

# Capetown

March, 2025



Volume XVII  
Issue No. 8



*“Pelican of pietas, Jesus Lord, cleanse my unclean self in your blood; one small drop of it could make the whole world clean, purged from every evil.” - St. Thomas Aquinas*

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## Formator's Corner

Fasting is perhaps one of my favorite Lenten practices. As a man who lives out of my heart at any given moment, I have a tendency to make decisions on whether I'm having a bad or good day; on whim and fancy. Fasting gets me into my body. It grounds me in a way that other practices often fail to do. It gets me out of my emotions into something solid and more "real." And that's all well and good.

Perhaps the best thing about fasting, in my mind, is that it allows me to make space for God. It allows me to allow God to fill that space with whatever Grace I'm missing at this time. For me, fasting is a radical act of trust that affirms

that God is in control. God knows what I need better than I do, and that if I give God a chance, good things will flow into the space I leave empty, things that will change me for the better, help me grow, or make up for what I'm lacking in my spiritual life. I don't plan for a Grace when I fast, I simply ask God to do with the emptiness what is best for me at this time. In its way, it's a form of living into Poverty.

One of the great challenges to fasting for me is that there are always things around in community to fill that emptiness. Whether it's a bag of chips, a can of soda, or leftovers in the fridge that finishing off will prevent waste, there is always that tickle at the back of the mind. The other struggle with fasting is that once it's broken, it's hard to recommit to it, at least for that day. It can leave a heart-type like myself feeling like a failure. Of course, the goal of any Lenten practice isn't to "succeed." The goal is to draw closer to God. And just as in fasting or any sort of kenotic action you can always empty out more, no matter how close you get to God in Lent, you can always be closer, and the ultimate closeness won't come until God makes it happen. Any emptying out, no matter how little, is a little more space for God. Drawing even a little bit closer to God is a win, no matter how much distance still remains in your own heart. So, I keep trying. If I fail today, I can fast again tomorrow.

