

January 2015						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				Rev. Joseph Short Sioux Falls 1	Rev. Charles Duman Sioux Falls 2	Pope Francis 3
Rev. Randy Phillips Sioux Falls 4	Rev. Gregory Frankman Sioux Falls 5	Rev. Jerome Ranek Sioux Falls 6	Rev. Roger Geditz Sioux Falls 7	Rev. Rodney Farke Sioux Falls 8	Rev. John Rasmussen Sioux Falls 9	Rev. Edward Pierce Sioux Falls 10
Rev. Richard Baumberger Sioux Falls 11	Rev. Robert Hamel St. Cloud 12	Rev. Todd Schneider St. Cloud 13	Rev. Gerald Mischke St. Cloud 14	Rev. Daniel Walz St. Cloud 15	Rev. James Statz St. Cloud 16	Rev. Gregory Paffel St. Cloud 17
Rev. Peter Kirchner St. Cloud 18	Rev. Mark Stang St. Cloud 19	Rev. Alvin Quade St. Cloud 20	Rev. Leroy Schik St. Cloud 21	Rev. Aaron Nord St. Louis 22	Rev. Martin Mannion St. Louis 23	Rev. David Novak St. Louis 24
Rev. Edmund Griesedieck St. Louis 25	Rev. Albert Danter St. Louis 26	Rev. Charles Tichacek St. Louis 27	Rev. James Dyer St. Louis 28	Rev. Anthony Dattilo St. Louis 29	Rev. Gerald Knueven Toledo 30	Rev. Jerome Nowakowski Toledo 31

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 John Kiley, This donation is to help the Fraternity of Priests in continuing their work of ministering to priests. _____ \$ \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____



"To gather priests to Christ and to one another to proclaim..."

THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

The Importance of Faith: Discerning Good from Evil

Fr. Robert J. Carr, Boston Fraternity

If you have ever felt discouraged by your personal struggles as a priest, religious or a lay person and even the failures of the Church, imagine a world without your presence in the Church and indeed the Church at all. Imagine what John Lennon once said that there is no Heaven, no Hell and above us only sky. Where would we find ourselves as a race? You do understand that like Lennon this is a dream of many of those who reject a belief in any form of deity. Some explain their position as a result of the actions of the Al Qaeda terrorists who in the name of their god destroyed the World Trade Center in New York, a part of the Pentagon in Washington, DC, killed thousands and were only thwarted by the heroic actions of some passengers over Pennsylvania. We, however, are not them, as much as people want to put all believers in that basket.

We stand up for a truth that can only be found in Christ and even though our best efforts are just that and often fail and at times we may feel fruitless, we need to ask ourselves: "What would the world look like if we indeed were not here?" What if we closed the operations of the Church and we all went home to live the rest of our, no longer ontological lives, in peace.

The answer may be found along with many other answers on the

internet. Now I am not referring to writing in your favorite search engine the question: "What if the Church stopped existing? what would our world look like?" I don't think that would yield any sufficient answer besides '42'.

What I do mean is looking at the internet as a storage place of history, we can see these exact issues brought up in a world where atheism was on the rise and many atheists spoke their mind freely throughout the Twentieth Century, case in point: John Lennon's Imagine. But there are more serious expressions you may find as well ranging from Margaret Sanger calling on the developed world to stop having babies to a quote bantered around from famous atheist Bertrand Russell.

Following World War II, a British reporter asked Russell if he considered what happened at Dachau to be evil. This was the first of the NAZI concentration camps and one that my father help liberate. Russell responded " 'Dachau is wrong' is not a fact. Gravity IS a fact. But 'Dachau is wrong' is not a fact. I think it's wrong, but I can't prove it."

When you study the world of the atheist, you consistently see this idea over and over again. We believe in what we can prove. The problem is that this puts us into a sort of cave, where we assume that all that exists

is that which we can ultimately prove exists in our present state. However, that assumes that what exists is only that which can be perceivable by us. What if what exists includes those things which cannot be perceivable by us? This is where faith begins. It does not begin in believing in fantasy but believing in what is beyond our ability to biologically perceive, that which may not be made of atoms and molecules.

This brings us back to Russell's quote. Russell will explain that all that exists is what we can prove. We can prove gravity, we cannot prove, according to Russell, whether Dachau was wrong. The reason why Russell can say this, with a straight and serious face, is that we can prove that gravity exists, but once we get to the morality of Dachau, we get into the existence of good, evil, right and wrong, which cannot be proven in the same way that gravity's existence can. If we look at this in another way, we can prove that Dachau exists for we have irrefutable evidence, but if we want to ask whether it was an evil thing and we have not defined evil, then we cannot prove it is an evil thing. If we want to determine whether or not it is an evil thing, we must first define evil. However, if we live in a cave where we see nothing beyond it and believe that nothing exists beyond it and the source of evil is beyond the cave, how

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Dear Fraternity Brothers and Friends of the Priesthood

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Please send articles, comments, and photos to the FOP Newsletter editor, Fr. Bob Carr, via e-mail to editor@fraternityofpriests.org

Newsletter material from all Fraternity members is gratefully accepted. Any submissions will help make each issue better!

