



The Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order  
1820 Mt. Elliott Street  
Detroit, MI 48207

# Chapter 2023 – Evaluation

## 1. How well do you believe the process went for creating the chapter agenda?

● Extremely well	16
● Somewhat well	13
● Neutral	4
● Somewhat not well	2
● Extremely not well	0



We had plenty of discussion time but I am not sure that much content came out of the discussions... it mostly came from "elsewhere"

We need to work on the proposal piece

I don't really remember the process before chapter very well. But by the fact that issues were raised through formal proposals instead of chapter items for discussion suggests that methods of raising issues by other means should have been more highlighted in the process.

I was under the impression that there were more than two Chapter proposals, including Destination ministries and those from the Secularization project.

It's a good process. The problem was friars didn't use it, e.g., Collaboration proposal

We used to have small-group discernment sessions to talk about the friars raised up for the council. We didn't have that this year and it made the whole voting process seem rush... like we just voted for people to get the voting done. I'd like to see those small group discernment times come back.

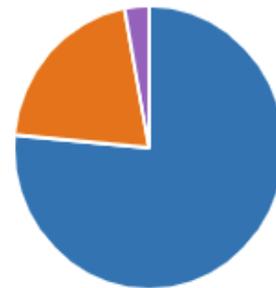
The agenda for chapter is set primarily for election of leaders which needs most of the chapter time to process the election. Surprisingly, at this last chapter the election process did not take the time expected so there was a little room to face issues that are confronting us, our world and the role of faith and religion itself. Separate gatherings to face these issues under the guidance of the Holy Spirit are needed outside chapter time. It could be possible to have a provincial chapter time dedicated to facing the issues of our time and practice reading the signs of the time. Whether we want to try this approach or use another is a decision for all members of the province.

I believe that there were no agenda items gathered from the friars of the province. Perhaps it is time to address the process.

I think we should encourage brothers to bring Provincial concerns to the Chapter via a discussion format as opposed to submitting a Chapter proposal. I think this will help encourage fraternal discussion devoid of hard feelings.

### How helpful were materials sent to you prior to chapter (i.e. on preparing for chapter, what to bring, what to expect, etc.)?

Very helpful	26
Somewhat helpful	7
Neither helpful nor unhelpful	0
Somewhat unhelpful	0
Very unhelpful	1



Other than the list of capitulars I didn't need to refer to anything else during the chapter.

I didn't actually use any during the Chapter itself except the list of capitulars.

I liked the paperless chapter

It was really the material sent out that prepared me for this chapter. They were long but very helpful..

The regular notices from Capuchin Communications to download materials were helpful.

As it turned out, I don't understand the emphasis put on a "paperless" chapter. I saw no need for bringing a tablet or other electronic device. I had my phone anyhow, but hardly used it in any direct connection with chapter activities.

Hygiene products were distributed at recent Chapters. The choice not to, is not the issue. However it would have been helpful to know about the change.

## How helpful was the staff when you first arrived on campus?

Very helpful	30
Somewhat helpful	4
Neither helpful nor unhelpful	1
Somewhat unhelpful	0
Very unhelpful	0



They did put me in the wrong room but we got it worked out.

Some friars were handed chapter agendas and others were not handed them.

They made it easy. I arrived a couple of hours early, and they still were able to give me my room key.

They were a little disorganized when we first arrived.

## How satisfied were you with meals served?

Very satisfied	28
Somewhat satisfied	7
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0
Somewhat dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	0



The food was very good, but the quantity of vegetarian meals was inadequate. While it may have been adequate for the strict vegetarians, there are many friars who although not strict vegetarians, would prefer not to eat meat every day and took vegetarian meals. Then there wasn't any vegetarian food left for the strict vegetarians.

The food was good and generally "healthy." However, I wish there would have been some yogurt, bagels, and cereal available for those who didn't want to eat eggs, bacon, sausage, and pancakes or french toast each day.

I did not like all the garbage generated by throwing away all the utensils, but I don't know the remedy for that, given the circumstances. It seems they were not prepared to wash dishes.

The meals were better this year. Healthier. Good options. Less carbs.

the breakfast menu was repetitive and could have used variety.

We ran out of churros! They were delicious, but we needed more so everyone could have a treat.

Much better than the last time. Too heavy on carbs the previous time. Nice variety.

### How satisfactory were the evening socials (atmosphere, beverage service, snacks, etc.)?

● Very satisfied	20
● Somewhat satisfied	8
● Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	6
● Somewhat dissatisfied	0
● Very dissatisfied	0



Essentially chose not to go to the evening socials.

service was slow. it would have been better for us to serve ourselves unless they stipulated that it had to be done that way

The snacks were a little phoned in (though the homemade chips were nice.) I'm not sure if that's actually a problem or not, though. Maybe it kept the friars from eating too much junk.

We should bring/distribute our own snacks and libations for social.

Would have appreciated a non-alcoholic beer.

## How would you rate the liturgical prayer services?

● Excellent	27
● Good	7
● Fair	1
● Poor	0



Our Province knows how to pray. That is clearly seen in the creativity and clarity of the various events, especially the Healing Service.

