

the Dragoon Dispatch

SPRING 2007 NEWSLETTER

FRANCISCAN NOVITIATE

Workers in the Vineyard



Nick gives birth to yet another delicious creation!



David and Jacob rolling with the good times



Francis, the novice R"ambo"



Nader in stitches

In the Beginning...

As mid-July of last year approached, two groups of men were preparing for very important events in their lives: for the candidates, it was 'Investiture,' for the novices, 'First Profession of Vows.'

On July 21st -- having completed their respective candidacy programs -- Nader Ata and Nick Ro-

meo of St. Anthony Province, and David Moore, Jacob Johnson, and Francis (Lukasz) Mikosof of St. Bonaventure Province, were invested in their habits. The ceremony, which was held in the chapel of the novitiate in Mishawaka IN, was simple, quiet, and moving. Provincials Patrick Greenough (SB) and Michael Kolodziej (SA) officiated over the event. They blessed

Beginning



Francis' big day

the habits and reflected on the great and mysterious spiritual journey into which these newly minted novices were agreeing to enter.

A week before investiture, David, Jacob, Francis, Nader, and Nick arrived at the novitiate in order to acclimate themselves to their new home and life-style. The soon-to-be simply professed showed them "the ropes," giving practical advice on day to day living,

and tips on how to perform their house duties.

The next day, friars, family, and friends from all over the country gathered together to witness the outgoing novices' First Profession. The Mass and ceremony were held across the street from the novitiate, at the provincialate of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration. Gerald Payne (SJC), Charbel Charro (OLC), Peter

Tremblay (SA), Brad Sobon (SA), Anthony Lajato (SB), Francis McGann (SB), Joseph Schenk (SB), Ephrem Cramer (SB), and Hans Flondor (SB) all took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and were given their new, knotted cords. Afterwards, the sisters provided all of the friars and families a delicious buffet lunch.

10,000 Leagues Under Debris



Novices unclogging a sand blaster

As the dust from the first weeks of acclimation settled, new dust was preparing to gather beneath us. In the basement, that is. For several weeks, we novices plunged ourselves into a project that culminated in the equivalent of a permanent Botox shot for the bottom level of the Novitiate.

What began as an innocent attempt to rid ourselves of years' accumulation of moldy storage was quickly visited by a man named Murphy. And so began the saga that this writer entitled, "The Manhattan Project Revisited", finding us in fierce combat with the forces of mold and the unpredictabilities of pounds of granules blown through the

tubing of a now-infamously finicky sand blaster.

When the last of the grains had been swept away, the last pile of refuse driven to the dump, and the last porous block of cinder covered with paint, we were left with a vastly-improved basement. The work room is cleared. The laundry room is immaculate. The pool room is at last suitable for its named purpose.

The completion of the director-dubbed "Urban Cellar Project" was celebrated with two festive gatherings. The first hosted the candidates of Saint Bonaventure Province, while the second came as a portion of an Epiphany celebration with the Franciscan Sisters of Per-

petual Adoration (a.k.a. "the sisters up the hill").

With the basement renovated and the guest rooms updated, the Autumn work period came to a close. Currently, we are working on a reconfiguring of office and computer space. The budding of Spring will see new floors and fresh paint in the first floor hallway.



Novices hammer away at old pipes

"And so began...
'The Manhattan
Project
Revisited'..."

‘SERRAN-dipity’

The Serra Club hosted a conference of its regions six and seven on the campuses of the University of Notre Dame and Saint Mary’s College. The gathering, held October 25-28, was attended by some three hundred Serrans of various locales. The theme of the conference was “Thirsting for Knowledge, Truth, Charity, and Christ”.

The Serra Club is a national organization of men and women dedicated to the promotion of vocations to the priesthood and religious life in the Roman Catholic Church. It is named for Blessed Junipero Serra of California mission fame.

Having had contact with the club and its president, Dick Dornbos, in years past, we were invited to provide needed assistance over the four day event. Our duties centered on a primary ministry of presence and

included welcoming participants to their local hotels, riding with them on buses to scheduled events, and being certain that the Serrans—many of them older—made it through the weekend unscathed. (We accomplished all of these; the lat-



cussions were held at St. Mary’s. After a scheduled presenter—Fr. Theodore Martin Hesburgh, CSC, President Emeritus of the University of Notre Dame—cancelled due to illness, we were asked to participate in a panel discussion. Sitting at a table on the stage of St. Mary’s O’Laughlin auditorium (once graced by actress Helen Hayes), we fielded questions regarding the respective catalysts of our entering Franciscan formation. Rave reviews of our performance were received from grateful Serrans.

