
Ars Charismatic Retreat for Priests

September 25-30

By Father Tom Devery, NY Fraternity of Priests

*[This article is continued
from the November issue.]*

Both Fr Kevin and Sr. Briège have ministered with priests for more than 30 years. In Sr. Briège's testimony she once complained to the Lord over how priests were straying from the truth and indeed misleading the people. She was very disillusioned and Christ gave her a heavenly vision of what the priesthood means and how heaven rejoices when one man is ordained. And the Lord said, "Have I ever given a gift that was not perfect, now I will show you what a priest is!" The Lord led her into a mystical vision of an ordination on earth but the heavenly reality of praising God each time one gives his life to God in the priesthood. If priests ever understood the full depth of this call, they would die not out of fear but out of love." No human being has a right to be a priest; it's a sacrament, a call and a gift. "If you, as a priest, long to know Jesus Christ as a saint, you have to ask and make the effort to be holy." She admitted to herself early on in her life, "I'm just not in love with Jesus; I need to seek and find Jesus and nurture a personal relationship with him. In each Sacrament the gift needs to be unwrapped. There's power in each sacrament.

The Spirit will be released in you, just seek Jesus more and more.

Sr. Briège made a statement that has lingered with me. She said that God is lifting the veil of our sinfulness and our scandalous behaviors, that the darkness may be brought to the light and that as priests we would experience the overflowing power of His reconciling mercy". It's that haunting term" lifting the veil", which stuck me.

Many priests went to confession in chairs facing each other in the field opposite the Crypt Basilica where the retreat was being conducted.

Community of the Beatitudes led us in music ministry. It was anointed too. It was uplifting, joyful and very catchy tunes. The community of the Beatitudes helped us in singing in over eight different languages. Transistor radios enabled the priests from all the countries to understand the message and song in their own language. This community consists of priests, sisters, brothers and married couples throughout many parts of the world including a house which recently opened in Denver. From serving us food, to all the behind the scenes work, their presence was evident and loving. All the Lauds, Vespers, Eucharists,

and Eucharistic Adoration were done so liturgically well with a Solemn High Pontifical reverence..

We were invited to venerate the Heart of St John Vianney. It's in it's own lunette. And in Ars there is a seminary. Many local seminarians and international seminarians study there. One evening they put on a play about the life and the temptations of St. John Vianney. I didn't realize that he too was discouraged and ran away three times and returned to Ars. He eventually served there for 41 years.

How blessed we were with the relics of the heart of St. John Marie Vianney and St. Therese of Lisieux. There was a Teresian Scholar who gave a wonderful testimony of the priests that were part of St. Therese's life and her love for the priesthood.

Two stirring moments remain with me; a Eucharistic Healing Service when Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament was carried through the Hall and came to a standstill to nearly every priest. and the altar call for the reception of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. I would estimate about half the men left their seats and stood before the altar, bishops as well as priests. It was a time of wonderful praise and worship with words of knowledge and a real openness to the power of the Holy Spirit. After the priests were prayed over for the baptism in the Holy

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Editor's Box:

Please send all articles, comments and photos to the editor, Fr. Bill Cosgrove via e-mail at frbill@optonline.com or fax to 845-227-3951.

Newsletter material from all Fraternity members is gratefully accepted!

Another Advent/Christmas Season!! Another challenge to “prepare the way of the Lord!” This is the season to remember the Lord who came to us in Bethlehem, to anticipate the Lord who will come again at the end of our lives and at the end of time, to welcome and celebrate the Lord who desires to come to us daily in prayer and in the Eucharist. With this said, preparing the Lord’s “way” is a year-round challenge and task. How are we doing?

It always saddens me to hear the dread in people’s voices as they talk about this time of year and all that it entails. PEOPLE!! Our God desires to come to us, he chooses us, he loves us to pieces—that’s what it is all about, the rest is just fluff and distraction! Isaiah reminds us that God is “Emmanu-el”, God-with-us. He is emfleshed in time so as to rub elbows with us, a man like us in all things but sin. God could have done this symbolically, but he knew our human limitations, and our need to touch and see and know. I love that opening line in the first Letter of John:

What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, and what we looked upon and touched with our hands concerns the Word of life... what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you... (1 Jn.1. 1,3)

I wrote to you during the Advent/Christmas Season of 2002 about Christmas lights and how people carry on about the glitter, especially when displayed too early (often just after Thanksgiving). I remember commenting on how I loved that stuff. At the coldest, darkest time of the year when daylight is the shortest, we are reminded that Jesus is the Light of the world, who desires to come to us. He who came to dispel our cold and darkness, he who is our light, is with us. All those Christmas lights bring me a sense of hope and joy. Each

light reminds me that I too am called to be light. It might seem insignificant, but when you add my light to the rest of the Church, there is a blaze of hope and joy in our darkening world. In traffic, in line at the cash register, at the mall, etc., I am a light reflecting the light of Christ. Isn’t our faith magnificent?

