



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

# THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

June 2015						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Rev. 1 Tom Devery New York	Rev. 2 William Cosgrove New York	Rev. 3 Alan Shnob Ogdensburg	Rev. 4 For the souls of our deceased FOP members	Rev. 5 Prayer Requests Received	Rev. 6 Pope Francis
Rev. 7 Joseph Muldoon Ottawa	Rev. 8 Thomas Sparacino Pittsburgh	Rev. 9 Thomas Kredel Pittsburgh	Rev. 10 Paul Zywan Pittsburgh	Rev. 11 James Holland Pittsburgh	Rev. 12 John Sweeney Pittsburgh	Rev. 13 Nicholas Mastrangelo Pittsburgh
Rev. 14 Joseph Luisi Pittsburgh	Rev. 15 John Lynam Pittsburgh	Rev. 16 Tony Gargotta Pittsburgh	Rev. 17 Thomas Galvin Pittsburgh	Rev. 18 Stan Gregorek Pittsburgh	Rev. 19 Robert Boyle Pittsburgh	Rev. 20 Daniel Mahoney Pittsburgh
Rev. 21 Thomas Federline Pittsburgh	Rev. 22 Kenneth Oldenski Pittsburgh	Rev. 23 John Theodore CSSP Port-of-Spain	Rev. 24 George Lewis Port-of-Spain	Rev. 25 Donnie McMahon Port-of-Spain	Rev. 26 Ian Taylor Port-of-Spain	Rev. 27 Msgr. Cuthbert Alexander Port-of-Spain
Rev. 28 Dwight Merrick Port-of-Spain	Rev. 29 Robert Shaldone SOLT Providence	Rev. 30 Gerard Caron Providence				

## 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.  
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 The Fraternity of Priests pledge of financial accountability: We take very seriously the trust you put in us when you send a gift. We stand accountable before God and you to honor that trust. We pledge: To use your gift care-fully and wisely, and not to ask for money that is not needed.

## Between Ideals and Human Reality

by Father Vlado Bizjak, Slovenia Fraternity

Dear brothers, this time I want to meditate about the priest as a man, divided as anybody else, between the sublime call, his priestly vocation, and his everyday reality as man that has all the needs as anyone other.

We have to remember that we are not called only to work for God as his workers that receive a salary (wage) for some hours of activity, but we are called to holiness which is more than and different from some external activities. The specialty of man is that he is kind of an amphibian. As C. S. Lewis distinguished between cerebral man and visceral man: "For by his intellect he is mere spirit and by his appetite mere animal." (The Abolition of Man)

Our everyday experience tells us that we are divided by our ideals and high expectations and then our very primary bodily needs. We have to take both of them seriously. Quickly, we are tempted to understand the highly rational and spiritual values from God and the bodily needs as an opposite, as nearly hostile to God, as sinful. We could compare this to the Plato's world of idea(l)s: a perfect world without evil or any blemish which is opposed to our material world. It is only a shadow of this divine perfection. The salvation for man captured

between both worlds is in setting him free from the bondage of the body to release the beauty of the pure spirit in us. But we must be careful not to fall into the old trap of Gnosticism which declares the material bad. Indeed there is a tension in us between ideals and reality, but both, spirit and body are wounded in us and have to be restored.

First, we have to watch over our ideals, over our set of values or scale of values. No doubt that our Christian mindset gives us many beautiful ideals. God's love sacrifices itself, Jesus who loves us until death on the cross, is the highest of this love. The first commandment to love our God above all and our neighbor as ourselves. To seek the will of God and to serve him as Virgin Mary did: "I am the Lord's servant! Let it happen as you have said." To live according to the Ten Commandments, to respect life of every human creature, to respect creation. Priests especially live by the Eucharist and should live according to symbols of bread and wine, to give ourselves to others as a food, to be servants and men of God.

In the years of our formation and later in our priestly life these ideals stay, but many times they stay just in our theories, in our

good will, in our preaching. The sharpness and the enthusiasm to strive and to live them fades out a little bit. One tries few times to live it, but then he sees that it isn't so easy and it demands a lot of energy, a lot of personal discipline and a lot of love. The ideal of perfection in our minds causes us to put a lot of effort in persuading the body to follow this idea and returns bad feedback or even a bad conscience when we didn't realize this ideal. But we have to have ideals. And they have to be higher than we reach. This is the nature of the ideals. If we would be able to reach them, we would lose our engine of life. It's like food put in the front of the muzzle of the working animal, the animal will go on pushing but it will never reach the food. This seems nonsense, but the ideals create the tension to push us forward. The problem of the contemporary culture is that all our needs and yearnings are fulfilled and they extinguish the wish to go on. So we kill the ideals, the power to go on.

Known Italian anthropologist Umberto Galimberti wrote a book about the young generation, how they lost the ideals, they have nothing to live for and they have no energy to live, they just vegetate: "I have an excellent student who

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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](mailto:editor@fraternityofpriests.org)

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

Here we are again in the month of May, a month dedicated in a special way to Mary. May I suggest that during this month we reflect prayerfully on the beautiful chapter dedicated to her in the Vatican II Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*. You may recall that there was a debate among the bishops at the Council whether they should issue a separate document on Mary or include Mary in the document on the Church. The result: chapter VIII in *Lumen Gentium* is entitled *The Role of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, in the Mystery of Christ and the Church*. Mary is seen as the pre-eminent member of the Church and also as the Mother of the Church. She is the woman of faith, the model disciple, the one human person who most perfectly heard and accomplished the will of God.