Is Jesus Christ a human person? As often as I have posed this question to various groups participating in Adult Faith Formation, the answer usually comes back: "Why of course he is." This is a major misunderstanding among many Christians, even among those who are very serious about following Christ. The revealed truth is that Jesus is not a human person, but a divine person. He is the eternal Word of God who out of love for us took upon himself our human nature in all things but sin. He is one person, a divine person, with two natures – a divine nature and a human nature.

We are at present journeying through the season of Advent in preparation for the awesome Feast and Season of Christmas. It is Christmas that can help us to appreciate the two natures of Christ. The traditional Lucan Christmas gospel shows us the humanity of the Lord. He comes to us as a newborn infant placed in a manger. He comes to us in poverty. He is visited by the shepherds who are among the outcasts of that day. It was Saint Francis of Assisi who brought this gospel passage to life in the Christmas Crèche which we display in our churches and hopefully in our homes. Francis desired to bring home to God's people the tenderness and love of God as seen in the humanity of the Christ child.

One of the Christmas gospels that we seldom hear is the beginning of the gospel of Saint John, often termed the Prologue. It is assigned as the gospel for the Christmas daytime Mass, but can be proclaimed at any Mass of Christmas. When read at Christmas, Saint John takes us from the manger at Bethlehem and focuses us on Christ the eternal Word of God existing with the Father from all eternity. The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us. This gets us to the heart of the mystery that is Christmas. When we pray the Nicene Creed at Christmas Mass, we proclaim that the Child of Bethlehem is "God from God, Light from Light, True God from True God." Both the Prologue of

John's Gospel and the Nicene creed are very clear that Christ is an eternal divine person. All of this is summed up very beautifully in the Divine Praises when we pray: Blessed be Jesus Christ, True God and True Man.

As we celebrate Christmas this year may I recommend along with reflection on the Lucan Christmas gospel, a prayerful meditation on the Prologue of St. John and also the Nicene Creed. May you and your loved ones experience a faith filled and peaceful Season of Christmas.

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: \$ **4,750.00**

Actual Donations: \$ **1,975.00**

Budget Surplus (shortage): **(\$2,275.00)**

Current as of October 31, 2014.

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can we define evil or for that matter its source? This is the opposite side of the argument of Russell and other atheists.

For many, including many atheists, Dachau was in fact evil, but many atheists may not agree on why. For many of us Christians, however, we understand evil and its source, therefore we can define evil and name it when we see it. Indeed, many Christians define Dachau in terms of the Christian understanding of the source of evil: "It was demonic."

We can also name our own moral failures when we do them and recognize this as Catholics; this is what the sacraments are all about especially the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We have a sense of evil, for our faith teaches not only the difference between good and evil, but also teaches that there is a source of good and in reference to that source the reality of evil. We can understand that anything that seeks to destroy humanity is evil and anything that seeks to lead us to the source of our being is good. If we have no definition of good or evil, we cannot share that understanding: therefore, Russell's statement reflects a lack of understanding of good and evil brought on by his lack of appreciation for that which is outside his proverbial cave, which he cannot appreciate for he only believes in the cave.

This is the problem with atheism, because the inability to recognize any form of reality beyond the material, makes us unable to define good from evil to its deepest levels. It is difficult enough for us as Christians because we can see in our history a distorted view of good and evil when we root

our actions in the opposite world to Russell's which is not faith, but faith without reason. Russell rooted his opinions in reason without faith. If we can as Christians can appreciate the difficulty of discerning good from evil, then how much more is that difficulty for those who do not believe in a source of evil beyond simple human decision.

The real issue that Russell is saying is not that Dachau is not wrong, but for him as an atheist, he has a hard time defining in concrete terms what is in fact wrong. Russell, I am sure would argue that the NAZIs did not understand what they were doing was wrong, as much as the rest of the world did. This leads us to ask if there is an objective standard in the atheist world of what is right and what is wrong. Russell implies no.

Indeed, his definition of right is: *The objectively right action, in any circumstances, is that action which, of all that are possible, gives us, when account is taken of all available data, the greatest expectation of probable good effects, or the least expectation of probable bad effects.* (Russell, Bertrand; The Element of Ethics; 1910 §24)

When we look at the Catholic definition of right, it is that which is most loving to God and neighbor. As you can see, the former must look at the probable effects and the latter looks at what is most loving to God and neighbor. Is it a loving act to flip someone the bird when they cut you off in traffic? No! It may have been by Russell's standards the right way to communicate to the other person your anger. However, in the Christian sense, it is wrong because it is not a loving act, even if the other driver was acting in an unloving manner.

Was the torture and murder of innocent men and women a loving act to God and neighbor? I think the answer is obviously no. Therefore, it was at the least wrong, and at its worst an abomination, but still wrong. We can understand this because our definition of right and wrong, good and evil comes from our understanding of the source of all being which is also love, which like the privation of that being and that love comes from outside of Russell's cave.

If in our most discouraging moments we turn to God and say, why am I here? I have accomplished no great things and I am certainly no heroic saint. He may want you to remember, if you did so much as take seriously the need to attend mass on Sunday, you may have sowed a seed of truth to a world that cannot discern its right from its wrong.

“There is so much noise in the world! May we learn to be silent in our hearts and before God.”

—Pope Francis
via Twitter @pontifex
(November 18, 2014)

Please send us your prayer intentions:
