

SOLEMN VOW REQUEST

EVALUATION REPORT FORM

NAME: THOMAS THING

Age: 27 DoB: 5 / 22 / 59

Place of Birth: San Diego, CA

Citizenship: USA

Date of First Profession: 9 / 4 / 83

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Family:

Father	<u>Robert H. Thing</u>	<u>[living/deceased]</u>	Age <u>58</u>
Mother	<u>Marie G.</u>	<u>[living/deceased]</u>	Age <u>57</u>
Brothers/Sisters (Ages)			
	<u>Robert (37)</u>	<u>Anthony (31)</u>	<u>James (19)</u>
	<u>Kathy (35)</u>	<u>Frank (25)</u>	<u>()</u>
	<u>George (34)</u>	<u>Mike (22)</u>	<u>()</u>

Education: (Begin with most recent; Prior to OFM)

School/University	Dates attended	Degree	Major
<u>St. Anthony's Seminary</u>	<u>1974 - 1978</u>	<u>H.S.</u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>

Work Experience: (Begin with most recent; Prior to OFM.)

Place	Dates	Duties
<u>N/A</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u>with the friars</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u>since age 14!</u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>

LIFE IN FRANCISCANS:

Community	Dates	Director
<u>Pre-Nov 'G' St./HIGHLAND Park/SAS</u>	<u>1979-1982</u>	<u>Cardinalli/Dunne/Connolly</u>
<u>Novitiate Los Angeles</u>	<u>1982 - 1983</u>	<u>Josef Prochnow</u>
<u>Post-Nov Las Vegas</u>	<u>10/83 - 5/85</u>	<u>Brian Flynn</u>
<u>7th St. Berkeley</u>	<u>5/85 - present</u>	<u>[REDACTED]</u>
		<u>Richard McManus</u>

Education/Professional Training:

Place	Dates	Degree/Certificate/Courses
<u>Holy Names College</u>	<u>9/85 - 5/87</u>	<u>B.A. Religious Studies</u>
<u>Univ. Cal. Santa Barbara</u>	<u>'81 - '82</u>	<u></u>
<u>L.A. City College</u>	<u>'79 - '81</u>	<u></u>

Ministerial Involvements:

Place	Dates	Duties
<u>Holy Names College Oakland</u>	<u>9/86 - 5/87</u>	<u>Campus Min. team</u>
<u>St. Stephen's Parish Walnut Creek</u>	<u>'85 - '87</u>	<u>Youth Min. group director</u>
<u>St. Christopher's School Las Vegas</u>	<u>'83 - '85</u>	<u>Catholic Community Services/ Teacher</u>

Other:

Summer Experiences	Places/Dates/Comments
<u>Mission San Luis Rey</u>	<u>Family Spiritual Vacation (Summer, '86)</u>

Leave of Absence: Dates/Comments:

GENERAL REPORT:Community Life:

Tom Thing has lived for more than half of his life in Franciscan communities, beginning with his early days at St Anthony's Seminary, back in 1974. He knows the friars very well, and does express a deep love and concern for what we are about. Over his fourteen years in a wide variety of community settings, Tom has developed good skills for such a way of life. He has 'survived' quite well the many changes in our formation programs over the course of those years. But more than survival, he has learned how to become a vital member of any community he has lived in. Tom puts energy and enthusiasm into the work of making community happen. He contributes more than his 'share' often, in terms of time, effort, etc. that make for good community. He is looking in his community experiences to be able to make a 'home'. In places, and at times where community living has been difficult, if not almost impossible, Tom has learned from those experiences as well. He is self-reflective enough to consider his part in the difficulties; he is able to talk it out with others. Tom is aware of what he wants and needs from such a religious lifestyle, and what he is able to give to make that happen; he is also able to receive, to make his needs known. He is not passive, and has learned ways of expressing his concerns about community in healthy and helpful manners. He takes seriously the fiscal responsibilities of actively contributing to the support of the friary; he works hard. He tries to balance his outside commitments - school, work, ministry, friends - with the demands of community schedules. He is able to make needed adjustments and compromises. He makes 'time' for community. He is conscientious about house chores (thankless jobs like food shopper), prayer leader assignments, cooking, etc. (He is a good cook; and a creative spirited prayer leader.) While the Las Vegas community experience ('83 - '85) was fraught with many difficulties and tensions, Tom was still able to function and do well in his ministry-work at St. Christopher's School. The pastor commended his work. Tom sees the Las Vegas time as a real learning experience. As a result of these early Post-Novitiate assignments, fortunately, Tom has not become totally disillusioned, nor hopelessly cynical either. He has been at the 7th St. House since May, '85.

Education/Ministerial Involvements;

Tom has to work hard at studies. He is not totally comfortable in the academic arena. However, it is much to his credit that he is graduating from Holy Names College this month with a BA in Religious Studies. He has given himself to the task of finishing his degree work. He also recognizes that he can do the work quite satisfactorily, with effort. He seems, over the past two years to have developed new self-confidence in his abilities to study and do well (B/C student). He recognizes his needs to further develop professional skills and training. He is open to the possibility of further studies at FST next year. We encourage this!

