



# Franciscan Vocations

March 2007

## Three Approved for Postulancy Total of Five for Class of 2007

As in January, the Admissions Board of Saint John the Baptist Province met at Saint Anthony Friary in Cincinnati on March 24, 2007. This time they approved three men: **Roger Lopez**, **Tim Tran**, and **Joshua van Cleef**. These men will join Dan Helfrich and Clifford Hennings, who were approved in January, as members of the Class of 2007. Their Postulancy year will begin July 1.



Roger, age 28, lives in Pensacola, FL where he has spent his entire life. He is the youngest of three sons. He attended Pensacola Catholic High School and took some classes at the University of West Florida.

Besides being a Senior Retail Sales Rep for T-Mobile, USA, Inc., Roger is a volunteer firefighter and is very active in his parish where he serves as a lector and 5th Grade CCD teacher. Before landing his present job, he was a store manager for Blockbuster, Inc.

Tim, age 25, was born and reared in the Minneapolis, MN area. He attended Eastview High School in Apple Valley where he, his parents, and his younger brother presently



live. He earned a Bachelor Degree in English from the University of Minnesota—Twin Cities in 2003. In the fall of that same year Tim began a ten month volunteer program with the Franciscan

Sisters of the Poor in Cincinnati where he met the Friars.

Tim has held a variety of jobs including food service, warehousing, retail work in a lumber yard, and household/commercial waste collection. His most recent and present job is in shipping for Workflowone, a paper products supplier.



Josh, age 22, spent his early life in the Detroit, MI area where he attended Brother Rice High School. He is the middle of five children having one sister and three brothers. He is about to

graduate from the Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, VA with a Bachelor Degree in Psychology and a minor in Philosophy.

Josh has taken a leadership role at VMI on the Soccer Team, among his fellow cadets, and at the local parish. He is a Eucharistic Minister and plays an active role as an officer in the Newman Club.

Dan Helfrich of Sandusky, OH and Clifford Hennings of Richmond, TX were featured in the February Newsletter which can be found on the blog. <http://vocationvibes.franciscan.org/2007/02/index.html>



## Upcoming Events

As the academic year draws to a close, those involved in formation prepare for some **major transitions**. The new class of Postulants is in place (see story at left), the present Postulants, Dennis Geib and Richard Goodin, are in their final months before going to novitiate, and our novice Thomas Olsen, O.F.M., is preparing to make his First Profession of Vows.

But the Vocation Office isn't ready to close down for the summer. There is one more **Come and See** weekend scheduled for **May 4-6**. Fr. Don has travel plans to visit in the Houston area, and in various places in Ohio and Florida. Other sites will be added as needed. And then in June he will return to Canterbury, England to teach at the *Franciscan International Study Centre* where he taught last summer as well. This year he will repeat the Introductory Moral Class he offered last year and add a course on Marriage.

But the big province-wide event is the **All-Province Assembly** scheduled for May 21-25 at the Virginia Kettering Hall on the campus of the University of Dayton. This will be a week of prayer and fraternity. Provincial elections and policy setting will take place next May. This year we gather not to do business but to celebrate our fraternity, do a little ongoing-formation in the form of learning from guest speakers, and enjoy one another's' company.

We friars ask that you please keep these happenings in your prayers.

*Come and See Weekend*  
May 4-6, 2007 in Cincinnati, OH  
Contact the Vocation Office if you would like to participate.  
1-800-827-1082  
[sjbvocations@franciscan.org](mailto:sjbvocations@franciscan.org)

## A Brief Look at the “Steps” toward Admission

All who receive this newsletter by mail are in some stage of association with the Vocation Office of Saint John the Baptist Province. Many have just begun the process of discernment; five are ready to enter the Postulancy Program July 1. What are the “stages” or “steps” along the way?

While each individual is unique, there are some *general* patterns to the process of discernment for our province. First is the initial contact with the Vocation Office which often comes via the web in one of a number of forms. The Vocation Director responds with an email or phone call to complete the first step.

If the individual wishes to learn more about our community, the Vocation Director sends out a first packet with both printed materials and a mini CD. A *Personal Inventory* is also included which, when returned, indicates that the individual is at least interested in continuing the association with the Vocation Office to some degree.

The third stage is a personal visit. The Vocation Director tries to pay the individual a visit so that he and the prospective can get to know each other a bit more and to answer questions and concerns that the inquirer may have. (Most, if not all, men at this stage do have questions and it is important that these are answered.)

If both feel that the prospective is ready to move on, the Vocation Director invites him to Cincinnati for a *Come and See* weekend where he will meet members of the Franciscan community and others who are discerning their calling. There is also ample opportunity to speak with the present Postulants to benefit from their first-hand experience and to ask questions. This step often proves to be quite decisive with many participants deciding to pursue admis-

sion while others come to realize that this is not the community to which the Lord is calling them. Both are significant and positive steps in the discernment process.

If the decision to proceed is mutual, the Vocation Director gives the individual a packet of forms and a detailed “to do” list. Two items on the list require travel. The Vocation Director often travels to meet with the prospective for a *Behavioral Assessment* which is a more in-depth look at the man’s motives, past behavior, prayer life, healthy, etc. The individual needs to travel to Cincinnati to meet with our psychologist for a psychological screening.

Once all the testing is completed, the forms are returned, and all is ready, the prospective returns once more to Cincinnati to meet with the Admissions Board (see the February Newsletter for a description of the Board. A copy is available in PDF format at <http://vocationvibes.franciscan.org/2007/02/index.html>)

If the Admissions Board finds the individual a good candidate for the Franciscan life, they accept him into the Postulancy Program.

Does this sound appealing? Or frightening? Maybe both? That is not unusual. The decision to seek admission into a Religious Community is a big step in a man’s life, but if that is what the Lord is calling him to do, God’s grace is there at each step along the way of discernment—and also during the stages of formation. Jesus assures us that it is not we who choose him, but he who chooses us. All he requires of us is a generous heart that says what Mary said to the angel Gabriel, “Let it be done to me according to your will.”

Feel free to contact the Vocation Office at 1-800-827-1082 or [sjbvocations@franciscan.org](mailto:sjbvocations@franciscan.org) with any questions or concerns that you might have.

Peace and every good.

## An Easter Wish and Blessing

Spring is beginning to arrive in Cincinnati. The days are warming up and the nights are less cold. The early flowers and tree leaves are appearing. We seem to naturally think of new life and hope this time of the year. Maybe that’s due in part to the changing weather; maybe in part to the fact that we are approaching Easter.



The mystery of the Rising of Jesus will be our liturgical focus for seven weeks. From Easter Sunday to Pentecost the readings at the Eucharist will make heavy use of the Acts of the Apostles as we hear how Saint Luke describes the growth of the early Church. That growth was not without its challenges and problems. Neither is our growth in the life of grace. But Luke makes it very clear that faith in the Risen Jesus is at the heart of the life of the Church—then and today.

May the Season of Easter prove to be a blessing for all. May it be a time of peace and joy. And for all of you who are discerning a possible vocation to the Religious Life and/or priesthood, may the Risen Lord strengthen your hearts and calm your fears.

Have you checked out our web site or visited Fr. Don’s Blog recently? They are good resources for leaning about our province and keeping up with what’s happening among the Friars of Saint John the Baptist Province. Simply go to:  
[www.franciscan.org](http://www.franciscan.org)  
and/or  
[vocationvibes.franciscan.org](http://vocationvibes.franciscan.org)