



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

THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

August 2012						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			Rev. 1 Ron Matthew Alexandria, LA	Rev. 2 Norman Gremillion Alexandria, LA	Rev. 3 John Kiley, Boston, MA	4 Pope Benedict XVI
Rev. 5 Paul McManus Boston, MA	Rev. 6 Gerry Fraser Boston, MA	Rev. 7 Volney DeRosia Boston, MA	Rev. 8 Richard Kelley Boston, MA	Rev. 9 Maurice Larochelle Boston, MA	Rev. 10 Donald Clinton Boston, MA	Rev. 11 Patrick Gilbert Boston, MA
Rev. 12 Paul Gilbert Boston, MA	Rev. 13 Gerard Leclerc Burlington, VT	Rev. 4 James Lawrence Burlington, VT	Rev. 15 Chris Fuse Cardiff, UK	Rev. 16 Matthew Jones Cardiff, UK	Rev. 17 John Bland Cardiff, UK	Rev. 18 Donal Gillespie Cardiff, UK
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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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This donation is to help the Fraternity of Priests in continuing their work of ministering to priests.

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Dear Father Bob Franco,

The prophet Amos lived in the eighth century B.C., a time of relative prosperity for the Kingdom of Israel. However, he prophesied about an imminent famine.

Yes, days are coming, says the Lord, God, when I will send famine upon the land; not a famine of bread, or thirst for water, but for hearing the word of the Lord.

They shall wander from sea to sea and rove from the north to the east in search of the word of the Lord, but they shall not find it. (Amos 8:11)

In the days of the prophet Amos, the people had more than enough to eat. However, the deepest cravings of the human heart would not be met. Knowing that people do not live on bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God (Deuteronomy 8:3, Matthew 4:4), Amos understood that this spiritually hungry people would not be fed. Their embrace of material prosperity was so tight they thought they had it all. Yet, they were spiritually bankrupt.

There is a similar situation in our world today. Many people, especially in the West, experience the relative comfort of prosperity. This does not mean that they are free from care. Their focus on maintaining or growing that level of comfort can keep them anxious. The occasional pangs of spiritual hunger are quickly

Be Prophetic

By Fr. Bob Franco

numbered by the cares of the world. Like the seed in thorny ground, the word of God is choked by the "anxieties and riches and pleasures of life." (Luke 8:14)

How is this situation remedied? How do we create a hunger for the word of God among a people who are seemingly satisfied with life apart from God? It is only by living out the prophetic dimension of our vocations that we can break through the spiritual dullness that plagues many people.

Called to be a Prophet

"You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High." (Luke 1:76) Each day Roman Catholic priests echo these words of Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, when he prays the Cantic in Morning Prayer. These words are to remind them, not only of the vocation of John the Baptist, but of their own vocation—that of prophet. Surely each baptized person shares in the power of the Holy Spirit by which Jesus was conceived and then anointed at his baptism. As the ordained minister anoints the newly baptized with chrism, he proclaims, "As Christ was anointed priest, prophet and king, so may you live always as members of his body, sharing everlasting life."

However, when a man is ordained to the priesthood he is configured to Jesus Christ in a specific way so as to make Christ present in word, in sacrament and in shepherd-like care.

His vocation is to make the prophetic, priestly and kingly aspects of Christ present to the Church. This is his life.

First: Live the Message

In a world that has lost its hunger for God's word our lives need to reflect what it means to be nourished by God's word. St. Paul reminds us, "Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect." Nourished by God's word our manner of thinking, speaking and acting ought to stand in stark contrast to the secular person. If our manner of life looks just like everyone else's, why should they change? If we, who are called "the salt of the earth", lose our zest, why would people listen to us?

Our personal lives are to be characterized by purity and generosity. Our relationships are to be free from grudges, suspicion and jealous. They are to be characterized by charity. Our relationship with God is to be reverent, familial and filled with faith. We need to learn, by constant practice, how to speak the truth with love.

This holiness was emphasized in the documents of Vatican II. Chapter V of the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church highlights the universal call to holiness. The decree Presbyterorum Ordinis, which describes the role and responsibilities of the priest, highlights this call to perfection in an exhortation

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Dear Friends of the Priesthood

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Please send articles, comments, and photos to the FOP Newsletter editor, Fr. Michael Roy via e-mail at editor@fraternityofpriests.org or fax to 508-943-2213.

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

The term "Carpe diem!" is Latin for "Seize the day!" It highlights an important Christian attitude. Yes, we are destined for eternity. However, for a small portion of our existence we live in time and space. This small portion is very important. How we use this short time we have on earth dictates what our eternity will be like. Like the old beer drinking polka, "In heaven, there is no beer..." We can say, "In heaven there is no time. That's why we make the most of it now!"

We may rue the time in which we live. We may wish our circumstances were different. However, fretting about things we have little to power to change only saps our energy for living for Christ in the present moment.

In the book of Esther, there is a little vignette about embracing the time in which one lives. Esther, a Jew, was chosen to be Queen for Ahasuerus. Haman, an enemy of the Jews, had plotted to annihilate them from the Kingdom. Mordecai, Esther's cousin, informed her of Haman's plot. He urged to go to the King and seek his help on behalf of the Jews. Esther was reluctant. To go before the King without being summoned was to risk her life. Mordecai urged her anyway. "Who knows but that it was for a time like this that you obtained the royal dignity?" (Esther 4:14b) It was as if Mordecai said, "Esther, seize the day! This perhaps was the whole purpose of you becoming queen!"

