



NEWS

Welcome Fray Clézio!



Our mission in the North of Mexico is celebrating the arrival of fray Clézio Menezes Dos Santos. He is from the Central Brazilian Province and has been assigned here for several years to help us serve the local Church and in the implantation of our charism.

Fray Clézio is from Brasília, D.F., in Brazil. He professed perpetual vows in 2007 and was ordained to the priesthood just last year on the third of July. He has experience in formation and will be a great help to us in strengthening our formation program.

Since his arrival in Mexico in April, fray Clézio has had the experience of helping celebrate the Holy Week services in the chapels we attend near our friary San Pío de Pietrelcina in Cd. Benito Juarez, Nuevo Leon. During May he began his tour of our other three houses: our postulancy in Durango, Durango; our novitiate in Tres Ojitos, Chihuahua and our mission in Yécora, Sonora. He will be assigned to work in one of these places at the end of June. Welcome fray Clézio!

We are deeply grateful to you and to your Province for allowing you to serve us here in the North of Mexico. Our needs are great but our Lord always gives us what we need. May He bless your vocation and your ministry among us.

Dear friends of Padre Pío:

“It is necessary to pray to the Holy Spirit Paraclete in a special way regarding a great truth: that he may help us know ever more fully the excellence of our Christian vocation.” Padre Pío



Our Third Youth Retreat: “Enliven your Life”

On May 15th we celebrated our third youth day. As always, God's hand was visible amidst these young people –expressed in their joy and enthusiasm as they accompanied us on our way and learned about the great things of God. In this way they learned how see a gift to be given to them and to embrace life with hope instead of submitting to indifference and despair.

During this month of May, our youth day played a Marian theme. Our group hiked for two hours to a shrine to Our Lady of Schönstatt, atop one of the hills around Monterrey. The participants learned, by this experience of hiking, that our life is like a pilgrimage in which we don't walk alone but rather are joined together, learning to trust one another and to help one another. They also learned that our goal is not some finite place in the terms of worldly gains but the prize of infinite value that only God can promise with certainty. It is his promise that provides the hope necessary to continue the journey.

In spite of the two-hour hike up the mountain, the participants showed no signs of weakening, nor was their joy diminished. On their faces were signs of their dreams, signs of hope and determination.

During the walk we recited the rosary and sang hymns thanking God for the gift of life and for the natural beauty that surrounded us on all sides. A cloud of mist covered us for part of the journey refreshing our spirit and instilling gratitude in our hearts for his greatness toward us.

Upon arriving at the summit, we celebrated



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Holy Mass. It was a celebration in which the youth took the opportunity to share their dreams, goals and also their fears; a time in which God spoke to us through his Word. After mass, fray Adán shared a theme entitled “Live the Life!” in which we celebrated as a group the great gift of life that God has given to each of us, a life oriented to the love and service of others.

We invite you to participate in our youth retreats the third Sunday of every month. Ask for more information (web page).



From Writings of Padre Pío

By Fray Guillermo Trauba OFM Cap

Happy Easter! From the sad shadow of Lent we are now enveloped in the light of the resurrected Christ during this Easter season. While our work during Lent focused on our conversion by way of repentance for our sins, our work during this Easter time centers on the good use of our talents. In fact, our personal growth is by way of the good use of our talents rather than by the eradication of our sins. The reason is that if we “clean house” and don't put virtues in the place of vices, our “demons” return in greater numbers and with increased intensity. Our mind doesn't understand negatives. Therefore, it isn't enough to say what one doesn't want to do;

one has to provide an affirmative strategy. The tactic of the devil is to pervert the good use of our talents. Even though temptations will continue, this Easter season provides us with a more attractive face of Jesus. This, in turn, should inspire greater hope in uniting ourselves to Him at all costs.

In his letter to his spiritual daughter, Raffaolina Cerase on the 25th of April 1914, Padre Pio offers several techniques for spiritual warfare. These suggestions presume our deep hope in Jesus and our conviction to remain faithful to Him the more clearly we see Him.



I am consoled to hear that the storms are increasing, for this is a sign that God's kingdom is being established within your. Keep cheerful and don't be discouraged. The temptations and storms that are circling around you are sure signs of divine predilection. Your fear of offending God is the surest proof that you are not offending Him.

Place your unlimited trust in the divine goodness and the more violent the enemy becomes, the more you should abandon yourself trustfully on the breast of the most tender, heavenly Spouse who will never allow you to be overcome. God Himself has solemnly announced through Sacred Scripture: God is faithful and He will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with temptation will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

To convince yourself of the opposite is infidelity and may God guard us from falling into similar absurdities. Even St. Paul was restless and besought the Lord to free him from the trial of the flesh: he too was very much afraid that he would yield, but did he not receive the assurance that grace would always be sufficient for him? Our enemy who plots against us wants to persuade you that the very opposite is the case, but despise him in the name of Jesus and laugh heartily at him. This is the best way to make him beat a retreat. He plucks up courage when dealing with the weak, but when anyone takes up a weapon and faces him he becomes a coward. You may fear, if you like, but it must be that holy fear, I mean to say the fear that is never separated from love. When fear and love are united, they help each other, like sisters, to remain on their feet and to walk securely in the Lord's paths.

