

## International Bonds of Brotherhood

This issue of *The Visitation* focuses on the international dimension of the Fraternity of Priests and the many friends and brothers that have been brought to us by our fraternities, outreaches, and ministries. While the Fraternity has always embraced our brotherhood as a means of support and friendship, we've been richly blessed by the growth and strength of our brothers throughout the world.

The Cardiff Fraternity is in its 15<sup>th</sup> year and is made up of nine members, at the moment. Over the last few years we have welcomed three religious, including two Rosminians in parish ministry in the diocese, and a missionary of Mill Hill, which has a retreat house here—sadly, soon to close. It looks like Dennis may apply to work in the diocese after that happens.

Our new Archbishop Peter Smith has been with us almost two years now. We're hoping he'll stay, but he may be heading for Westminster (London) and a red hat eventually. Like many places we are still recovering from two major abuse scandals in 1997 and 1999, plus two priest suicides in the 80s and 90s etc. The ripples spread very far in all kinds of ways. Vocations are very few and we now have only one curate (associate pastor) in the diocese.

Pray for Pat Cashin one of the founder members of our Fraternity. He left the group about four years ago and has recently gone on extended leave.

I myself am doing well in a city parish. The last two or three years I've been part of a small covenant community in our diocese called the Lamb of God. One possibility for the near future is some low-key cooperation between the Fraternity and the community, which feels itself called to be of service in our diocese. Thank you for the card on my 25th Jubilee which was a very very happy occasion. The actual day was 1st April but we celebrated on May 9th. Three members of the Fraternity gave a shared homily at the Mass on "The Priesthood Today" (with the approval of the Archbishop!) I also celebrated my 50th birthday this year.

There is a strong feeling in the Fraternity that the Lord is deeply involved in what sometimes appears as a big mess, calling us as always to be faithful to Him and to one another. We regularly pray for the

Fraternities across the world in our two weekly meetings. I caught up with Sean Conaty during the summer; it seems the Hexham & Newcastle Fraternity isn't functioning just at the moment.

Keep up the great work Tim and be assured of our prayers here across the Atlantic!

God bless you

Fr. Matthew Jones  
Cardiff Fraternity



*A Blessed Christmas to all our benefactors, friends, and fraternity members!*

# Dear Friends of the Priesthood

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Newsletter material from all Fraternity members is gratefully accepted!

The New Jersey Fraternity of Priests gathered for prayer today and we received the following prophecy: "Do you know how deep is the mercy that I have shown you? Do you know how dependent you are on my mercy? My people need to know how I desire to shower my mercy upon them. May you embody my mercy for my people."

What a wonderful word! What a challenging word especially in this season of Advent as we await the coming of the Lord. One of the many ways that God comes to us is through the mercy we show one another. We are called to literally embody the mercy of God. We priests are able to do that in a specific way during the Sacrament of Reconciliation; but we are called to SHOW the mercy of God.

One of the foundational beliefs of the Fraternity of Priests is that this time in which we live is a time of God's Visitation to us. Through the various movements of grace that we have seen, we know that the Holy Spirit is moving in a special way during these days. One of the ways we have seen this is a greater awareness of the mercy of God. Again and again I have seen the power of God's mercy melt hearts and change lives.

As we continue in this Advent season, I invite you to reflect on the mercy of God. Without God's mercy where would you be? How can you show God's mercy in a deeper way to others?

Please continue to pray for your priests and for the Fraternity of Priests. As priests we are always called to intercession for our people. It is wonderful that we know that there are people praying for us.

May the spirit of the Christmas season be yours. May the love and peace that only Emmanuel can give to us reign

in your hearts during these days.

Please feel free to send in your intentions. You are always remembered at the altar as I bring your intentions to God.

Please pray as we journey to the Diocese of Vasai in India this January. May the Lord open many doors to us in our first outreach to Asia.

In Christ,

Fr. Timothy Graff



## Fraternity Financial Report

One of the objectives for the Fraternity of Priests is to inform our donors about the ongoing financial health and details of the organization. We're providing this information to help communicate our specific need and to thank those many faithful benefactors who help make our service possible. Thank you!