Rarely could I hear and understand the verses being sung over the sound of the piano.

Loved the healing service. Remembrance service also very good. Perhaps the number of friars we were remembering exceeding the time available. The written items were a acceptable fill in.

Thanks to our excellent Liturgical Commission!

I would suggest a little more coaching for prayer leaders, especially the younger friars or those not used to leading. Leaders should lead. It seemed a couple of the leaders were not sure when or how to begin or how to give instructions to the assembly. Also, some coaching is needed in the use of microphones, out of deference for those of us with hearing difficulties. A conversational tone will not always work with a sound system. Simple things, but some reminding might be needed, not just for chapters but also for other public gatherings.

Particularly I liked the concept of dedicating a Prayer session for the Deceased Brothers and leaving their memorial pictures for further remembrance. I also liked the Healing session, the anointing included.

It is always a joy to have provincial liturgical celebrations. It was commented to me by members of other jurisdictions how impressed they were with our singing and such.

The liturgies and prayer could not have gone better. The memorial service for those who have died was especially moving, and the anointing service was excellent.

Most of the music was unfamiliar and largely only included the refrains. The accompaniments were over the top and a little too "Broadway," which lessened the prayerfulness of the services. The "optional" morning Masses were simple but felt much more prayerful. It would be nice to have our prayers from the liturgy of the hours since we are obliged to pray them by our constitutions and canon law. It can be difficult to find the time to do so between events. It would be nice if we could at least have lauds and vespers from the breviary each day.

## How would you rate the overall organization/schedule of the chapter week?

● Excellent	19
● Good	11
● Average	4
● Poor	0
● Fair	0



If no soap was going to be provided, we should have been told to bring our own.

The friars tend to want to keep things moving, which rendered the schedule as presented subject some big changes.

more free time would have been good

We only scheduled small groups after we got there and because of time after the elections. I'd prefer one small group to discuss issues (NOT ELECTIONS) with people living in a different part of the province.

Again... I would like to see those discernment periods we used to have be on the schedule again.

More time after lunch would be appreciated

## How satisfied were you with the provincial minister's triennial report?

● Very satisfied	30
● Somewhat satisfied	4
● Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0
● Somewhat dissatisfied	0
● Very dissatisfied	0



I do feel it could have been a bit shorter

Very thorough presentation but some items forgotten. There were a few mistakes in some minor details.

I'm glad he didn't repeat the printed report. The verbal report gave a clear indication of what he values and some of his thinking. I would think that some of the items presented should have been dealt with by the province before being presented as a fiat accompli. (sp?)

## How satisfied were you with the process for discussing the various chapter proposals?

● Very satisfied	18
● Somewhat satisfied	11
● Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
● Somewhat dissatisfied	3
● Very dissatisfied	0



I think we need to revisit the whole chapter proposal question... is this the right place for business like that?

Neither proposal was very complicated. Maybe more pre-chapter discussion of them would be warranted.

Again, the collaboration proposal need lots of pre-chapter discernment that didn't happen.

I think we need to look at how we do proposals because it was clear that neither of the proposals should have even been presented.

They should have voted to move the next chapter to Mt Calvary!

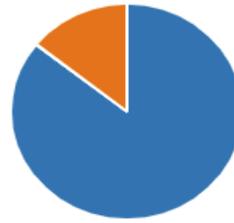
I firmly believe that after prayerful consideration the Provincial and the Provincial Council decided not to discuss one of the chapter proposals and that another format for discussing the topic would be more appropriate and fraternal. However I believe that some voices will not be heard.

Loss of the third proposal left me feeling that our concerns were rejected. Even with a substitute process ahead, it still feels like our hopes for collaboration are not to be shared.

Again, this does not have so much to do with the discussion process as it has to do with how chapter proposals are submitted by the brothers. I don't think the Province should be blindsided by proposals that call for action involving complex situations.

## How effective was Tino Arias' performance as president of the chapter?

Very effective	30
Somewhat effective	5
Neither effective nor ineffective	0
Somewhat ineffective	0
Very ineffective	0

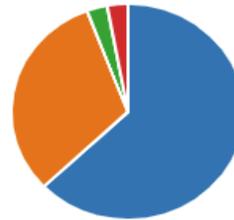


There wasn't a lot for him to keep together. Chapter seemed pretty easy this triennium.

His presentation was enlightening but the implications for the future of the Capuchin reform movement and how it is being challenged to change shape were not addressed....there was not enough time at chapter. Hopefully they will be at smaller provincial gatherings to come.

## How helpful was the last session with the newly elected administration?

Very helpful	22
Somewhat helpful	11
Neither helpful nor unhelpful	1
Somewhat unhelpful	1
Very unhelpful	0



it got a bit long and repetitive and brothers ended up addressing the chapter assembly instead of the provincial council

Having just elected the group and they having minimal meeting time, there not a lot of answers to questions. I will note it was with great interest Tom Skowron's questions about The St. Francis project and the difference between Tom was thinking we needed and the response. That came up in the small group following the representation of the keynote.

