

I Myself Shall Shepherd Them: Repentance, Reparation, Restoration, and Refreshment.

A report on the Annual Fraternity of Priests Meeting

By Father Bill Cosgrove

Perched on a rolling hillside lies an 82 acre retreat site called the Pallotine Retreat Center in the Archdiocese of St. Louis where 25 priests from 18 dioceses around the country and the world gathered from August 1-6 for the annual Fraternity of Priests meeting.

The theme of the Fraternity meeting was "I Myself Shall Shepherd Them: Repentance, Reparation, Restoration, and Refreshment." This theme was discerned at the annual Fraternity of Priests Board of Directors meeting held in Steubenville, OH during the month of April.

Father Tim Graff gave the gathered priests the first conference: Restoration. He reminded us that the restoration of God was both personal and corporate. He brought forth six truths regarding restoration. First, I need to be restored; second, God has the power to restore me; third, I need to give God permission; fourth, I want what God wants for me; fifth, I seek the Lord's restoration in quiet time and finally the question that was posed: do I

live a restored life that shows the power of God's restoration.

On Monday evening Fr. Ray Ratzemberger spoke about enduring



Members who attended the Annual Meeting held in St. Louis, Missouri

the crisis of faith that comes from doubt and then led us in a time of Eucharistic adoration for healing.

On Tuesday, we were blessed to have the auxiliary bishop of St. Louis, Bishop Robert Hermann as the main celebrant of our Eucharistic liturgy. He encouraged us to be catalysts for renewal in the priesthood in each of our diocese. Fr. John Allard spoke to us about the significance of understanding the concept of reparation and the importance of doing reparation for the sins of priests. On Tuesday evening Father Bob DeGrandis, a member of the Washington DC Fraternity,

spoke to us about the various types and levels of healing, as well as the importance of each priest opening himself to the priestly call of preaching the gospel and healing the sick. He shared with us many words of knowledge of priests being healed that evening and all priests experienced "resting in the Spirit."

On the feast of St. John Vianney (August 4th), patron saint of parish priests, 25 priests began a 12-hour tour of downtown St. Louis. Our tour included the Gateway arch, the Anheiser-Busch brewery, Botanical Gardens, the old Cathedral and the Basilica of St. Louis, the king (visited by the Holy Father in 1999), historic Union Station, and

Forest Park. We feted ourselves with a fine Italian meal at Favazzo's restaurant on "the Hill."

Fr. Dwight Merrick from the Trinidad Fraternity issued the priests a strong call to renew our priesthood by re-rooting our priesthood in "being better, rather than doing better." He reminded us that priests were never called to mediocrity. We were called to stand close to God in holiness. He assured us that if there is anything worth dying for it is becoming holy.

Father Bill Cosgrove from the NY Fraternity gave the concluding talk reminding us that God

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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!

The International Meeting of the Fraternity of Priests met the first week of August in St. Louis, Missouri. Over 25 priests from around the world gathered to enjoy the hospitality of the St. Louis Fraternity and to hear the word of the Lord as He spoke to us.

There were many memories that we left with. The Lord worked in many ways as we enjoyed hearing teachings from the leadership of the Fraternity, experienced the Lord's healing power in prayer services and felt the Lord's presence in the beautiful surroundings of the Pallotine Renewal Center where we met.

What was foremost in my mind, as I write these words, is the inspiration from the priests. Whether it was hearing from the priests over meals or their preaching during liturgies they serve as a wonderful example of priestly zeal and a desire for evangelization.

Several priests shared about how their involvement in the Charismatic Renewal has changed their life and their ministry. There is a deeper desire to spend more time with the Lord and a greater emphasis on the Eucharist. They have started to see how praying for healing has revolutionized their ministry and their parishes. Their experiences serve as a wonderful example of what priesthood is meant to be.

We had priests present from around the world and many Dioceses here in the United States. This wonderful gathering could not have happened without your generosity. Many of these priests would not know each other and not have experienced the fruits of the Baptism in the Spirit were it not for the Fraternity of Priests.

We prayed throughout the week for all our benefactors - those who support us with their prayers and financial generosity - for all of you. Many thanks for all that you do for priests throughout the world. We are making plans to move into new areas

around the world and this can only happen through your generosity.

Thank you again for helping us in the Lord's renewal of the priesthood.

In Christ,



Fr. Timothy Graff



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promised the church "a season of refreshment" (Acts 3:19). This season will come from God only after a time of repentance and reparation by the Church that will pave the way for a divine breakthrough. This divine activity will come as a time of renewal, refreshment and universal restoration. (Acts 3:19).