In order to understand Padre Pío's commentaries to Raffaolina, it is necessary to take into account his keen spiritual perception, that is, his sensitivity to the spirit of the other person. First of all, we see that the struggle is a sign of spiritual health. The fear of offending God is an indication that the soul is oriented towards God. Like a wise doctor making his diagnosis, Padre Pío sees Raffaolina as spiritually healthy. Nevertheless, he offers her some medicine. He exhorts her to remember that sin always implies consent, that is, freedom and knowledge. And it is in this context that the grace of God is always sufficient to overcome any temptation. He also exhorts here to have so much confidence in Jesus as to put aside any fear of the devil and to deal him a blow in the name of Jesus. Whatever fear that may be present should be channeled to that holy fear of separating oneself from God.

Perhaps the most important message for us is to maintain our hope and gratitude in Jesus; to see Him more clearly is to desire Him more ardently. Let us come to Him with all haste whatever the circumstance.

May God bless you completely,

The Hermitical Life of the Minor Brothers

Por: Fray Pedro Cesar Silvério OFM Cap



This Easter Season, being conscious of God's greatest gift to us in the resurrection of his Son, is a very

appropriate time to reflect on the “life in the hermitages of the Minor Brothers”.

Saint Francis had a great appreciation for

the solitary life. From the beginnings of his conversion he would seek solitude in



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remote places in order to pray and reflect on his life. When the Lord gave him his first brothers they would go off to solitary places to pray. The Carceri was one of the preferred sites of the early friars.

The places where Saint Francis and his brothers retired to pray as hermits included: *Alvernia, Creccio, Fonte Colombo*, without mentioning the first house of the Minor Brothers in *San Damian* and later in *Rivotorto*. Even the restored church, the *Portiuncula*, served as a refuge of prayer for the Minor Brothers.

In the second life of Saint Francis by Celano, he exhorts us: *As for the rest, Saint Francis reminded all the brothers to be charitable, and exhorted them to practice the affability and mutual acceptance typical in a family. 'I want', he said, 'that my brothers show themselves to be sons of the same mother; and that if one were to ask the tunic, the cord or whatever else, it would be given to him generously. Also, lend to one another books and whatever else so that no one be pressured to take it away from the other.' And, in order to demonstrate that this would be something that Christ would do, he was the first to do it. (2Cel. 180)*

Being a responsible preacher of the Word of God, Saint Francis would pass five "Lents" and moments of prayer and contemplation. He wanted his brothers to dedicate their life to contemplation so much so that he wrote a Rule for hermits, taking the example of Martha and Maria from the Gospel account (cf. Lk. 10:38-42). He used language typical of a family, where the mothers care for the children by being diligent and attentive, and after a time, they are to reverse their roles.

Also, in the Approved Rule VII, 13, he reminds the brothers: "Keep from making any of the hermitages or other places wherever you may be, your own, and don't refuse anyone who wishes to enter there. Living a life of poverty implies that all our places are places of solitude and contemplation."

In order to dedicate himself even more to contemplation, one time being very weak, Saint Francis had himself carried on the burro of a poor country folk to a distant hermitage. (LM. 7:12; Lm. 5:3)

Saint Francis exhorts us:

As we know from the Fathers who have gone before, they [the hermitages] were like solitary flowers; would that the hermitages today not lose their original beauty, the praise whose holiness lasts forever! (2Cel. 179)

Moreover, the real hermitage is one's own heart, the place of encounter with God: Three and One. A hermitage is also found in the cosmic praise inherent in all creation. Wherever God resides, all creation sings a song of praise to its Creator combined in a multitude of voices.

The Capuchins revived the tradition of the hermitages to the point that the original name of the Capuchin Reform was: "the Brothers of the Blessed Hermitical Life". With the Capuchin Reform there was a notable increase in the number of brothers dedicated to the hermitical life. From the start, Fray Ludovico sought permission to be able to live in solitary places. Pope Clement VII in his papal bull "in suprema" conceded permission to the Capuchin Order to have solitary places of retreat in each province¹.



The constitutions of 1536 speak of being able to have one or two small cells or hermitages near the main Capuchin friary but set apart from the people where the friars would be able to enter more deeply in prayer².

The difference between the Capuchin reform and the other Franciscan reforms of the Strict Observance is that the Capuchins combined the hermitical life with the apostolate, a balance that continues to be sought to the present day.

In the constitutions of the Friars Minor Capuchins³, no. 52.1 we are



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exhorted to, “conserve and promote that spirit of contemplation that irradiated the life of Saint Francis and our elder brothers. Therefore, let us dedicate a space of time more generously oriented in mental prayer”. And in number 56.1: “Let the provinces maintain, in so far as possible,

fraternities dedicated to retreats and prayer”.

Let us finish with the words of the II CPO⁴ of the Capuchins in Taizé, 1973, no.14: “Let us pray like minor brothers. We are truly minor brothers when we unite in the name

of Christ, in mutual charity, in such a way the Lord is really present in our midst.” And in no. 18: “Upon contemplating God, the Supreme Good, from whom all other goods proceed, let our hearts burst forth in adoration, thanksgiving, in wonder and praise.”



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¹CRISCUOLO, V., *I Cappuccine – Fonti documentarie e narrative*, Curia Generale dei Cappuccini, Roma, no. 77.

²Constitutions of Roma – Santa Eufemia, in CRISCUOLO, V., *I Cappuccini* no. 316. Op. Cit.

³Constitutions of the Friars Minor Capuchins, Rule and testament of Saint Francis, Iberian Conference of the Capuchins, Sevilla, 1993

⁴*Documents of the First Four Plenary Counsels of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchins*, Conference Ibérica of Capuchins, Sevilla, 1983.

Our community prays daily for your intentions. If you wish us to pray for one or more particular intentions and to be included in our prayer list

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As you already know, your donations can be made to our

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