

Hearing God's Call Requires Silence



In the early 21st century, a state of complete silence is often difficult to achieve

One of the most common concerns among those discerning a vocation is, how do I know for sure God is calling me to the Franciscans? This is even more prescient in a time of such overwhelming communication technology. Oh if only God had a Twitter account. We could sign up and receive useful posts like "JOIN FRANCISCANS NOW". How about a Facebook page? God could update you to his status and request you be his friend. Would we be in favor of the God I-phone App? A touch of your phone would connect you directly to his call and plans for your life. The truth of God, the one our Holy Father Saint Francis figured out all those years ago, is that his presence and call are radically and fundamentally simple. Therefore, it demands from each man discerning a vocation, an equal response.

Every true vocation begins in silence. Silence

is for us in the 21st century an act of real willpower. It is a turning away from cell phones, satellite radio, MP3 players and the Internet. It's no longer a matter of simply turning off the radio. Thirty minutes of silence a day, a disciplined silence is a great start. Regular silence is hard. The first person we always hear is our self. For me, it is always a shopping list. After some time your own voice fades away. Your silence will become full. It will be full of God, full of mystery and full of vocation. The irony will be upon your return to technology. Once seen as full of information, now feels a little less satisfying. That's what makes disciplined silence so radical, in order to hear God call forth everything from you, you must begin with the still quiet of nothing. No passwords needed. No downloads required. No licensing agreements to accept. What is asked is the honesty and vulnerability to allow your silence and God's call to transform your tech-savvy Martha into prayer-savvy Mary. It takes courage to be in the world and not of it.



We can find silence when we distance ourselves from communication technology

Courage is what Francis displayed in accepting God's challenge to consider a vocation. Francis had the courage to step back from the world around him so as to better enter the world within God. The men inside this newsletter have decided that courage counts for something other than heroism. The courage to answer God's call begins with the silence to hear it. It continues with the discipline to keep that silence. Keep it in the face of the ever changing expectations of technology. Where was God's call before Twitter, Facebook, I-Phones, and whatever else is coming? The call is where it has always been, in the silence. God's promise to Jeremiah, says it best, "If you call on me I will hear you, and you will find me in your heart." Now if I could just plug that destination into my GPS, I'll be set.



God has a vocation for each and every one of us

**Fall/Winter
2009**

**Inside this
Issue:**

*Hearing God's Call
Requires Silence* 1

*Investitures,
Professions, and an
Ordination too!* 2

*2009-2010
Conventual
Franciscan
Postulants* 3

*Youth Toward
Assisi* 3

*Contact a Vocation
Director* 4



**Visit us on the web
at
www.franciscans.org**



Investitures, Professions, and an Ordination too!

God is stirring in the hearts of many men and calling them to religious life. In the Order of Friars Minor Conventual, a number of young men are at various points in their vocation-journeys. This summer they passed key milestones on these journeys.

On July 17 at the St. Francis of Assisi Novitiate in Mishawaka, Indiana, eight men who had previously been in the order's postulancy program attended their novitiate investiture where they received their habits and became novices. For the next 12 months, Rory, Nick, Bryan, Paul, John, Vincent, and Jeffrey will learn more about living the Franciscan way. They will also study the Rule of St. Francis and the Constitutions of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual.

A day after the novitiate investiture, friars from around the United States gathered at the St. Francis of Assisi Novitiate again for Friar Nicholas Vincent Dragone's and Friar Pio Antonio Alves' Profession of Simple Vows.



The 2009-2010 Novices and their Ministers Provincial and one Vicar Provincial



(left to right) Friar Michael Kolodziej, Friar Nicholas Vincent Dragone, Friar Pio Antonio Alves, and Friar Patrick Greenough at the Profession of Simple Vows in Mishawaka, Indiana

A lot farther north in Toronto, Ontario and some 15 days later, a Profession of Solemn Vows took place in the Franciscan Church of St. Bonaventure. Friar Reto Davatz—the professing friar—had decided to embrace his existence as a Conventual Franciscan and to do so for the rest of his life. Friar Reto is currently a student in San Antonio, Texas and had spent the previous 12 months in Costa Rica fulfilling a variety of ministries.

