



Weekly re:Cap

A capite ad calcem

Published for the friars of the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph

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Et alii...

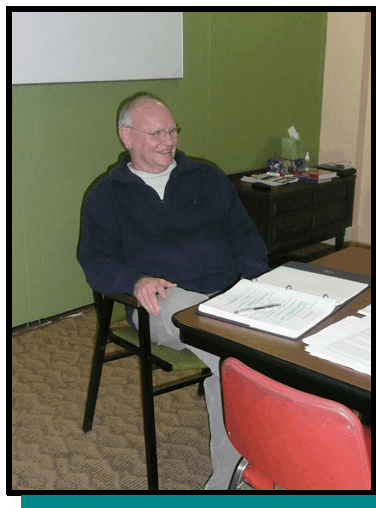
Overheard: "We remain a young nation, but in the words of Scripture, the time has come to set aside childish things. The time has come to reaffirm our enduring spirit; to choose our better history; to carry forward that precious gift, that noble idea, passed on from generation to generation: the God-given promise that all are equal, all are free, and all deserve a chance to pursue their full measure of happiness...Let it be said by our children's children that when we were tested we refused to let this journey end, that we did not turn back nor did we falter; and with eyes fixed on the horizon and God's grace upon us, we carried forth that great gift of freedom and delivered it safely to future generations." — President Barack Obama, inaugural address.



Week ending 23 January 2009

Issue Number 789

Ignatius continues to teach



Ignatius Feaver

Friars in the Capuchin postulancy program at St. Conrad Community took part in a workshop recently on the topic of discernment with Ignatius Feaver (MMGSP). The workshop provided the friars with an opportunity to explore methods of prayerfully reflecting on their experiences over the course of the past five months of living in Capuchin community.

The week opened with a "dyad experience" of actively listening to a partner and then switching roles of speaker and listener. Postulants also

learned about Ignatian methods of discernment and explored helpful scriptural images for discernment. Toward the end of the week they discussed Franciscan discernment methods based on Bonaventure and Duns Scotus, and took a day-long retreat to apply this method to their formation evaluations. The workshop provided an opportunity to combine teaching, prayer, and group reflection on experiences of Capuchin life. The brothers said that the experience was helpful to their ongoing discernment process, and expressed appreciation to Ignatius for facilitating the workshop.

Ignatius Feaver, who was the first and only lay friar to serve the order as a provincial minister with Vatican approval, teaches and ministers in Toronto. In 2002, the St. Joseph Province elected Bob Smith as provincial minister. The Vatican refused to affirm that election.

Under a “big sky”

by Mark Schenk

[Ed. note: The following is excerpted from Mark Schenk’s on-line blog. Nine friars, pictured below, currently minister in Montana.]



Mark Schenk

Continuing my eastward trek, I crossed the Pacific Ocean and eventually found my way to Montana, U.S.A., where I made a short visit to the friars working there. Montana is aptly nicknamed “Big Sky Country” because of its vast, sparsely populated areas of semi-arid grasslands and mountains. It is also home to several Native American reservations, which were the original reason for the friars’ presence here. Due to the state’s demographics, the parishes of Montana, with the exception of those in urban centers such as Billings, Helena or Great Falls, tend to be small and far apart. Although the Capuchin friaries of Montana used to have fraternities of three or more friars, the shortage of friars in the United States has made it difficult to maintain traditional fraternities. Most of the eight Capuchins now working in Montana live alone; they do, however, have fraternal gatherings and/or chapters twice monthly.

Three of the friars currently serve as pastors or sacramental ministers on the reservation of the Crow tribe, and another works on the Northern Cheyenne reservation. The other four, although not ministering on a reservation, have a significant number of Native Americans in their parishes. Most of them care for more than one parish, since there are more parishes than priests in the diocese. I was impressed and edified with the ministry of all the friars here, but especially with the ministry on the reservations. From art and architecture to the style of their ministry, the respect of the brothers for the cultures of the Crow and Cheyenne was evident. They are very much “friars of the people” here. For example, if their health permits it, the friars regularly take part in “sweats”, a ceremony that is used to create and maintain a sense of community. More than just respecting the local culture, the friars have tried to improve the life of the communities they serve, especially through education. Thanks to the efforts of the friars, there are three elementary schools and one high school on the Crow and Cheyenne reservations that students can attend free of charge. Many graduates of those schools are now employed as teachers and staff members of those same schools. Although unemployment on the reservations is still very high, the situation would clearly be worse if not for the help provided by the Capuchins.