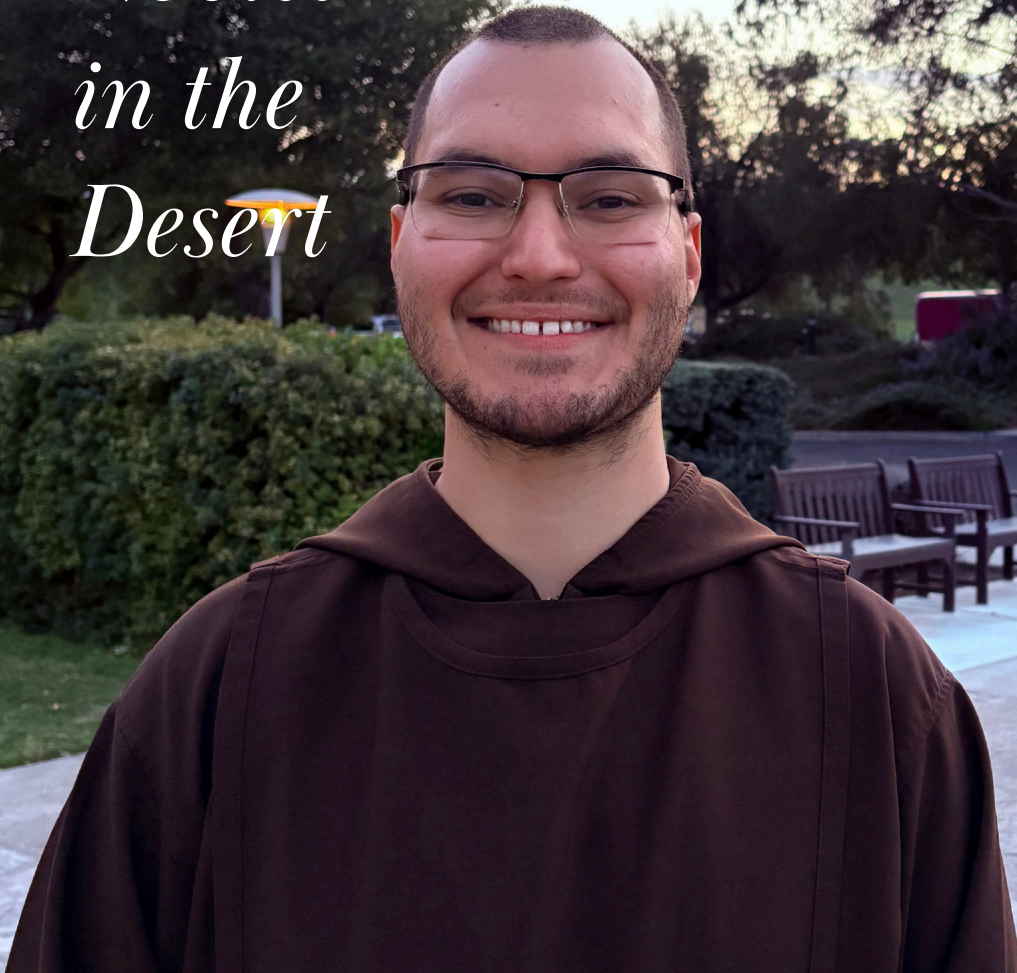
Br. David Hirt, OFM Cap

*"The goal is  
to draw closer  
to God."*



*Ecce Homo, Luca Giordano 1664*

# *Novice in the Desert*



*Br. John Mary Lauderdale*

**Q:** What aspect of the Capuchin life speaks most powerfully to you?

**A:** There are many things I love about being a Capuchin, but two things in particular come to mind as I reflect on this question. The first is that as Capuchin Franciscans, we commit to living the Gospel by imitating Jesus in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi. The Gospel is the greatest proclamation and the entire foundation of the Christian life, and so to live this life is both a great honor and a great challenge. Living the Gospel life means that we live in intimacy with Jesus, in apostolic brotherhood, and in service to others. This leads me to the second thing that speaks so powerfully to me, which is the harmonious balance between prayer,

fraternity, and ministry. Each one grounds and provides nourishment to the others. Prayer is at the heart of the Capuchin life. Prayer provides a profound connection to God, grounding me in faith and guiding my daily actions. In this prayer I receive the peace and love of God and out of this prayer comes our life in fraternity. Fraternity fosters a deep sense of community and brotherhood, where mutual support and shared spiritual journeys enrich our lives. Finally, out of our life in prayer and fraternity we go out to the world in ministry - serving all people, especially the poor, and preaching the Gospel by our words and actions. Ministry allows me to serve others, embodying the teachings of St. Francis through acts of compassion and outreach. Together, these elements

create a fulfilling and purposeful life, where spiritual growth, communal bonds, and service to others are beautifully intertwined. This balance is what makes being a Capuchin Franciscan so meaningful and rewarding.

**Q: What has living in a religious order taught you about the Catholic Church/Faith?**

A: One of the most important lessons I've learned from living in a religious order is that while all of us are striving for sanctity within a Gospel brotherhood, we are still human beings. This means that every brother has his own strengths and weaknesses, flaws and gifts. Every brother comes from a different background and has their own unique story of how God has led them to the Capuchins. All of us are sinners trying to respond to the grace of God. While this can lead to frustration and disappointment at times, it can also foster a deep sense of humility and compassion as we journey with one another in our spiritual growth and daily challenges. It is precisely in our own weakness and sinfulness that our charism of Gospel brotherhood is put to the test. Here we strive to put into practice Jesus' teachings on mercy, patience, forgiveness, and daily conversion.

\* Alpha Resource Center of Santa Barbara empowers individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout Santa Barbara County by supporting families, creating opportunities, and fostering belonging.

**Q: What is a lesson that you've learned from your ministry?**

A: One of the lessons I've learned in doing ministry at Alpha Resource Center\* in Santa Barbara is the importance of simply being present to those I serve. In a world that often emphasizes constant activity and productivity, I am continuing to discover that human connection and support can come from the quiet moments of presence and attentiveness. By being fully present, I offer more than just what I can do; I offer myself. This approach has taught me that sometimes the most meaningful way to serve others is not through doing, but through being - creating a space where those we serve feel seen, heard, and valued.

“...human  
*connection*  
and *support* can  
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# Franciscan History across the First Order



*The novices of the Order of Friars Minor, Conventuals, and Capuchins attending a class with Br. Jack Clark Robinson, OFM, on the history of the Franciscan's in America.*

The novices, and some of the formators, of the Franciscan First Order met at San Lorenzo Seminary the week of March 17 to learn about the history of the Franciscan's in the United States. The Franciscan First Order is made up of the Order of Friars Minor, the Conventual Franciscans, and the Capuchin Franciscans.

The class, given by Br. Jack Clark Robinson, OFM, covered the Franciscans place in the development of Europe and their presence in the developing “New World”, beginning with the discovery of New Spain (modern day Mexico) and going up to current times.

