



Happy 2000th Birthday, Jesus!



Asleep in the Light

By Kevin Turner

Napoleon Bonaparte made a surprise visit one night to his outpost sentries on one of the vital positions of his battlefield. Stealthily, he moved along in the gray light of morning. One sentry after another immediately challenged him. Finally, the

crafty warrior stole up to a strategic spot. There was no sentry to challenge him. The calculating Napoleon moved closer and saw a pair of boots protruding from under a shock of corn and a rifle propped beside them. He made no comment but just picked up the rifle and took guard himself, waiting for the awakening of the snoozing soldier. Finally the corn stirred and up jumped the guilty defender who grabbed for the gun that was gone. Can you imagine his confusion and embarrassment? A rather shattering experience to be caught napping by the Emperor Napoleon! When our Lord returns, will He find us Christians sleeping at our post of duty?

I am a layperson and a member of one of the more than fifty Renew 2000 small groups in my local parish.

The Renew 2000 program has brought together a variety of Catholics each seeking to grow closer to God through community. Most have been Catholics for many years. Renew 2000 has provided me an opportunity to make some serious observations on the spiritual health of parishioners in my parish. As a catholic I am prompted to ask, "Are we asleep in the light?"

Season three of Renew 2000 deals with ecumenism. During one discus-

sion the subject turned to the differences between Protestants and Catholics. After comparing some very important theological differences we turned to how we act differently.

Walk into most evangelical full gospel churches on a Sunday and quite often you will be noticed and very warmly welcomed. If this is your first time they may ask for your name, address, and phone number so they can send you a brochure about their church. You will not be left alone when the service ends, as several people will ask you how you liked the service and will bid you to come again next week. This is real different than most Catholic parishes (not to mention the manifestation of the spiritual gifts). Most Catholics do not welcome new people on their own initiative. At the direction of the priest they may, for the priest sets the tone.

In the Catholic Church the priest affects the whole parish community. If he has an "on fire" relationship with Jesus Christ, and a heart for his flock, the parish is dynamic. He is sharing the grace of his inner prayer life with his people. A priest who has no life within communicates that to his people, they can see something is missing, and this too affects his parish.

Look at the sacraments and their effect on the people. I received them all in the Catholic Church, but nothing really came "alive" for me. Later, when I felt a real need and strong desire to get closer to God, I went to

...continued on page 3

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Happy Advent!!

There is something about this time of year that fuels a spirit of anticipation: here in New England we await the first snows of Winter; the sense of Christmas is in the air and the commercial urgency to shop begins to plague one's mind; decorations and carols are harbingers of the coming feast, etc. Liturgically we seek to banish seasonal darkness (short days) with light and are reminded by the prophets that "The Light" is coming who is "Emmanuel--God-with-us". The anticipated birth of Jesus is highlighted with joy. As this year of Jubilee draws to a close I am sensing a feeling of urgency, and anticipation, to see the "new springtime of faith" that Pope John Paul II prophetically sees.

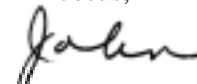
The Fraternity of Priests stands at the doorway of a new millennium and is challenged by the Lord and the "signs of the times" to be ready with anticipation of what the Lord can and will do. How exciting! I believe that just as Mary carried the Savior within her that first Advent, we too are called to carry the Christ into the world. What an exciting birth! The anticipation of a new year challenges a new year with and in Christ.

Let's not let the hectic pace of the season rob us of peace. You are a Christ-carrier, a Light-bearer, and a child of God. Carry Christ into the malls, traffic jams, cash-out lines, and to all you meet. Pray for the person for whom you are wrapping a gift, or to whom you are writing a card. Anticipate a new springtime of faith.

On behalf of the Fraternity of Priests, thank you for your prayers and support over the years. What the Lord can do with one priest alive and on fire with His Spirit is both amazing and exciting. Think of the number of people just one priest touches and effects. Pray for your parish priests. They are God's mighty instruments (If they do not know

about the Fraternity, tell them about us). Know that you are in our prayers and best wishes always. Thank you, thank you, thank you for your ongoing generosity and prayer. May Christ be reborn in a dynamic way in you this Christmas Season!

In Jesus,



Fr. John

P.S. If you know someone who could be a possible donor and would enjoy a Newsletter, please send his or her name to us.



Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem

In October I made my Jubilee pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I lead a group from Tucson. The night before our departure I was packing and had the TV on in the background. On every channel were scenes from Israel.

There was fighting between the Palestinians and the Israelis concerning the Temple Mount, or the Mosque of the Dome of the Rock. I could not help but think as we approach the New Millennium; things have not changed in 2000 years.

—ed.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Brother Priests of the Fraternity,

Ever since visiting your home (Visitation House) in Steubenville on May 9, 1998, I have received your monthly newsletter and have been very much impressed by your good spirit and kindness.

It has always been my desire to support your efforts and to share in your purposes. Here is a simple way: I will offer half of my "free" masses for your intentions (one each month for the next 12 months) as a Jubilee present to you all. You are therefore free to take a stipend for each of the twelve, or else, make your own special intentions each month.

My prayer is that the Holy Spirit may use your movement to strengthen and spread our faith everywhere.

Sincerely,
Fr. Bartley F. Schmitz, SVD
Taiwan, Republic of China



Fr. Bartley F. Schmitz, SVD

...continued from page 1

be prayed over by Protestants from a charismatic ministry. I saw they had what I wanted. At that moment the fullness of the Spirit was released within me. Why didn't it happen when I was confirmed?

There was nothing wrong with my confirmation; I just didn't know how to appropriate the grace of the sacrament. I did not take it off the silver platter, per se, that God was holding out to me. Later, when prayed over, I knew what I wanted and what to expect, it had been explained to me. I had a faith experience, and God delivered. Catholics are usually explained the sacraments in glittering spiritual language. Most of what is taught is not explained in real terms. We need to teach from experience. Tell them in plain English.

The people want priests who

Fr. Schmitz, thank you so much for your generous offer made last year on Nov 18, 1999. The grace of your gift has been felt and greatly appreciated. As we approach the start the new millennium, and the completion of your promise, I thought it would be appropriate to share it with all the brothers and lay supporters. May our generous Lord bless you and your ministry to His people. —ed.

have a personal relationship with Jesus. The priests who spend time alone with God every day and live in the power of the Holy Spirit have it. Be an inspiration for your people, and share your stories and enthusiasm with them. You can share your love relationship with Jesus with your flock during homilies and other meetings. Give them a glimpse of what a love relationship with Jesus Christ is all about. Be open, real, and humble.

The parishes, which are manned by priests of the Fraternity, by definition, have a much deeper relationship with God and are indeed most fortunate.

It is sad, but perhaps the majority of priests in ministry do not know Him as you do and hence, cannot give what they do not have. They are asleep in the Lord's presence. We must not judge them, but pray that they too will encounter Jesus. †

Kevin Turner is a catholic layperson that loves the Catholic Church, and feels called to minister to priests. He is presently living in Tucson Arizona. As an officer in the Air Force he has been stationed in various places throughout the U.S. At each assignment he was active in the local parish and became close to its priests. —ed.

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A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

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.

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

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Dear Father John Allard,
This donation is to help the Fraternity of Priests in continuing their work of ministering to priests.
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