Friars might be reminded that this is not the time for little speeches to the whole assembly. It is for asking questions of and making comments to the new council.

It might be more helpful if organized around a leading question to give it a more concrete direction, e.g. ask each council member to respond to: what do you see as the most challenging question facing our province at this time in history? Admittedly, this would need more time to address properly.

Long questions and even longer answers didn't help it flow like a conversation among friars. It felt more like a CNN interview.

## Overall satisfaction with this chapter?

Very satisfied	25
Satisfied	8
Neutral	2
Dissatisfied	0
Very dissatisfied	0



I felt it was very different from any chapter I attended. But it flowed very well. I suspect all chapters in the future will be different.

Also very happy we are not returning to Xavier University.

THANK YOU! Igor, you did a great job with the daily reports and notices.

## Do you have any concerns/issues that you would like addressed in preparations for our chapter of 2026?

I think there was some confusion of roles, for example, those facilitating the voting process seemed to think that they could rewrite the process and the adjournment of the chapter was not the prerogative of the president, but of the chapter body itself. I also missed our traditional motion to adjourn (classic style of Matthew Gottschalk).

There seemed to be a lack of clarity in some of the roles, for example, those charged with facilitating the voting assumed that they could change the procedures, and the adjournment was not the role of the president but of the chapter body. I missed our formal and planned motion to adjourn (Matthew Gottschalk style).

New place in Chicago area

Wherever we decide, I would hope we would take the older friars into account as far as distance between buildings and bathrooms with bedrooms. Xavier was a good space with the exception of the AC and the flies!

we need to find a different and more appropriate venue given our size

Some concern was mentioned about ministry to the Hispanic or Spanish speaking people. Since one of the greatest concerns of our founder St. Francis of Assisi was always to respond to the needs of the Church, I think greater emphasis should be made on the part of our Hispanic friars who already speak Spanish as well as others, to learn the Spanish language to minister to the Hispanic communities in parishes to fulfill that great need. While working in Tucson during my last six years of active ministry I witnessed the strong

and active faith of the Hispanic communities in the parishes and realized they are the future of the Church is the USA. They can conduct and run their own retreats and renewal programs, but are in need of Spanish speaking priest for support and confession and the celebration of the Eucharist. That would be a wonderful ministry for the friars of our Province and at the same time respond the the ideals of our founder, St Francis of Assisi, to always be willing and ready to respond to and assist the needs of the Church. Back in the 50's an 60's, when I entered the Capuchins and was ordained, that was the Spirit or the Province. Most friars of the Province were ready and willing to respond the the needs of the Church, at that time, calling for foreign missionaries, especially to Latin America (namely Central America and Panama). We generously fulfilled that need at the time and I believe our Province should return to that same spirit of generously fulfilling the needs of the Church in this present age, according to the ideals of our founder, St. Francis of Assisi, to always answer the call and needs of our Mother, the Church. John Francis Samsa, Capuchin.

I think that it would be good to look for another site for Chapter in 2026 than St Xavier

Other than Xavier University, there is a need to find a facility close to an airport to coordinate transportation for the friars coming from other states.

None at all

Methods other than proposals for raising chapter agenda should be promoted and highlighted more.

I think conversations prior to forming proposals would serve the province well. Both the collaboration issue and the site for the next chapter proposal would have benefitted from conversations both as to the intent and probable and favorable outcomes.

Venue/Location

There remains the issue of location. If not St. Xavier, then where? Apparently not St. Lawrence. We should probably aim at a hotel or conference center with accommodations and meeting space in close proximity to each other. I have no practical suggestions for that.

Let us have the Chapter at one of our houses

The process of scrutineering and counting of the Ballots could be simplified.

John Allen's presentation was a highlight. Next chapter, try to get an equally dynamic speaker who has something to say, and can not be pigeonholed as ideological. John Allen was perfect and should be a candidate to speak at the next chapter if an equally good speaker cannot be found.

Like many, I'm unsure if SXU is the place to continue having or Chapters, though I don't know if there is a better option. Maybe the Hotel Floor idea would work?

We need to leave St X's. Anywhere but there!

Allen's presentation was encouraging and challenging. I wonder if we need a separate chapter just to face the issues of our day and another for discerning leadership?

find a location that would be more fitting for our reduced size, we do not need a University Campus to house us any more.

Would prefer new accommodation site for next 2026 Chapter, not Mt. Calvary, but some large motel or resort with private room and bath, and gathering room, dining area, meeting room etc. God is good, all the time 🙏😊

Only negative: Bedrooms too COLD.

The only disappointment was the mandated session for updating training for dealing with sexual abuse. I learned little from that training. Perhaps evaluation of some case studies would have been more productive. David P.

Friars were able to participate in this evaluation from June 12 – June 30, 2023  
via the link: [CHAPTER EVALUATION](#)

The evaluation form has now been closed.

All remarks are included and entered into this report without editing.

Peace and blessings,

Br. Igor  
Capuchin Communications Office