Specifically highlighted were the ways in which the Franciscans often accompanied immigrant communities to the United States and provided spiritual support in the new

experience of the “melting pot” of America. In addition to this we discussed the role of missionaries in the United States, initially to the indigenous of Baja and Alta California and New Mexico, and continuing to the more recent missions with the Native American communities from the Carolinas to Montana and Arizona.

This is helpful to the Franciscans of today so that we can see the traditions that we come from here in America, and can begin to see where we are called to serve in today's rapidly shifting culture. We remember that we are first Friars Minor, or lesser brothers, and that we have a call to serve the poor, outcast, and marginalized of today. We have a responsibility to see our Lord Jesus Christ in those we encounter, and to live with a deep love and respect toward all.





*Above: Br. Stephen OFM Cap, Br. Christian OFM, Br. Charlie OFM Cap, and Br. Joseph OFM Cap.*

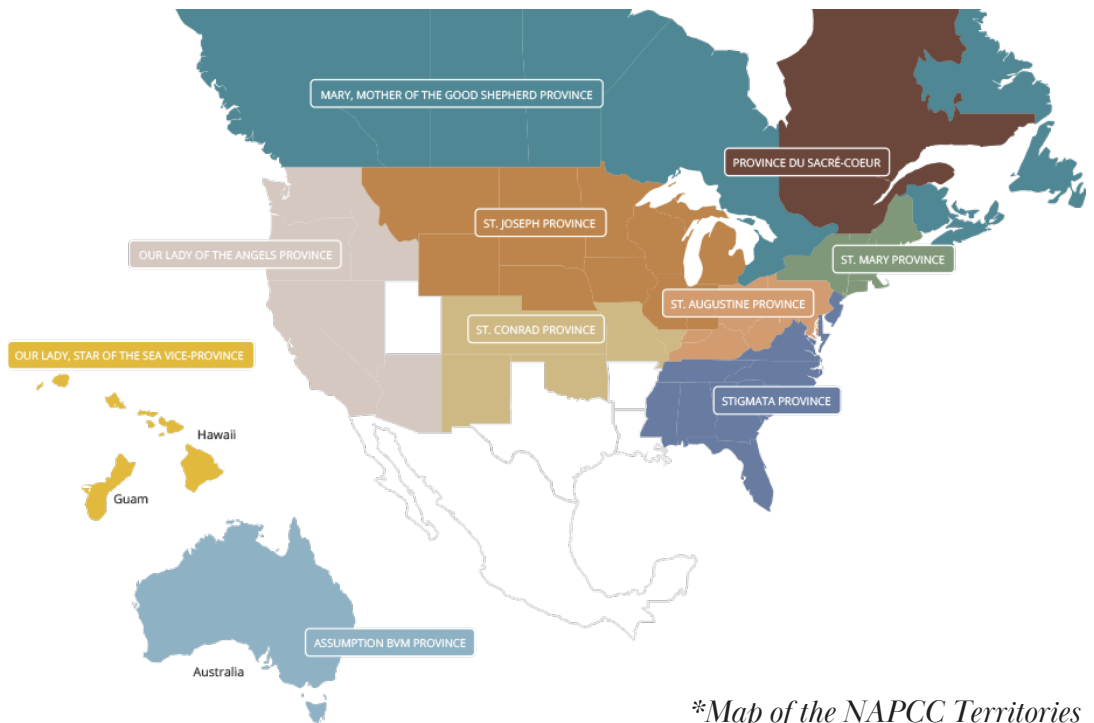
*Left: Br. Ricky OFM with Lucy*

*Below: The Novices in class*

*Right: Br. Jesus OFM and Br. Stephen OFM Cap talking in the sun.*



# NAPCC Meetings



*\*Map of the NAPCC Territories*

The NAPCC, or North American Pacific Capuchin Conference, met at San Lorenzo seminary the week of March 10 for a series of meetings. There were representatives present from the six U.S. provinces, Australia, Canada, and Mexico.

The meetings were focused on the future of the conference and the role that collaboration is going to play, and what it will look like, going forward.

On Tuesday, March 11, there was a social with all of the novitiate, NAPCC representatives, the San Lorenzo Foundation, and the San Lorenzo Corporation. This served as an excellent opportunity for the representatives to see how the novitiate is run, and the people that help make it happen!

