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New friar expects his medical experience to help in ministry

Robert Delaney of The Michigan Catholic
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Friar Vincent Reyes, OFM Cap. New Capuchin Bro. Zoilo Garibay during his Dec. 3 first vows ceremony at St. Bonaventure Monastery.

Detroit – It was not so very long ago that newly professed Capuchin Bro. Zoilo Garibay was so caught up in his career as a registered nurse in the Intensive Care Unit at Henry Ford Hospital that he had drifted away from regular church attendance.

"But I never stopped praying," he says, and the feeling that somehow that career on which he had "fixated" was not enough led to a process of reassessing his life that not only brought him back to weekly, but to daily Mass attendance.

And it took him even further, to reawakening the thoughts about a priestly vocation he had formed while attending a high school seminary back in his native Philippines.

As a step in that direction, he entered the novitiate of the Capuchin Franciscans in Pittsburgh for the year

The Capuchins

The Capuchins are one of three historic branches of the Franciscans, the family of Friars Minor religious orders founded by St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226). The Capuchins emerged



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of preparation to make his first vows as a [Capuchin friar](#), which he did Dec. 3 at St. Bonaventure Monastery in Detroit.

The ceremony came just a month before Vocations Week, Jan. 7-12, during which the Church celebrates God's gift of vocations and urges all Catholics to pray that people may answer God's call.

With the New Year, Bro. Garibay, 30, begins his studies for the priesthood at the Catholic Theological Union of America in Chicago, while living at the Capuchins' house of studies, St. Clare Friary.

It was a fortuitous chance that led him to the Capuchins, Bro. Garibay recalls. As an immigrant he had to visit the Immigration Office at Mount Elliott and East Jefferson avenues. His route took him right by St. Bonaventure Monastery and the Solanus Casey Center at about the same time — seven years ago — that he was looking for a place to attend daily Mass.

An Internet search showed him there was a 7:45 a.m. Mass in the monastery chapel — perfect for him to attend after his overnight shift at the hospital.

"I would come directly from work and would be in my hospital scrubs. I would look around and see a true cross-section of Detroit. There would be professionals, the homeless, and the infirm. I began to realize the Capuchins were the 'peoples' friars. Every morning they would heal us sacramentally. I was healing bodies. They were healing souls," Bro. Garibay says.



Friar Vincent Reyes, OFM Cap. Capuchin Fr. Daniel Anholzer, provincial minister of the Detroit-based Province of St. Joseph, blesses Bro. Zoilo Garibay during the Dec. 3 ceremony.

as a reform movement within the Franciscans in the 16th century, and have been in the United States for a century-and-a-half. The Detroit-based Province of St. Joseph includes Michigan and nearby states. For information on vocations to the Capuchins, call Fr. Bill Hugo, at (773) 890-1238, ext. 114.

One day, one of the friars spoke to him after Mass, thanking him for coming. "I was struck by the warm welcome. The Philippine culture values hospitality," he continues.

As Bro. Garibay learned more about the Capuchins and got to know the friars, he says he came to realize their values were a direct reflection of his own. And he saw that he might combine his medical training with his Church vocation.

Just as "what I learned in my high school seminary influenced my practice as a nurse," Bro. Garibay says he expects his medical experience will help shape his service as a priest once he is ordained five or six years from now.



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