Tom cannot just be a student; he has to work, for his own sense of well-being. He needs to be involved with people in on-going ministry. While at Las Vegas he did work as a teacher at the elementary level at St. Christophers School. The pastor highly commended his performance. Since being at 7th St. House, Tom has been active in ministerial involvements. Through much personal initiative, he began a youth ministry program for St. Stephen's Parish, Walnut Creek. Now in its second year, the group has grown consistently. Tom works hard to make for quality experiences for young people (high school age); programs focus on development of values, concerns for issues and problems of youth today, as well as good opportunities for wholesome socializing. Tom likes what he is doing, and brings a natural exuberance of his own personality into his work. He is looking forward to continuing this ministry next year, as well.

In his work at the parish Tom is very careful to keep lines of communication open with the pastor, by checking in with him on a regular basis. The pastor is well pleased with the quality of Tom's work. Tom has recruited other persons to help him in this ministry. He will also spend many hours a month counseling and talking with young people about their problems. In so doing, Tom has often consulted with [redacted]/Richard and the pastor or others, about handling certain difficult situations. He is not afraid to ask for help and seems eager to learn more. Tom has expressed continued interest in working in parish situations, especially in family-based ministries.

While the youth group has taken much time and effort, that is not all that Tom has done. He is also on the Campus Ministry team at Holy Names College this year. In that he gives about 10 hours a week in service of all kinds, working with college age population - in liturgies, retreats, prayer programs, social functions, counseling, etc. He has received good reports from his supervisors. He works well on the 'team'.

Personal:

Tom has literally grown up with the friars, and he continues to grow. This growth seems most particularly notable in the past two years, while at the 7th St. House - achievement of academic goals, greater self-confidence in his talents and gifts, and in himself in general, at ease with growing self-knowledge and awareness. His perseverance, his willingness to learn, his ability to handle difficult situations without becoming totally disheartened, his general outlook on life all indicate good skills for Tom's ability to live this way of life well. He takes himself seriously, but not too seriously; he has a good sense of humor, and basic joyful disposition. He has a natural gift of helping others to enjoy themselves as well. He is sensible and exercises good judgment in important matters. He is reliable to follow through on tasks. He has consistently shown himself to be energetic and keeps busy with many projects. He does need attention in this area, however, to slow down. He needs to develop good time management skills. At times as pressures and demands have mounted, Tom can get stressed out, tired, or exhausted. He needs to be able at times simply to relax and learn how to 'waste' some time once in a while, creatively. Balancing all of the demands of the various works he is involved in does get stressful. In such cases, community life can suffer, e.g., community prayer attendance, or emotionally withdrawing from others or group meetings, or his attention to studies. Tom would do himself well to expand his stress management skills (perhaps via exercise outlets, or the like.)

Tom has been serious about spiritual life and growth, especially this year as he has looked forward to the possibility of solemn vows. He has met regularly with his spiritual director, and reports that this has been quite beneficial. He has become more comfortable with a prayer style that is more fitting his disposition and temperament, and continues to learn. Musical expression is an important part of his praying. (The one who sings, prays twice!)

Tom has the desire and the ability to live the vowed life in an honest and healthy way. He continues to discover what the vows call and challenge him to do and the way to live them out well. He is open and accepting of challenge. For him, it seems, that solemn vows are not 'final' in the sense that he would have no more to learn after that about the vowed way of life.

Tom is sociable and relates well with people - of all kinds and sorts - from young children to old ladies. He has worked in Las Vegas and enjoyed working within the Black culture. He remains open to such involvement in the future. In cases of conflict he is usually able to work through differences and express himself; occasionally, when things cannot be worked out amicably, he is able yet to tolerate imperfect situations. Being a hard worker himself, he can tend to be somewhat judgmental of others who do not seem to carry their own weight. This can be a source of tension.

Tom has some self-image problems that seem to center around his being overweight. He does take care to dress well, and is concerned about the way he looks. He would do well to continue to try to develop some skills in this area - weight control programs, exercise, stress management, etc. Tom certainly is not unaware of this, and sees it as a focus of concern. (Also, it would be beneficial at some point for him to delve further into understanding possible dynamics underlying the feelings, attitudes and behaviors around this issue.)

Tom is a talented young man; he loves music and has a good voice. He was a charter member of the Santa Barbara Boys Choir.

IMPRESSIONS:

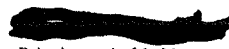
Overall, Tom possess and demonstrates vital skills essential for living our way of life in a healthy and holy way. Tom is a community man. He has a sense of warmth and humor, a generous spirit, flexible, with ability to co-operate and tolerate; he recognizes what needs to be done and takes initiative to make good community happen. He values community life; he is not a loner. He is interested in continuing to develop his professional and personal skills to help people. He is a hard worker. His exuberance is contagious. He is able to learn from his mistakes, and move on without holding grudges. Tom knows what he is getting into, with life with the friars.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is the unanimous vote of the local community of 7th St. solemnly professed, as well as the whole Post Novitiate team, that THOMAS THING be admitted to solemn profession

COMMENTS:

Evaluators:


Richard McManus
Vince Mesz
John Gutierrez
Patrick Groves

Report written by: Richard McManus

Date of report: 5/1/87