



Candidate Discernment Weekend

05-07 February 2010-Hosted by the Office of Vocation Ministries

Our Discernment Weekend theme **To be Formed Into Christ Jesus** was presented by our brother Capuchins James Gavin, Martin Curtin, Celestino Arias, Michael Greco, Michael Ramos, Ronald O'Keefe and Matthew Giles.



The eleven participants [above right] included: [bottom row]: Scott Surrency, Brian Niemiec [Cap Corps Volunteer], Carl Rushton, Ronald O'Keefe [postulant], Matthew Giles [postulant], and Andrew Skonieczny; [top row] David Lopez, Andrew Batista, Salvatore Cordaro [postnovitiate friar], Jim Cotter, Christopher Johnson, Johnny Alvarado, Brendan Graham and Alex Prado.

The goals of the weekend gathering were not only to enlighten the candidates about the philosophical and practical elements of our postulancy program at Saint Michael Friary in Brooklyn but to focus on Saint Francis' desire to be conformed in all things to the Mind and Spirit of Jesus Christ especially as Lent draws near.

"I came to my first discernment weekend not knowing what to expect, all I knew was that there were eleven other candidates. I stepped in and I was welcomed by all the brothers and candidates. Within a few minutes I was talking with everyone as if I had known them my whole life. One of the best parts of the weekend was spending time with the brothers. I learned so much about how they live and more importantly about their ministries. I enjoyed listening to all the wonderful and knowledgeable presentations we had presented by many of the brothers. To sum up the whole weekend all I can say is it was simply awesome and one of the best weekends I ever had.

"Thank you brothers."
Andrew Skonieczny

"The Discernment Weekend was a new and wonderful experience for me. It was an honor to meet all of the brothers and candidates [who were all very warm and welcoming] and to learn about what they went through on their own vocation journeys, as well as experience what Franciscan prayer life is like. The weekend definitely answered most of the questions I had and gave me a lot to think about. God willing, I look forward to attending another."

David Lopez

"The Discernment Weekend was truly inspiring. I learned so much about the Capuchin Franciscans.

"I feel blessed to have experienced their fraternity, communal prayer life and ministry firsthand."

Jim Cotter





The weekend was inspirational. The talks inspired me to look at the Gospels through emotional lenses that not only helps me understand what God is saying to us, but how God **feels** when speaking to us through the bible which continues to enrich my spirituality through the weekend. The fraternity and humility of the brothers, in carrying these Eternal Truths in their hearts yet speaking to us as real brothers, is always inspiring and beautiful. **Alex Prado**



From the Office of Vocation Ministry

On behalf of the candidates and myself I'd like to thank each brother for their fraternal support, prayer and in some instances, their presence during this recent weekend.

Twelve candidates attended ranging in age from 17 to 36. They represented 5 states. It is always remarkable to me that even though the sacrifice is significant, each candidate arrived on time and stayed for the entire weekend. We thank them and ask the Lord to grant them clarity of vision and courage to follow their call.

Special thanks to Martin Curtin and Jim Gavin, our principal inspiring presenters as well as Tino Arias and Michael Greco for their complete explanation of the Postulancy program. Many thanks to Ron O'Keefe, Matt Giles and Michael Ramos for their invaluable input. The entire fraternity of St. Michael was most hospitable all day Saturday.

The brothers of Good Shepherd opened our home to the candidates throughout the weekend and the brothers from San Lorenzo and St. Francis of Assisi Friaries were present to the candidates throughout the gathering. We welcomed Michael Connolly and Andrew Drew from St. Clare's, John Gallagher from St. Conrad and Mario Guerrero from St. Joseph the Worker. The candidates mentioned often in the evaluation how much they appreciate the presence of so many friars at our discernment weekends.

So, to one and all, we are most grateful for your input, presence and prayers and ask for your continuing prayers for our candidates who are in the process of determining whether they will apply for postulancy this year. God's Love and mine,

Timothy Jones, O.F.M. Cap.
Coordinator of Capuchin Vocation Ministries

