

St. Anthony Journal



St. Anthony of Padua Province

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What Happens in Costa Rica...? *(by Fr. Richard-Jacob Forcier, OFM Conv.)*

On January 3, 2012 the members of the Joint Definitory (St. Anthony of Padua and Immaculate Conception Provinces) traveled to Costa Rica for a few days of meetings and a couple days of recreation. Four of us (Fr. James McCurry, OFM Conv., Fr. Jude Surowiec, OFM Conv., Fr. Michael Zielke, OFM Conv., and I) traveled from BWI via Charlotte to San Jose, Costa Rica. My comments are basically a scrapbook of what the two friaries there have to offer. We were collected from the San Jose airport by Frs. Justin, Jorge, and David, and brought to the Asuncion Friary in Alajuela. Asuncion Friary is situated on a beautiful expanse of property which has a myriad of flora and fauna surrounding it. There are banana and coconut trees, citrus trees, and pineapple groves. It is quite something. Fr. Fernando (the Guardian) and the friars gave us a great welcome. This friary is also a house of formation for Postulants and for the First Professed from both Costa Rica and a delegation in Venezuela. There are about 12 friars in residence. Throughout the friary there are reminders of the great history of woodworking that had been done by the friars in years past. The 2 story friary is on an open plan that opens up to the central courtyard that has a great statue of St. Francis and the Wolf of Gubbio.



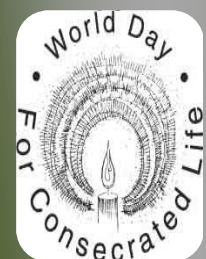
Prayer for Vocations

Loving God,
We rejoice in
Your gift of life
to us.
You created us
out of Your
abundant love.
Empower us to
nurture this gift
with the grace of
gospel living.

You sent us Your
Son Jesus to
show us the way
to fullness of life.
Open us, through
Your Spirit, and
guide us on our
journey to
holiness.

Grace our Church
with women and
men who respond
wholeheartedly to
Your call to the
consecrated life
for the sake of the
gospel.

We praise You
now and always
in union with
Jesus through the
power of the
Spirit.
Amen



Celebrated on
February 2, 2012
Observed in
parishes the
weekend of
February 4-5, 2012

When first entering the Alajuela compound, we passed several buildings used as classrooms, meeting spaces and for overnight accommodations (retreats). The friary has a modest chapel that welcomes people from the local area for Sunday Eucharist. There is even a small hermitage on the property that can be used for quiet prayer and reflection. It is a great place to visit.

During our time in Costa Rica the Joint Definitory met with Fr. Tony Kall and Dr. Pat Kelly throughout the day of January 4. On January 5th we began the day getting our calendars together for the Joint Definitory until the end of 2012. It was noted that as of July all our meetings will be Joint meetings through the end of the quadrennium. After we had made our calendar dates and other comments each Definitory met separately through the end of the afternoon.

On Friday, January 6, we were greeted by Roy our tour guide and Alonzo our bus driver and were taken to the Lost Iguana Resort where we stayed until Sunday morning. This resort is in view of the Arenal Volcano and is in the cloud forest. This is a three hour drive from the friary. We arrived to a typical day in the rain forest – rain, but we made the most of our time together. Basically, this two-day experience gave the members of the Definitory a recreation moment which helped forge some community bonds which are much needed in every friary level.