“Rave reviews of our performance were received from grateful Serrans.”

In addition to the conference, we also joined the Serrans for the opening Mass of their

Advent retreat, celebrated in the gymnasium of Marian High School. On December 28, we joined Bishop John D’Arcy and the seminarians of the diocese for a Mass and dinner hosted by the South Bend Serra Club.

ter tarnished only by a Serran who felt the urge to be born again and dove into the pool of the baptismal font in the chapel of Saint Mary’s. Official reports say the man decided to remain Catholic.)

On Saturday, the main day of the conference, a series of dis-

the sisters’ infirmary. Donning Santa caps and bearing gifts, the novices and their directors went from room to room, singing a carol for each and every sister. Eyes brightened as the friars tried their best to stay in harmony. Afterwards, the sisters who staff the infirmary

Singing Through the Midnight Clear

After settling into the routine of the novitiate, in early November the novices were given the opportunity to continue a four year tradition of participating in the Franciscan Sisters’ Christmas Eve choir. The friars practiced and rehearsed with the sisters about once a week for a month, preparing for the big night. During the week leading up to December 24th, the practices intensified, and when the

time came, the novices were ready. The sisters agreed that everything went off without a hitch. After mass, the friars joined the sisters for a casual get together. Egg nog, wine, snacks, and other wonderful treats were provided for all to enjoy.

About a week before this special Midnight Mass, the novices continued yet another novitiate Christmas tradition -- singing carols at





graciously treated the friars to cookies and punch.

Other holiday highlights during the month of December included hosting a few local South Bend and Mishawaka families for dinner and games; a Marian day of recollection with Fr. Patrick Greenough (SB); and two nights of fraternity with the OFM novices from Cedar Lake, IN. On Christmas day, the novices spent the day cooking up a unique “Tastes from Around the World” buffet, opening gifts, watching movies, and playing games. Also, some novices went to their apostolate -- a hospice -- where they spent

a little time visiting, cleaning, and handing out homemade



Wayfriars' Express



Part of **The Novices with OFM friars at conference on St. Clare** through an in-depth discussion of the vows. Extensive individual conferences with Fr. Jude throughout each day helped the novices to share personal thoughts and reflect on the meaning and importance of the vows in their lives.

* From July 30th – August 5th, the novices went to the Sacred Heart House of Studies in Chicago, IL for a “beginning of the year retreat.” Fr. Jude D’Angelo (IC) guided the novices

* On September 8th the novices participated in an informative workshop on the Liturgy of the Hours with the OFM novices in Cedar Lake, IN. Fr.

Stephen Malkiewicz guided the novices through the Office in a way that em-

phasized issues of interpretation, history, and inclusivity.

* The novices went to Oldenburg, IN from September 21st – 23rd for a conference on the theology and philosophy of Bl. Duns Scotus. Br. Ed Coughlin, from St. Bonaventure University, explored some of the ways in which Scotus helps both Franciscans and the Church to understand the Incarnation in terms of God’s desire to become one with His creation.

* From November 13th – 15th, the novices attended a conference on St. Clare with the OFM novices in Cedar Lake, IN. Poor Clare sisters explained the life of Clare through an interpretation of the tableau. The sisters also helped the friars to better understand some of the history behind Clare’s letters.

* From November 29th – Dec. 1st, the friars went to the Our Lady of Consolation Shrine in Carey, OH and celebrated the feast of All Saints of the Seraphic Order with the OLC friars there. During the visit, the novices were treated to a solemn evening prayer liturgy and a wonderful dinner.

* The novices attended

their “mid-year retreat” in Chicago, IL at the Sacred Heart House of Studies. From January 9th – 12th, Fr. Jim Ciaramitaro (SB) led the novices through a fascinating exploration of Bl. Angela Felingo’s writings and the Franciscan mystic tradition.

* On February 24th the novices attended a one day conference on the meaning, purpose, and uniqueness of being a Franciscan brother. The conference was held at the House of Studies in Chicago, and was led by Br. Joseph Wood (SB).

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From the Director



Fr Robert makes a wish for another great 5 months.

We are on the internet!
Visit us at:
www.franciscandiscipleship.org