

Ars Charismatic Retreat for Priests

September 25-30

By Father Tom Devery, NY Fraternity of Priests

Tucked away in a beautiful valley 20 miles north of Lyon, France lies the still quiet village of Ars, France. It was there that a sacred gathering took place to mark the centenary of the beatification of St. John Marie Vianney, patron saint of parish priests.

Fr Bill Cosgrove, Fr Steve Norton and I (Fr. Tom Devery), of the Archdiocese of New York, arrived in Ars on a bright sunny Sunday along with 858 priests from 71 countries. After three glorious days of taking in the sites of Paris we landed in Lyon to begin our 45-minute bus ride into Ars. Members of the Community of the Beatitudes welcomed us and assisted in our getting settled. It was a warm bright sunny day and water was a welcome treat. Many men had traveled great distances so to wait till nighttime to stretch out was a major sacrifice. We found Fr. Bob Franco (Cleveland Fraternity) enjoying a wonderful meal and we joined him. Later we rambled through the town.

In the tiny town of Ars, which became famous worldwide through St. John Marie Vianney, we saw the saint lying incorruptible in his glass coffin. The Church was tiny, holding no more than 50 people and the Basilica behind it and adjacent to it held another 200. I

reached out and prayed over the old-fashioned confessional and meandered from the church into the parish rectory where I saw the place where John Marie Vianney lived, prayed, and labored.

For a man who had a hard time in the seminary, he had a fondness for books. What stirred me was the staggering number of confessions he heard during the last year of his life, over 90,000. Imagine having over 300 each day!!! He was austere in his personal life. With food, prayer and penance he was lavish and through these gave witness to God's mercy. Actually there were five confessionals in the tiny church. One near the altar for religious and priests, one for men, one for women, one for invalids, and finally one which had The Cure sit in the church and the penitent kneel outside for the Church, for those too fearful to enter St. Philomena's Church. Seeing the small humble quarters he lived in, the orphanage for girls called "Providence House", and the austerity of his rectory and kitchen; one can see just how ascetic he was.

Just outside the town there was a statue of the Cure greeting a young boy. Legend has it the Cure asked him for the direction to Ars, "You show me how to get

to Ars and I will show you how to get to heaven".

Both Fr. Kevin Scallan, CM. and Sr. Briege McKenna, OSC in their conferences spoke of many issues facing the clergy today: celibacy, homosexuality, chastity, prayer more than works, and seeking an openness to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Fr Kevin Scallan while trying to get us to understand just how obtuse priests can be and how resistant we are to renewal and the workings of the Holy Spirit, gave a great little story about giving a retreat to priests in Africa. He could tell early on that that this particular group of priests was not interested in his topic, which was Renewal in the Holy Spirit. Their body language was arms folded across their chests. Fr. Kevin was humorous in his storytelling. These were accomplished missionaries who could build you anything from an outhouse to a Cathedral, but over the years they were more into development work and fund raising than getting in touch with their spiritual lives. At one point a Father Joe from Italy said to Father Kevin. "Well, when I was baptized, did I not receive the Holy Spirit?" "Yes, Father" "And when I was confirmed by the bishop, did I not receive the Holy Spirit?" "Yes, Father" "And when I was ordained a priest, did I not again receive the Holy Spirit?" "Yes Father". "Then what more are you going to add that I don't already

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Dear Friends of the Priesthood

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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!

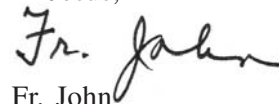
I am sitting in my hotel room in Canterbury, England, having just celebrated Mass in the Catholic Church of St. Thomas of Canterbury, just about a stone's throw from the magnificent cathedral. On this pilgrimage through England we've visited the tombs of Venerable Bede and St. Cuthbert, and we are soon off to London to visit the Tower and Tyburn Abbey. In reviewing centuries of faith and suffering, glory and martyrdom, I am awed by the ongoing march of faith through the millenia in which we are all paraders in our time. I am also saddened by the broken and shattered Body of Christ which is splintered and divided in so many ways. As I walked through Caterbury Cathedral I sensed such an urge, such a "burden" to pray for Church unity. When I see our divisions, I see Original Sin in action.

How Jesus yearned for unity! At the Last Supper he prayed for us, "for those who believe in me through their (the apostles')word, that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me"(Jn.12.20-21).One of the greatest testimonies we can give to the reality of Jesus Christ in our world is our unity. How can we begin to undo and heal the harm of the divisions that centuries have handed down to us? We must strive to be "instruments of peace", to quote St. Francis. It all begins right here with me. Where am I not "one" with a brother or a sister of my own faith, perhaps in my own parish? Who is the person I avoid, refuse to talk to, or, worse still, talk about the most? In the parish here in Woonsocket we ask our kids "What would Jesus do?"My actions of bridge building, peace making, and healing in relationships might never be known or famous, probably miniscule and not too impressive, but they are the first steps

towards unity and peace in the Body of Christ. Imagine what would happen if every single Christian strove to move in this direction—the results would be revolutionary. Like a pebble thrown into a lake making an almost inaudible splash, the rings that radiate out from the center eventually reach the shore. We are being called to be those pebbles—watch to see how God can work through us!!

Dear intercessors and donors, pray for unity among priests—our unity with our bishops, our unity with each other. Do not forget to pray for your parish priest (send in his name that we might join you in prayer). Again, thank you for your support and prayers. On this pilgrimage I will remember you all at Mass.