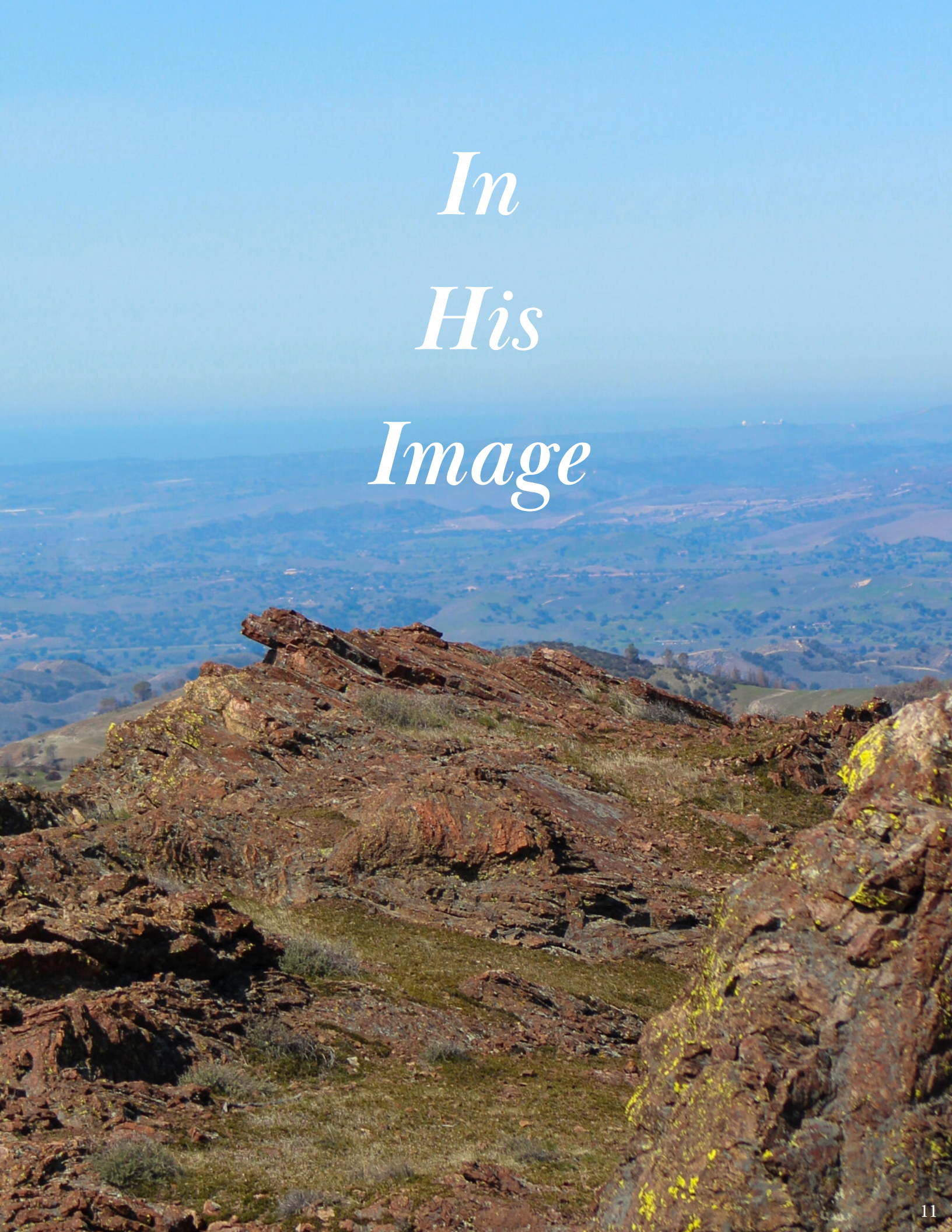
The majority of the representatives left on Friday, March 14, to head back to their respective homes.



*Brs. Joseph West, Michael Meza, and Will Tarraza*



*Brs. Bob Marva, Robert Williams, Miguel Ramirez, and Rod Pieretti*

The image shows a high-angle view from a rocky ridge. The foreground is dominated by dark, reddish-brown volcanic rock formations with some sparse green and yellow lichen. Beyond the ridge, a wide valley unfolds, showing rolling hills, green fields, and small clusters of buildings. The sky is a clear, pale blue, and the overall atmosphere is bright and open.

*In  
His  
Image*















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Axel Nielsen Building



HANSON'S CLOCK SHOP JEWELERS













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