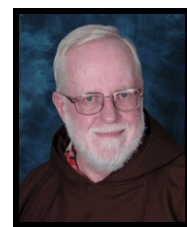
In the week I spent in Montana, I was able to spend a day or two each in Crow Agency, the St. Labre Mission near Ashland, the St. Charles Mission in Pryor, and Billings. I learned something about the history of the Crow tribe and its present circumstances while chatting with parishioners in Crow Agency after Sunday mass and by visiting the site of the Battle of the Little Bighorn, in which a group of Sioux and Cheyenne warriors defeated the forces of Custer



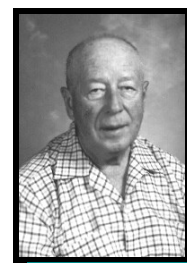
James Antoine



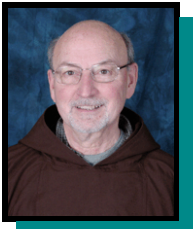
Fabian Fehring



Randolph
Graczyk

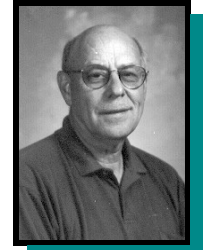


Chester Poppa

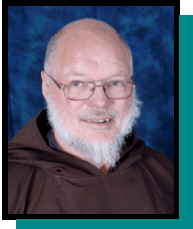


David Reichling

and the 7th Cavalry in 1876. That battle and the resulting reaction of the U.S. Army still has repercussions today. I even participated twice in a "sweat" (imagine a prayer meeting held in a sauna). At St. Labre Mission, I toured the fund-raising operations (including mailing, receiving and printing departments) that supports its own schools as well as those of the other Capuchin missions in Montana.

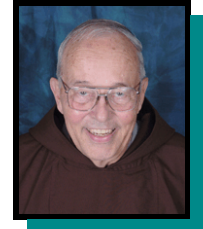


Paul Reichling



Charles Robinson

What is clear to me after my visit is that the friars have poured their hearts and souls into this mission. Here, as elsewhere, they have become "friars of the people", even among people who have every reason to be wary of white men. While material poverty on the reservations in Montana is probably no worse than it is in sections of any large American city, it is tinged with a particular kind of despair among the Native Americans—a fear that any gains they make might once again be stolen from them. Because of this poverty and because of the fact that the Native Americans are so often found on the fringes of society I feel that this is a ministry where Capuchins belong. Like



Paschal Siler

everywhere else in the United States, however, the friars in Montana are getting older, and there are few younger friars to replace them. While I will be the first to say that, as they become smaller, provinces will need to withdraw from some of their ministry commitments in order to use their manpower more effectively, I would hope that this ministry to the Native Americans is not one of the ministries that is lost. In my humble opinion, the fate of these missions should be a matter of concern for the whole North American-Pacific Capuchin Conference, not just for the St. Joseph Province. Saving them may require looking beyond the borders of the province, and perhaps even beyond the borders of North America.



Roger Veik

Cap Corps gathers to welcome and reunite!



Nathan Fouquet listens, as the assembly welcomes him home with prayers.

The recent gathering at St. Ben's in Milwaukee to welcome home Nathan Fouquet as a volunteer in Panamá was also a reunion, of sorts, as the assembled group of attendees (more than 40) included current and former Cap Corps volunteers, friars, and former directors of the volunteer program. And as Nathan tearfully recounted his experience in Panamá, his audience doubtless reflected on their own journeys and experiences of touching the lives of the people they've served, as well as *being touched* by their constituents.

This event was typical of these gatherings — a time of grateful prayer, sharing stories and "catching up" with each other, and enjoying good food. The Capuchin mission of hospitality, partnering and joyful service becomes enlashed and tangible in such events, and encouraging to those who are new to Capuchin ministries.

Weekly re:Cap is grateful to Nathan and to all of those who have offered time, energy and inspiration to the mission of the province and to the ministry of Cap Corps.



More than forty current and former volunteers, friars and partners attended the Cap Corps event.



Nathan chats with Todd Trabert (right) who also ministered in Panamá.



January

27 Tue U.S. Air Force starts atomic testing in the Nevada desert, 1951

28 Wed **Walter Kasuboski (B)**
James Zelinski (N)
Neal Plale (B)
 U.S. shuttle *Challenger* explodes, 1986

29 Thu **Joseph Maloney (B)**
Joseph Smetana (B)
 George W. Bush identifies the "axis of evil," 2002

30 Fri Gandhi is assassinated, 1948

31 Sat **Ana Martinez (B)**
 McDonald's opens in Russia, 1990

February

1 Sun **Joseph Lindzius (B)**
 During the Vietnam War, a Viet Cong officer is executed with a pistol shot to the head by Saigon's police chief and the image captured in a famous news photograph, 1968

2 Mon Idi Amin becomes dictator of Uganda, 1971

3 Tue **Mary Klotz (B)**
 Buddy Holly, Richie Valens, and Big Bopper die in a plane crash, 1959

Do you know someone who needs encouragement to make a difference?

Imagine Making a Difference

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