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 September 30, 2005.

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have?” Fr Kevin admitted that he wanted to get up and strangle him.

So Fr Joe decided that he was going to leave the retreat. Fr Kevin said, “Alright, but before you go, go to the chapel and tell Jesus what you just told me.” Fr Joe indeed went to the chapel and what took place next was mystical. Fr Joe saw a vision of someone going through his parish house and tossing out things. He was shocked to find that it was Jesus. He kept throwing things out the window, and next he saw a woman, who turned out to be Mary in this vision and she said, “Do whatever He tells you.” Jesus made it clear that Fr Joe had cluttered his life with things that kept him from God and He wasn’t about to tolerate his materialism. Fr Joe admitted that he was reduced to tears and asked for mercy and the Holy Spirit. Fr Joe returned to the group, He was touched and on fire. He shared just what happened to him. It was also humbling to Fr. Kevin to know that Christ acted in a sovereign way and the retreat wasn’t up to Fr Kevin but Christ. I could relate to that story and prayed for detachment.

We had an ample examen on our lives based on Luke 4. The Lord made the blind see, but there’s something more tragic than physical blindness, it’s spiritual blindness. The Lord made the deaf hear, and yet what’s worse than the loneliness of deafness is the spiritual deafness of our lives. In this fashion we looked at our lives and moreover our silences, our moments when we are not prophetic, and caring and pastoral. We repented for the ways in which

television and internet pornography has lured us into sad addiction. We were invited to pray for the priests who were dismissed because of sexual or financial scandals.

[Further reflection on this powerful, international retreat for priests will come in next month’s newsletter.]

Pentecost in Uganda

There are 9 vibrant Fraternity of Priest Groups in Uganda Africa! Between these groups there are approximately 60 men in Fraternity of Priests in that country. Far from an overnight sensation, this explosion of Fraternity has been building up over a few years.

In the early 90’s Life in the Spirit Seminars had been taking place in many parts of Uganda, especially in the Kampala area. At the heart of this presbyterial renewal is the Emmaus Center at Katikamu. Just outside of Kampala, it is staffed and operated by a lay community whose apostolate is to pray and facilitate programs and educational experiences for spiritual renewal.

By the year 2000, after conducting numerous Life In The Spirit Seminars for both laity and priests, a number of priests began informally meeting over the concern that baptism in the Spirit had “cooled.” Their major concern was; “How could this new life in the Spirit maintain its fire?”

In 2001, 32 priests met at Emmaus Center to discuss how to keeping the fire of the Holy Spirit alive in the priesthood. There, with a certain Fr. Severs, a pioneer of the Charismatic Renewal in Uganda, and the auxiliary Bishop of Kampala, Christopher Kakooza, the

idea to form and nurture “fraternity” among the priests of Eastern Africa was formally articulated.

The Episcopal conference of Uganda received copies of their deliberations and resolved to invite priests to gather for more discussion. In 2002, the Emmaus Center hosted 24 priests who met to plan a major gathering at the Gaba National Seminary in Kamala for the year 2003. This event had the support of the Uganda Episcopal conference and National Charismatic Renewal of Uganda.

Finally, June 29 through July 6 a retreat took place with the support and presence of Bishop Sam Jacobs and Fr. Tim Graff representing Renewal Ministries of the United States. It was at this retreat that Fr. Tim Graff took the opportunity to discuss Fraternity of Priests, promising to send someone to facilitate a “Fraternity of Priest Retreat” the following year.

In early July of 2004, I arrived at the Emmaus Center for their first Fraternity of Priests Retreat. During that retreat 49 priests attended to form 9 Fraternities representing 8 Diocese. A National Coordinator Team was established to include Fr. David Byaruhangh of Nairobi-Kabale Diocese, Fr. Silverio Twinomugisha, of Gaba-Kabale Diocese, Fr. Sanctue Lino Wanok, Gaba-Nebbi Diocese, and Fr. Alex Ojacor, Gaba-Soroti Diocese. These four are all on faculty at the National seminary having great credibility with their bishops and respect from the priests of Uganda.

Contributed by Fr. Moe LaRochelle

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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December 2005						
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				Rev. 1 Philip Gonsalves <i>Vasai, India</i>	Rev. 2 Louis Britto <i>Vasai, India</i>	Rev. 3 Pope Benedict XVI
Rev. 4 Alex Gonsalves <i>Vasai, India</i>	Rev. 5 Andrew Rodrigues <i>Vasai, India</i>	Rev. 6 Valentine Pawkal <i>Vasai, India</i>	Rev. 7 Joe D'Mello <i>Vasai, India</i>	Rev. 8 Consatance Mizquitta <i>Vasai, India</i>	Rev. 9 Ambrose Fernandes <i>Vasai, India</i>	Rev. 10 Martin Ninnang <i>Wa, West Africa</i>
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Rev. 25 Cyracus Tang <i>Wa, West Africa</i>	Rev. 26 John Bosco Eledi <i>Wa, West Africa</i>	Rev. 27 Mathew Tuurosong <i>Wa, West Africa</i>	Rev. 28 John Kpan <i>Wa, West Africa</i>	Rev. 29 Fidelis Vielu <i>Wa, West Africa</i>	Rev. 30 Raphael Kyiebiineh <i>Wa, West Africa</i>	Rev. 31 Raphael Kyiebiineh <i>Wa, West Africa</i>

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