VIEW FROM CONVENTO LA ASUNCION



CONVENTO LA ASUNCION



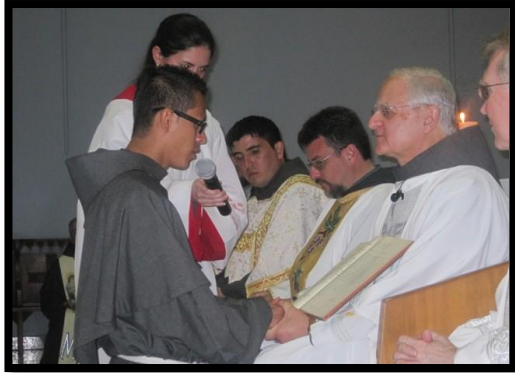
ON THE HANGING BRIDGES



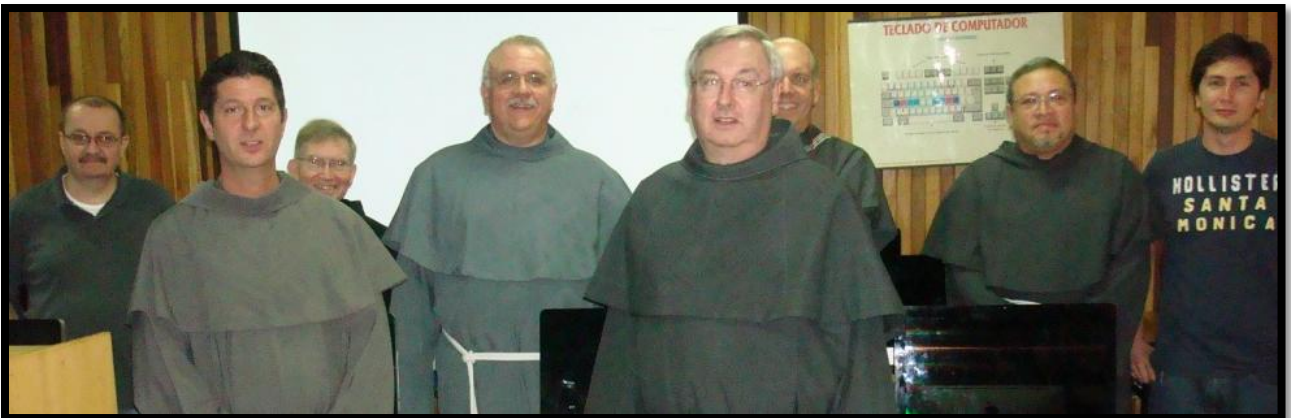
CONVENTO SAN FRANCISCO

After breakfast on Sunday we made our trek back to the Asuncion Friary for lunch and after a brief rest we were taken to San Francisco Friary in San Jose for a tour of the friary and the College before the Mass and Profession of Vows at 6:00 p.m. This friary and college is found in the Moravia section of San Jose (the capital). The complex takes up an entire city block. The College has 1,200 students from pre-school to grade 11. It is in extraordinary condition and would be a Blue Ribbon School (in my opinion) in the US. There are three different gyms, an in-ground pool, and a lighted soccer (futbol) field with astroturf. The friary has five friars in residence and Fr. Jorge is the Guardian. This friary too is in an open courtyard plan with a soothing fountain at the center. You can tell that this friary likes to spend time together outside and offers hospitality in the courtyard because it is well-supplied with chairs and outdoor cooking equipment!





The profession of vows of our brothers Marcos and Jhonathan certainly was the great capstone of our stay. The chapel of the College was near to capacity (over 500) for the celebration that lasted one hour and 45 minutes with great singing from the friars and postulants. Following the celebration a dinner was held in one of the gyms and I have never seen so many people served so quickly at one time. It was a great and relaxing event.



PROVINCIAL UNITY PRAYER

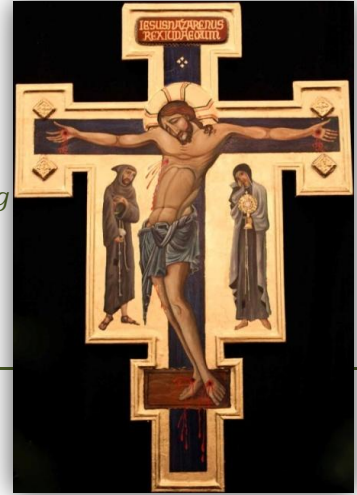
Most High and Good Lord, we praise and thank You for our many blessings. You have chosen and called us to live and labor among Your people as followers of Francis of Assisi. As part of this call, You now lead us to blend our two Province histories into one new Franciscan Province. Bless our efforts with gifts of openness, generosity, growth in personal holiness, and provide us with new energy in the work You gave our Father Francis as builders of Your Church. Amen.

IMMACULATE MARY, PRAY FOR US

ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA, PRAY FOR US

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI VOCATION PRAYER

Most High, Glorious God, enlighten the darkness of our minds. Give us a right faith, a firm hope and a perfect charity, so that we may always and in all things act according to Your Holy Will. Amen



In Keeping with Making Things New

Early last year St. Anthony Friary (Ellicott City, MD) needed to replace some wooden frames in the windows in the chapel and especially the rose window (which had pictured the Seraph Christ) in the lobby. The frames had caused some water damage to the walls and new metal frames were fashioned. In retrofitting the Seraph window into a more secure metal frame the window shattered (literally in hundreds of pieces). Since the Seraph window was one-of-a-kind, a new window (pictured here) was designed. Using the template of the coat of arms which is found on the central entrance of St. Joseph Cupertino Friary (up the hill) this window was designed and installed this past week. During the day it brings in great color into the lobby and at night it is illumined from the inside so that people driving onto our property can enjoy it throughout the night.