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Capuchin

Vocation Update

Province of St. Joseph

Franciscan Prayer:

When you discover God, you discover others and yourself.

(Part 2 of a series)

by William Hugo, O.F.M. Capuchin

Like all communication, prayer is not a one-way street. In prayer, we are not the only ones talking; God also talks. Both God and we both speak and listen. In Franciscan prayer, there is also a third group sitting on the stage of prayer: the rest of creation. Creation also listens and talks. This is because we are sisters and brothers with all creation; all have our origin in the same Father-Creator.

Since prayer is such a family affair, when we learn about God in prayerful conversation, we also learn about our sister and brother creatures. And when we learn about God, our brothers, and our sisters, we can't help but learn about ourselves. Consider these examples.

- When we learn that God created us out of his intense desire, we learn that we did not earn our existence.
- If God creates all creatures out of equal desire, then no creature is more important than another.
- Since God created all creatures, we are in relationship with all creatures through our common source.
- The respect God shows to me is the same respect he shows all creatures. So, I have cause to respect other creatures as I myself hope to be respected.
- If the God who creates me is humble, how can I possibly think of myself as haughty?

Since conversation with God will ultimately lead us to examine ourselves, prayer requires honesty and humility. The story of Francis unexpectedly meeting a leper forcefully illustrates this. Francis was understandably petrified of lepers. But their existence bothered him. Most of us ask "Why me?" when confronted by difficulty. When Francis saw a leper, he asked "Why them?"



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As Francis' deepening prayer was leading him to realize that the leper and he came from the same creator, Francis could no longer tolerate their separation. When Francis learned about God in prayer, he learned about the leper. When he learned about the leper, he learned about himself. So, in this story, Francis would finally embrace the leper. They were brothers and sisters. They were the same. His prayer had changed is life!



(William Hugo is the Provincial Director of Formation as well as director of Postulancy at St. Conrad Friary in Milwaukee, WI. He lectures on Franciscan spirituality and history and has an M.A. in Franciscan Studies from St. Bonaventure University in Western New York. He authored *Studying the Life of Francis of Assisi: A Beginner's Workbook*, Franciscan Press, 1996.)

*Artwork on page 1 by Michael Gaffney,
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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>

**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.*

Contact Fr. John or Br. Jerry as soon as possible if you would like to attend. Our contact information is in the box to the left.