cap Corps Volunteer Coordinator.

Todd Wieshowski- St. Clare of Montefalco Parish. Todd does pastoral work along with a big day of food distribution to needy families in the area along with St. Vincent de Paul volunteers.

Tom Nguyen- Tom takes his magic show on the road to try to lighten the day for children with cancer at a local hospital.

Detroit Ministry Weekend for Candidates and Inquirers

**Begins with supper on Friday Oct. 23
Ends after lunch on Sunday Oct. 25**

Visit the Solanus Casey Center and the many Capuchin ministries. Meet the friars and people who work with them. Spend time in prayer. *See the Vocation Update from Nov. 28, 2008 for last year's photos.*

Reservations are required to attend the weekends.

New inquirers are welcome!

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or visit www.CapuchinFranciscans.org and click on <How to Begin>