Back in the United States—specifically in Marytown, Illinois— on August 22, four more Professions of Solemn Vows took place. Friars Francis McGann, Hans Flondor, Joseph Schenk, and Anthony Lajato fully committed themselves to Franciscan life that day. Marytown is located in Libertyville, just north of Chicago. Staffed by the Conventual Franciscan Friars, it serves as the National Shrine of St. Maximilian Kolbe.



(from left to right) Francis McGann, Anthony Lajato, Friar Patrick Greenough, Joseph Schenk, Hans Flondor at the Profession of Solemn Vows in Marytown, Illinois

Keep in touch with us through facebook.

Simply type in *Conventual Franciscans* into the facebook search tool.

During a Profession of Simple Vows, a friar commits himself to a life "of obedience, without anything of his own, and in chastity" for a period of either one or three years, as per the Rule of St. Francis (approved by Pope Honorius III in 1223) and the Constitutions of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual.

July ended on a high note for the Conventual Franciscans. On the 31st of the month at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church in El Paso, Texas (just a few minutes from the border with Mexico), friars and friends gathered to celebrate the priestly ordination of Friar Andy Martinez. Friar Andy is currently stationed in Angola, Indiana where he ministers to the Hispanic community that has recently settled in that city. One of the guests at Friar Andy's ordination was Friar Maurus Hauer whose own priestly ordination took place in 1945. A few hours before Friar Andy's ordination, Friar Maurus joined Friar Andy for a recorded conversation on their respective ordinations. Much has changed since 1945, except for the way that God can move people to serve their fellow brothers and sisters. You can listen to Friar Andy and Friar Maurus talk about their ordinations at <http://www.franciscans.org/ordination.cfm>.



2009-2010 Conventual Franciscan Postulants

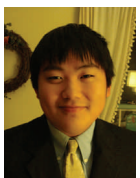
The OFM. Conv. Postulancy Program allows men to live in a friary and integrate themselves into Franciscan life.



My name is Gerard Toman and I am 23 years old. I was born in Coventry, England. I graduated in 2007 from The University of Newcastle-upon Tyne in Economics & Business management.



James McInerney is 45 and from County Cork, Ireland. He has been a visitor to our Friars in Wexford. His Franciscan vocation has prompted him to apply to the order.



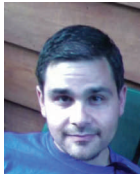
Michael Brocato was born in Puson, South Korea and was raised just outside of Baltimore, MD. He came to know the Conventual Franciscans during his time as a student at Archbishop Curley High School.



Moises Avila was born and raised in Honduras and was very active in his parish. While attending a diocesan youth program in Honduras, he met the Conventual Franciscans.



Yuniar Gonzalez is originally from Camaguey, Cuba and now enjoys permanent residency status in the United States. Before leaving Cuba, he earned a university degree.



Robert Gabriel Scasino is 33 years old and is originally from Milford, CT. He worked for the last several years as a Spanish teacher in Catholic and public schools in Maryland and Washington, DC.



Luke Tekielak, 19, of River Grove, IL, was born in Zakopane, Poland. He arrived in the States when he was 10 years old. Luke has worked in a hospital serving meals and has worked with his uncle in construction.



Charley Westerhold is a 31 year old originally from Bloomington, IL. Most recently he left the U.S. Army as a Physical Therapy Assistant in Ft. Hood, TX.



Thomas Wiener, 43, is originally from New York City. He studied at St. Francis Prep high school. He spent time with the Paulists and was recently a Catholic lay missionary.

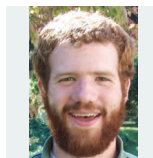
For more information on the 2009-2010 Postulants visit franciscans.org and click on the Postulants link.



Jack Butler, 21, was raised in Chillicothe, IL, 20 minutes outside of Peoria, where he could often be seen playing soccer and hockey. He was a parishioner at St. Edward the Confessor parish.



