

re:Cap



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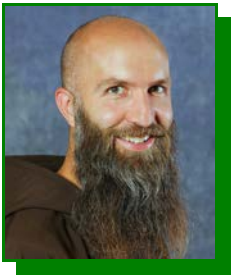
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Reflection on Summer Ministry in Cd. Benito Juárez, NL, Mexico

by Mike Dorn



Mike Dorn

Throughout my life, I've heard the phrase that "all we have is prayer;" meaning, if you strip away the temporal world of our existence — all its ups and downs, systems and structures of illusions — one begins to see why scripture asks us "not to love the world or the things of the world" because if we do "the love of God is not in us" (1 John 2:15).

Yes, I've heard it many times, but it wasn't until my days here on the outskirts of Monterrey, Nuevo León in the custody of our brothers of northern Mexico, that it hit me in a far deeper way. Although nine weeks is a very brief time for immersion in another culture, being stripped of the use of my language to communicate pushed me in ways I hadn't anticipated.

For starters, it has felt both humiliating, but also humbling. After my first week here and any attempt to speak just a few very basic sentences (and failing) while at table with other friars and houseguests, I went to my room, broke down and cried. I had no words in Spanish or even in my native English to express my feelings to God, but I knew it didn't matter. God understood, and that was enough, even if I didn't know myself. Situations like this helped me not take myself or certain experiences too seriously, realizing that God would see me through and that every day I was going to make a hundred mistakes which would be the only way I could move forward.

Moreover, the overall daily differences in culture, routine, food, activities, etc., all helped to strip away a part of the auto-pilot self-identity that inevitably takes hold in every person who has ever had a dominant language or culture. There's nothing like experiencing a world far different from your own to begin noticing what becomes normalized and the default in one's native context. I began to see how some things in one's culture are far more arbitrary than absolute truth, which can be shocking at first but proves to be far more liberating than anything else.

Much of what I'm writing I imagine is no revelation to many of the brothers in the province. Those who have served as missionaries abroad or on the reservations in Montana, immigrated to our country either voluntarily or involuntarily, or grew up in a home in the States experiencing a different culture and speaking a different language than our predominant one in society — can all speak with far more depth than this friar. That said, this summer has blessed me with a very small window into how challenging and difficult at times the experiences of such brothers in the province have likely been. Sincerely, brothers, you are



Convento Padre Pio, post-novitiate
of the custody

my heroes because in a particular way I think you're helping to demonstrate poverty (i.e. self-emptying) and minority that represents so much of our migrating world in 2019. Your lives show us detachment from the things of this world in language, culture, and homeland. It's an unflinching openness to another way of being in the world, and it's this very openness that isn't of the world. Quite frankly it's deeply prophetic, foreshadowing the displacement we all will experience with Sister Death. Your witness puts forth the question: In what ways have I loved my particular sense and comfort of Capuchin identity (my world), instead of loving God above the limits of such a world? In other words, can others see the love of God in me or are my attachments of culture/language/ministry/etc., in the way?



Chapel in Benito Juárez

On a similar note, our general minister —Roberto Genuin and councilor Carlos Silva —visited the custody here recently, and in their talk to us friars, expressed the sentiment that as Capuchins we belong to the international order and not just to a single province. Thus, we're called to be missionaries (both spiritually and in practice) in our fraternal offering to each other beyond our provincial boundaries. Roberto also commented that he was grateful to see Detroit, California, and other provinces represented here in Northern Mexico.

Indeed, perhaps at no other point in human history have we Capuchins needed to embrace and model for others mutual interdependence than in a world with only ten years left to act before the point of no return regarding the Earth's climate and sustainability. I pray that both our province and order can continue to help show the love of God in this unprecedented and critical time.

¡A mis hermanos y a la gente de aquí en Juárez, estoy sinceramente agradecido por su paciencia, hospitalidad y fraternidad! ¡Tu testigo es realmente inspirador de ver! Veo el amor de Dios en todos ustedes. (To my brothers and the people here in Juarez, I am truly grateful for your patience, hospitality, and fraternity. Your witness is truly an inspiration to see! I see the love of God in you all.)

Five Men Accepted into Postulancy

The province recently accepted five men into the inter-provincial postulancy program. Two of the new friars (Anthony Yousef and Shebin Philip) are members of the St. Joseph Province, two (Chandler Webb and Norman Valenzuela) are from Stigmata Province, and Christopher Woods from St. Mary Province.

re:Cap offers prayerful best wishes to our newest brothers as they continue their vocational discernment.



L-R: Arlen Harris, Shebin Phillip, Michael Sullivan, Anthony Yousef, David Hirt, Francisco Arredondo, Norman Valenzuela, Chandler (CJ) Webb, Michael Greco and Christopher Woods.



Post-Novitiate Friars Renew Vows

Friars in post-novitiate recently renewed their temporary vows in the presence of Michael Sullivan, provincial minister. Faris Najor professed his vows in Detroit; the other seven in Chicago.



Top row, L-R: Joseph Babcock, Mike Dorn, Faris Najor, Baudry Metangmo, José Vera; 2nd Row: Nathan Linton, Truyen Nguyen and Truong Dinh.

We Saw You at the Postulancy Reception





Season of Creation

1 Sept - 4 Oct

O Most High, all-powerful, good Lord God,
to you belong praise, glory,
honor and all blessing.

Be praised, my Lord, for all your creation
and especially for our Brother Sun,
who brings us the day and the light;
he is strong and shines magnificently.

O Lord, we think of you when we look at him.
(Canticle of Creation, Francis of Assisi)



Hispanic Americans: A History of Serving Our Nation

Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15, by celebrating the contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.

The Hispanic Heritage observance began in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period. It was enacted into law on August 17, 1988.

Today, 57.5 million people — or 18% of the American population — are of Hispanic or Latino origin. This represents a significant increase from 2000, which registered the Hispanic population at 35.3 million or 13% of the total U.S. population.

This year's theme: *"Hispanic Americans: A History of Serving Our Nation."* Share in this special annual tribute by learning and celebrating the generations of Hispanic and Latino Americans who have positively influenced and enriched our nation and society.


September

12 **Richard Hart (B)**

17-19 **Meeting with Pro Council, Marytown IL**

18-19 **Provincial Council, Marytown IL**

19 **Mary Hague (B)**

21 **Rita Petrie (B)**

22 **Roche Gaspar (B)**

24 . . **Buildings & Maint Commission Video Conf.**
Patrick McSherry (B)
Gary Wagner (B)