Monthly Donation Budget: **\$7,467.00**

Actual Donations: **\$6,319.92**

Budget Surplus (shortage) **(\$1,156.72)**

*Current as of October 31, 2003.*

While at the annual meeting of the Fraternity of Priests in New York this past August, I met some of the brothers from Ghana. I invited them to come to my parish in Seymour Ct.. Fr. George Asigre took me up on the offer and came in September for ten days. While he was here I approached the Knights of Columbus and asked them if they would be interested in helping Father George with his college expenses. They welcomed the chance to meet him. Fr. George prepared a presentation for the Knights, and after they heard the extent of his need, they gave him a check for \$2500.00. Fr. George and I see this as a wonderful example of the providence of God. The Knights were only too happy to help him with his education.

I also received a letter from Fr. Paul Kapochina from Ghana. He arrived home from the annual meeting and was in his new parish. His letter described his needs and the conditions in the area. They are so different from my own in the USA. Our local Fraternity has committed our selves to supporting this brother in any way we can.

The Fraternity of Priests has given me the opportunity to have brothers all over the world. I am inspired and encouraged by the faith hope and Love of these brothers. They help me to examine how I am responding to the Lord, and encourage me to serve the Lord more faithfully.

In Christ Forever Redeemed,

Fr. Brian E. Jeffries  
Hartford Fraternity

My brothers, come to me , all you who labor and are heavily burdened and I will refresh you. For my burden is easy and my yoke is light. Don't carry the burden by yourself: I am here with you to help you carry it. Recognize that you need my help and humbly ask for it. I am not only willing but even anxious to help you with all of your burdens. As you let me share in your burdens you will experience a deep joy even in the midst of suffering. St. Theresa Avila found the greatest joy in the depth of her worst suffering.

—Fr. Elmer Torborg

My brothers: be an instruments of my peace. Where there is hatred, sow my love; where there is injury, my pardon; where there is doubt, my faith; where there is despair, my hope; where there is darkness, my light; and where there is sadness, my joy. It is better to console than to be consoled—although I thank you for consoling me with your praise and adoration. It is better to understand than to be understood—although I thank you for understanding My desire to give myself body , soul and divinity to my people. It is better to love than to be loved. Thank you for loving me. I love you with all of the affection of my Sacred Heart.

—Fr. Todd Schneider

Come before me in the Blessed Sacrament and rest awhile. My yoke is easy and my burden is light. Come to me, my brother priests and I will give you rest and refreshment. Why do you seek consolation elsewhere? Those places are just broken cisterns that cannot restore you. I am your consolation. I am the Bread of Life. Feed on me. Be nourished by me. I will renew your priestly ministry and make my work for the building up of my kingdom fruitful and effective. Do not follow the strategies of the world. Follow me. Be guided by my Holy Spirit. Be empowered by my Holy Spirit. Be steadfast pillars for my people. Give them clear teaching. Courageously follow the *Magisterium*. Do not worry if others criticize you and even persecute you for following the teaching of the Catholic Church. Even rejoice that you can suffer for My Name. You will be given the grace of fidelity. My people will follow you. Great will be the reward in eternity. Bless, glorify, honor, praise and worship my holy name.

—Fr. Al Quade

As darkness comes more quickly to the northern hemisphere during the month of December, we are reminded of so much darkness that continues to engulf the nations as well as the minds and hearts of men. However, as believers we prepare for the coming of the Light of the World into a world of darkness and know that the Light of Christ will always scatter the darkness of this world.

We at Visitation House, the Board of Directors of the Fraternity of Priests, and the editors of this newsletter extend to you and your family the great joy and peace of this holy season. We pray that you will be able to let the love, joy and peace of this season shine out from you. May the newborn Christ child bless you during this coming Christmas season.

Please send us your prayer intentions: \_\_\_\_\_

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# THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

## A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

*O Jesus, Eternal High Priest, live in (name of priest), act in him, speak in and through him. Think your thoughts in his mind, love through his heart. Give him your own disposition and feelings. Teach, lead and guide him always. Correct, enlighten and expand his thoughts and behavior. Possess his soul, take over his entire personality and life. Replace him with yourself. Incline him to constant adoration and thanksgiving; pray in and through him. Let him live in you and keep him in this intimate union always.*

*O Mary, Immaculate Conception, Mother of Jesus and Mother of priests, pray and intercede for (.....). Amen.*

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Dear Father/Tim/Graff,  
This donation is to help the Fraternity of Priests in continuing their work of ministering to priests.  
 \$10  \$25  \$50  \$100  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_