With refreshing cool weather in the month of August we all departed our "Mount Tabor" feeling refreshed and recommitted to the ideals and disciplines of the Fraternity of Priests. Next year we will meet again from July 31- August 5 in the diocese of Cleveland, Ohio.

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: **\$5,463.00**

Budget Surplus (shortage) **(\$2,004.00)**

Current as of July 31, 2004.

Remember Those Early Days, Part II

By Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa
Preacher to the Papal Household

Editors Note - This month we have run the second part of this article. The first part ran in the August, 2004 issue.

2. The Charismatic Renewal is for the “essentials” of the Christian life.

The second danger is devotionism. Here too, we need to remember how it all began. The Charismatic Renewal was born with a powerful drive to return to the essentials of the Christian life: the Holy Spirit, the Lordship of Christ, the Word of God, the Sacraments, the charisms, prayer, evangelisation. This is the secret of its explosive power. This characteristic of the Renewal is clearly shown by the fact that it has no recognised founders, nor any particular “spirituality”, but that it simply accentuates what should be common and “normal” for every baptised person.

This has been my personal experience and, I am sure, it has been the same for many of you. The Bible becomes a living word, breathed by God and breathing God, as St. Ambrose used to say. I remember a definition of the Charismatic Renewal given by someone in those early days, that has always struck me as the most true: “Giving back the power to God!”. What convinced us was that we found ourselves clearly in the presence of God’s holy action. God present and active in history! That was the miracle that always filled the biblical prophets with awe and caused them to leap for joy: “Shout for joy, you heavens, for Yahweh has been at work! Shout aloud, you earth below!” (Isaiah 44, 23).

“Back to basics”, as they say. Let us once again offer to the Church this taste for what is essential. The basic work of the sphere and not imposed on all and sundry as a

measure of the greater or lesser extent of their “catholicity”.

This is not a question of taking position against any of these things. The point is whether the Charismatic Renewal ought to be characterised by this kind of thing, or by something else. We already have all that we need to become holy and to spread the Gospel. Even in the matter of devotion to Mary, if we were to take seriously and deepen our appreciation of what Scripture and the liturgical and dogmatic tradition of the Church have to offer (for example, the title of “Mother of God”), we would be able to offer her all the honour we desire, without feeling any need to scurry about after the latest message or apparition. In this way, we would render our devotion to Mary more acceptable to other Christians, and we would be hastening the day when, instead of being an object of division, she would become a positive factor in the unity of Christians. (Would not harmony among her children be the thing a mother desires most?)

Our task as spiritual guides is to help our brothers and sisters to be open to the great mysteries of the faith and never to shut themselves up in any short-lived devotionism, which can never serve to re-evangelise the world. To concentrate on essentials does not mean depriving the faithful of all space for free expression, or all personal preference, and reducing everything to a bland sameness. There is certainly room to cultivate one’s personal devotion as well, but this needs to be kept within the ambit of what is personal. We must not confuse what is demanded of everyone with things that are to be left to individual choice.

3. Courage and... let’s get down to work!

I would like to end on an encouraging note. There is a perception in some places that the

Charismatic Renewal is at a standstill, or shrinking, declining in enthusiasm and numbers. It is true, and it is normal in movements of this kind. They are not made to become institutions, but as the late Cardinal Suenens once said, to transmit an impulse, “a current of grace”, and then if necessary to disappear, like an electric charge that is dispersed in a mass of matter. However, one thing remains the same today as in the early days of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, and that is the power of the Holy Spirit. “The arm of the Lord is not shortened!” We see it achieve today, in those who come into contact with it for the first time, exactly the same effects as in the early days. Every time we allow him to act, every time we provide suitable occasions for his coming, where people gather as in the Cenacle with expectant faith, he does come down. I have had opportunity to see it again very recently. Every time it is a whole new world that opens up before the person who receives him.

Visible signs of the coming of the Spirit are generally the rebirth of courage, of hope and of joy. Even in the opinion of the public at large, the Charismatic Renewal is seen as a movement of joyful people, who clap or raise their hands, who seem transformed, with smiling, almost ecstatic faces. This is not a wrong perception. Joy is in fact one of the signs or fruits of the Spirit. I hope we will all cultivate the signs: courage, hope, joy; and avoid the dangers I have tried to bring to your attention (if my tone has been somewhat high-handed, please forgive me).

May the Holy Spirit help us to carry with us the flame of Pentecost, undimmed, into the new millennium, so that it may continue to transform the lives of many men and women of our time, and bring them all to Christ.

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



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