We of the Fraternity of Priests wish you and yours the brightest and most joyful and peaceful Advent Season, and a truly merry and holy Christmas. As once again we prepare for and celebrate the birth of the Messiah, may he truly be born in you. May his choicest blessings and grace be yours. Again, thank you for your generous intercessions and donations. I will be offering a mass this season for all your intentions. Please remember to pray for your parish priest—be light to him. Thanks again and have a merry and holy Christmas Season.

In Jesus,



Fr. John



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: **\$6,300.00**

Actual Donations: **\$2,463.00**

Budget Surplus (shortage) **(\$3,837.00)**

Current as of October 31, 2005.

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Spirit, they turned around to us and prayed for us that we might have a fresh new outpouring of the gifts and fruits of the Spirit. I experienced a powerful rush of infilling love and intensity in the Lord.

In these para-liturgies I felt the profound sense of God's merciful love touching our hearts concretely. I came away thoroughly refreshed and renewed. It was delightful greeting men from all over the world while waiting for meals in the massive tent that held about 1000. It was so unusual to be a minority, out of more than 850, we Americans numbered only 36. Yet more and more we were one. The spirit of Fraternity was no better experienced than during the Thursday we had a Solemn Pontifical Celebration of the Mass with Cardinal Turckson from Ghana. His Homily was brilliant on calling us to die with Christ and proclaim his death until He comes, but concretely dying to self when we submit to His will. That was a powerful word. Since it was the Feast of the Archangels, we had in the offertory procession and at the Sanctus all the way through the Consecration, no less than five seminarians each swinging an censor. It was awesome and reverent and seemed so appropriate. We processed through Ars with the Blessed Sacrament and we did an outdoor Benediction. It had rained all afternoon and in the evening twilight the clouds were letting the sunshine "God rays". Our festive meal included Beaujolais wine at table, roses, meals served at our table and then for entertainment an impromptu

Mexican Mariachis priests and their lively songs. We were rocking with the priests from Africa on keyboard and drums. It was a great night. It went from festive mood to dancing in the aisles. We certainly made a joyful noise to the Lord

The next day there was a two-hour trip to Paray-le-Monial and Visitation Convent where St. Margaret Mary Alacoque received the visions of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and promoted the worship of the Sacred Heart throughout the world. The day was designed to be a Day of Reparation for Priests. It indeed was. That evening

testimonies were shared from priests attending the conference relative to its impact in their lives.

For me this was the first time I had ever offered the Eucharistic Prayer in Latin. All the singing, wonderful as it was, seemed to be a bit of a struggle with reading and concentrating on language pronunciations; but when we chanted the Lord's Prayer and the Acclamations we were one. It was strong, vibrant and thrilling! It's a lifetime experience of unity, fraternity, healing and gratitude to God for the unspeakable gift of the Priesthood. DEO GRATIAS!

PADUA PLACE/ MUSSIO HOUSE: A SABBATICAL PLACE FOR PRIESTS

There is an influx of priests taking classes at Franciscan University every semester for sabbatical. Limited local housing is available. Padua Place/Mussio House can be an option for these priests. Priests need to have a place to rest, pray, study and enjoy fraternal companionship in a hospitable and affirming environment.

The homes are very comfortable. Rent (\$550/mo. & \$50/mo. extra for garage) includes all furnishings, maintenance and services, general housekeeping, house laundry (linens provided) personal laundry, basic food/grocery (enough for a light breakfast, snack or light supper). Various support services, pastoral ministry updates and other activities as articulated by guests are available.

Contact:

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Email: rectory@holyfamilyweb.org

May the Lord richly bless each of us during this holy season of Advent and the coming of the Christ Child.

Rejoice! For unto us a Savior has been born!

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

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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 \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____

THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

January 2006						
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