Let's consider Mary as the woman of faith. Mary certainly demonstrates a magnificent example of faith at the Annunciation when, not knowing the future, she surrenders her life completely to the will and the plan of God. *Fiat, let it be done unto me according to your word.* (Luke 1: 38) We call the Annunciation the First Joyful Mystery of the Rosary. Having surrendered completely to the will of God, Mary must have experienced intense joy. Mary continues to exhibit great faith in times of sorrow. She is still saying "yes" to God as she stands at the foot of the cross on that first Good Friday. As the model disciple she can say "yes" both in good times and in bad. May she pray and intercede to God the Father that each of us may share in her faith.

The gift of faith, however, does not eliminate questions. An aspect of Mary that is often overlooked is "Mary the Questioner". At the Annunciation she asks the angel Gabriel: "How can this be, since I do not know man?" (Luke 1: 34) When Mary and Joseph come upon Jesus in the temple after three days of searching, Mary questions Jesus: "Son, why have you done this to us? Your

father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety." How often scripture tells us that Mary would ponder things in her heart! Questions do not necessary indicated a lack of faith. Questions can be the springboard to a deeper and more mature faith. We should never be afraid of the questions that arise within us. We need to bring our questions to God in prayer and also to other people of faith. As we continue to observe this Marian Month, consider the place of Mary in your life. We are her children and she loves us. If needed, rededicate ourselves to the daily praying of her rosary, a powerful prayer she constantly requests in her apparitions. Mary desires nothing more than to bring us into a deeper relationship with her Son. May we share in her faith on earth and one day in heaven behold the blessed fruit of her womb, Jesus.



*Fr. John*

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: \$ 7,103.00

Budget Surplus (shortage): \$ 2,353.00

Current as of March 31, 2015.

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wants to get a PhD. I asked if he is losing three important 3 in his life with this. He answered: "Yes, I know that my PhD won't help me a lot, but at least for my next 3 years I will know what to do. After that I have no wish to know what is waiting for me."

The young generation without ideals just lives what comes, they live in present time, enjoying its moment and there is nothing to push them forth. There is an emptiness in the future and they don't want to know it. It is like the working animal who caught the food in front, now he enjoys it, but there is nothing more in front to pursue.

We will now try to separate the ideals from the values. The problem of ideals is that they are high and beautiful. But they are often too general, too theoretical. They are objective, they are only a rational idea, but they have no attractive power in themselves. We can agree with them, we can accept them by rational conclusions or traditions. Values on the other hand are those ideals which are lived, are personalized. They have a special attracting force in themselves. We can say that values are personally accepted ideals. Values are lived, they are what we see, ideals are what we think or say.

If we think or speak about the beauty of prayer, this an ideal, often a romantic one. If we live it, it becomes a value. An important meter of our values is time. The things which take us the most of the time are values, they are valuable to us. We can do a simple task to write down our life values. Let's just analyze what we are spending the time for and our

values will be extracted. We can so quickly discover that the values and ideals are not always the same. We know the ideals, but we love something else. St. Augustine said that we should be ashamed that we love our sins more than the Lord. And many times it is true. If we would like to follow the ideals they have to attract us personally, they have to have the goal in themselves. To work in the vineyard of the Lord is already the price in itself, we don't need to expect more awards.

Many times we have to humbly admit that we don't live this way. We can start with asking the Lord that the great ideals of the Gospel would start to attract us and will become our personal values. St. Ignatius in his spiritual exercises often reminds us that we have to ask for the aversion, disgust towards the sin and ask that our heart would get warmed up to the virtues. Otherwise we will not persevere long time and we will treat it just like a burden from outside, an annoying duty.

We can close this with some points. 1st we have to have ideals to strive for, 2nd we have to believe in them, 3rd they have to attract us personally and 4th we have to live them because of themselves, because they have value in themselves.

The second part, opposite to the ideals, is as we already said our human reality; we are limited body-mind-soul creatures. This reality causes us many problems because we want to be perfect and then we have this big obstacle – our wounded human reality. We are not angels but we are still unhappy, unsatisfied, yearning creatures. We can be driven by ideals or by our egoism and sinfulness. We live in the world without high ideals

promoted by faith. So many people just accepted to be driven by low ideals, searching for happiness in temporal pleasure. They don't want to think about the ideals because they cause pain, pain because of the gap between what they live and what they sense they have to be. The tragedy is that many try to kill the voice of the conscience and get used to living for the pleasure of the moment. Many times we priests fall into similar temptation. We tried many things and many times. Nothing worked, so we stop, we resign.

In our way towards holiness, we are hanging somewhere in between. Our professor in Gregorian University said that the biggest delusion of the Church today is a general mediocrity of the clergy. May sins of our brothers are also our responsibility. We all lowered our ideals and we have sold our heritage for "some of the red stew" (Gen 25,29). We got satisfied with average.

In between the ideals and reality we are called to persevere in this tension. The easiest way is to go to extreme spiritualism or irrational corporeality. Real Christian mystic is in the same moment united with God and standing firm on the real ground. This is the hardest way, but the only way and the most beautiful one. Our teacher is real God (ideals) and real human (reality of the flesh) and he will teach us and give us strength to follow him.

Please pray for the Fraternity of Priests Annual Gathering July 26-July 31, 2015 in Tucson Arizona.

Please send us your prayer intentions: \_\_\_\_\_

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