Jonathan Nix is 24 years old and comes from Toronto, Ontario. Jonathan first came in contact with the friars at the Franciscan Church of St. Bonaventure in Toronto, ON.



Andrew Burkholder is 23 years old and comes from Virginia. He first came in contact with the friars by doing a Google search with the word "Franciscans".



Jonathan Kiesler is a 23 year old recent graduate of Marian Univ. in Indianapolis, IN with a degree in Catholic Studies. He grew up in Floyds Knobs, IN with one younger brother.

Youth Toward Assisi



The American and Canadian contingent at Youth Toward Assisi in Assisi, Italy

From August 2-9, over 500 youth and young adults representing more than 23 different nations came to Assisi, Italy for the Fifth International Youth Toward Assisi – *Giovani verso Assisi*. The theme of this year's gathering was "The Gospel: This is my Life" and centered on a deepening commitment to live the gospel life as youth and young adults. Sixteen young adults from the United States and Canada joined five friars from the United States for

this great event. In Assisi, they joined a group from Quebec and members of Toronto's Korean Catholic community in representing North America at this international event. Throughout the week, the pilgrims gathered regularly for common prayer, liturgy, catechesis and a great deal of fun. On Wednesday, the group traveled by bus to Castel Gandolfo for an audience with Pope Benedict XVI at his summer residence. While the pilgrimage had various keynote speakers on different aspects of Franciscan spirituality, Thursday was dedicated to different workshops on such themes as liturgy, music, Scripture and poetry. Two evenings were dedicated to entertainment representative of the various cultures and languages. On Sunday, August 9 in the Basilica of St. Francis, our Minister General Marco Tasca presided at the celebration of the Eucharist and a commissioning ceremony in which the pilgrims were sent back to their native lands to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a more profound way. As the youth and young adults said "goodbye" to one another, they expressed hopes to see each other at the next World Youth Day in Madrid in 2011, if not sooner.

Contact a Vocation Director

Our Lady of Consolation Province

Louisville, Kentucky

Fr. Paul Schloemer, OFM Conv.

6901 Dixie Highway

Louisville, KY, 40258

Tel: 800.424.9955

franvoc@aol.com

San Antonio, Texas

Br. Tim Unser, OFM Conv.

1104 Kentucky Ave.

San Antonio, TX, 78201

Tel: 210.734.4962

timunser@yahoo.com

St Anthony of Padua Province

Baltimore, Maryland

Fr. Vincent Gluc, OFM Conv.

P.O. Box 29315

Baltimore, MD, 21213

Tel: 800.937.4945

vocations@saprov.org

Immaculate Conception Province

Syracuse, New York

Fr. Michael Lorentsen, OFM Conv.

c/o Alibrandi Catholic Student Center

110 Walnut Place

Syracuse, NY, 13210-2406

Tel: 315.475.0853

Friarmichaellor@aol.com

Canada

Vocation Office

c/o St. Bonaventure Church

1300 Leslie Street

Toronto, ON M3C 2K9

Tel: 315.475.0853

Friarmichaellor@aol.com

St. Bonaventure Province

Chicago, Illinois

Br. Joseph Wood, OFM Conv.

Sacred Heart Friary

6107 N Kenmore Ave.

Chicago, IL, 60660

Tel: 773.764.881 x223

chicagofranciscans@yahoo.com

St Joseph of Cupertino Province

Los Angeles, California

Br. Christopher Saindon, OFM Conv.

Vocation Office

5550 Thornburn Street,

Los Angeles, CA, 90045

Tel: 310.923.2678

calfriars@yahoo.com

General Delegation of Great Britain and Ireland

Great Britain

Fr. John Voytek, OFM Conv.

Greyfriars — St. Patrick's Friary

26 Cornwall Road,

Waterloo, London SE18TW

England, UK

Tel: [0044](0) 20-7928-8897

jmvoytek@gmail.com

Ireland

Very Rev. James McCurry, OFM Conv.

Our Lady of Visitation Friary, Fairview Strand

Fairview, Dublin 3, Ireland

Tel: 00353.1.837.6000

greyfriarjames@btconnect.com