Our circumstances may not seem as dramatic as Queen Esther's. However, God knows everything. Our hidden choices, our unrecognized deeds of charity, our secret sacrifices mean as much to God as the headlines of the New York Times. If our actions are public and seem to have great import, we are to seize the day! If our actions seem mundane, insignificant and routine, we are also to seize the day! Blessed Mother Teresa said "We cannot do great things. We can only do little things with great love". In God's eyes, momentous decisions and daring actions mean nothing without accompanying them with faith, hope and charity. And little things done with great love please the Lord.

Time is the main investment for the priests who belong to Fraternity of Priests. It is also the hardest thing for us to give. With our many

demands, time given over to daily prayer and brotherly relationships with priests, may seem a bit superfluous. Yet, time invested in the Fraternity disciplines will make the rest of our time fruitful. After all, personal success, even as a priest, does not guarantee heaven. As Jesus said, "What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?" (Matthew 16:26a)

Let us pray for each other! Whatever our vocation may be, let us seize the day!

Sincerely in Christ,



Father Bob Franco

P.S. - THANK YOU for your prayers for our members who attended the annual Fraternity Gathering in late July in Michigan. We had a great week of prayer, sharing our faith, and brotherhood. Please continue to pray for all priests and their walk with Christ.

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: **\$4,828.00**

Budget Surplus (shortage): **\$ 78.00**

Current as of May 31, 2012.

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that is clear, challenging and hope-filled (paragraphs #12-14). Our hope lies in that the Lord wants to make us holy and will grace us to become holy.

Priests who perform their duties sincerely and indefatigably in the Spirit of Christ arrive at holiness by this very fact. (#13 § 1)

If we make use of the means of grace offered us, we will become a "living sacrifice" (Romans 12:1), pleasing to the Lord. We will be laying the foundation to truly be a prophetic witness for Christ. The difficulty with a living sacrifice is that it can crawl off the altar. The measure of accountability that we have with each other in the Fraternity, the direction given us by the Kingdom Disciplines is a great blessing to us, helping us to remain constant in this call to being a prophetic voice in our contemporary culture.

Share the Message

Each vocation has a part to play in proclaiming the message of Jesus Christ. Parents and grandparents share the message in the context of the home. Making family a "domestic church" through common prayer, holy reading and decorating the house with Christian symbols and images, the message of Christ becomes more firmly rooted in each person.

For the ordained priest, sharing the message of Christ is central to his vocation. The priestly functions of "priest, prophet and king" are summed up in paragraphs four through six of the Vatican II document Presbyterorum Ordinis. And to the surprise of some, the first responsibility of the priest was not the celebration of the Sacraments. The first and most essential function of a priest is proclaiming the Word of God. The reason is clear:

4 (§ 1) The People of God are joined together primarily by the word of the living God. And rightfully they expect this from their priests. Since no one can be saved who does not first believe, priests, as co-workers with their bishops, have the primary duty of proclaiming the Gospel of God to all. In this way they fulfill the command of the Lord: "Going therefore into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mk 16:15), and they establish and build up the People of God. Through the saving word the spark of faith is lit in the hearts of unbelievers, and fed in the hearts of the faithful. This is the way that the congregation of faithful is started and grows, just as the Apostle describes: "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ" (Rom 10:17).

The ordained minister must proclaim "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth." St. Paul exhorted Timothy in this manner:

Proclaim the word; be persistent, whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching. For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine, but following their own desires and insatiable curiosity, will accumulate teachers and will stop listening to the truth and will be diverted to myths. But you, be self-possessed in all circumstances; put up with hardship; perform the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry. (II Timothy 4:2-5)

Other sections of Presbyterorum Ordinis paragraph 4 emphasize other aspects of prophetically proclaiming God's word. From section 2:

But priestly preaching is often very difficult in the circumstances of the modern world. In order that it

might more effectively move men's minds, the word of God ought not to be explained in a general and abstract way, but rather by applying the lasting truth of the Gospel to the particular circumstances of life. As Pope Paul VI said in Evangelii Nuntiandii #41, "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses."

I recently had a series of presentations on Theology of the Body given to my high school teen students. They patiently listened to a wise married couple share the components of the important understanding of our sexuality. However, it was the last talk that caught their attention. A woman in her early 20's shared her story. By God's grace she moved from a life of promiscuity to a life of chastity for Jesus Christ. It was her witness that gripped the minds and hearts of all who heard it.

Holy Spirit, Help Me!

More than ever people need to see Christians living the prophetic dimension of the Christian life. Worldly distractions have lulled many people into a spiritual stupor. Indifference and spiritual lethargy hold sway over many souls. Christians, both clergy and laity, need the help of the Holy Spirit to break through this spiritual dullness. All too often we have settled for living comfortable lives rather than good lives. The saints and biblical prophets lived lives of heroic virtue not comfortable mediocrity.

The truth is: Jesus Christ is Lord. He is our Savior, our only hope and Judge of the living and the dead. May our prophetic witness help many people welcome the mercy of Jesus in our day, and be ready to meet him at the hour of our death.

Please send us your prayer intentions:
