

Capuchins Elect New Provincial and Definitory

24 October 2002



Gerard O'Dempsey, Denis Ward, Julian Messina, Robert Stewart, Gary Devery
4th Definitor Vicar Provincial 2nd Definitor 3rd Definitor

New Australian Provincial and Definitory 2002 – 2005

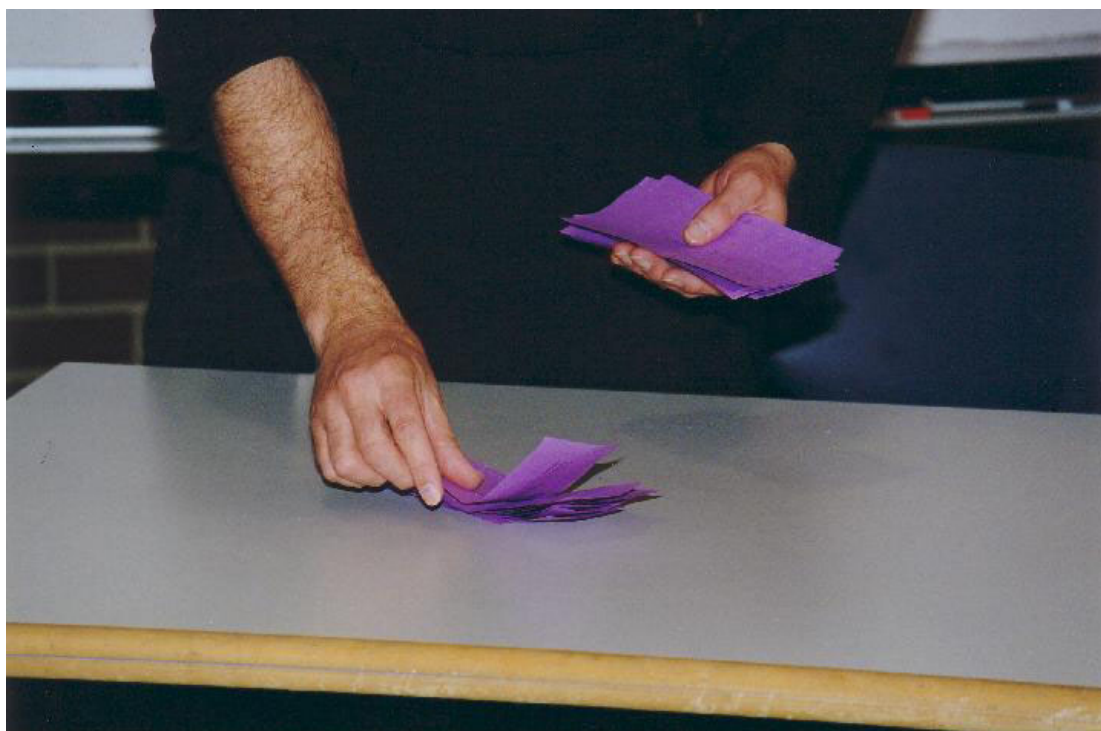
The Capuchin Province of Australia under patronage of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven held its Provincial Chapter from the 21 October to the 24 October 2002.

Br Julian Messina OFM Cap was elected Provincial with two thirds of the votes in the 1st Ballot. He worked as a missionary for eleven years in the Central African Republic and the Cameroons, and speaks English, Italian and French. He brings to his ministry as Provincial a "global vision" of the Capuchin Order and an awareness of the challenges that lie before us as we endeavour to live out our Capuchin charism in our own context.

Provincial Definitory

To assist Br Julian in his work, the friars also elected Br Denis Ward as his Provincial Vicar and Br Robert Stewart, (both on the previous Definitory) and Br Gary Devery and Br Gerard O'Dempsey. The

Provincial and three Definitors joined the Order from the State of Queensland. Br Robert being born in Bl Mary MacKillop country -South Australia.



Counting the Ballot

A Time of Grace

The Provincial Chapter 2002, was held in the Conference Centre of Assumption Friary at Plumpton in western Sydney. It was a special time of grace for the friars as they came together to reflect on the past three years and to look towards the future.

Address to the Chapter:

Definitor General – Br Joseph Nacua OFM Cap

When I visited the Province last year, I saw a group of brothers walking together in conversion and trying to respond to the deepest aspirations of the human heart. Spirituality is the "way of handling what we desire".

In this Chapter we would like to identify through dialogue, what it is that we desire as a fraternity: Chapter 7 of the *Regula Non-Bullata* gives us an image of these chapters in our family history. Chapter seven expresses the declaration of Francis and the Brothers to follow Jesus poor and chaste and humble, throughout their lives. And this common mind bore fruit for the Church and for society – the fruit of peace and reconciliation and the improvement of morals at the time.

This is somehow also to say, we are brothers in mission with a special mission. I see that reflected in the theme of the Circular Letter number 20, quoting the Pope's letter (*Novo Millennio Ineunte*) Saying that for the third millennium the Church must strive to become "*a home and a school of communion*".

Echoing that we may also say: our challenge for the new millennium is to make our fraternity "*a home and school of communion*".

Having that as our vision, all other elements of fraternity life fall into place:

- Whether our common prayer is the soul of our ministry;
- Whether we are transparent in important aspects of our relationships;
- Whether our local chapters are opportunities for on-going formation and not just business meetings;
- Whether our economy is fraternal, in the sense that our economy is handled to redeem relationships.

So, in a sense, every chapter is *re-inventing* the province every three years – it is seeking new visions together and re-discovering our identity once more, re-founding the Province and remembering our first love: Jesus Christ. It is then a rededication of the Temple, where God dwells among those who gather in His Name.

Therefore, though we can say like Cain, "my sins and my punishment are so great, who can forgive me?" – let us listen rather to the Prophet Isaiah saying: "Even if your sins be scarlet, they will become whiter than snow and though they be crimson they will be made white as wool."

So Brothers, let us begin!
