

THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

December 2012						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Pope Benedict XVI
Rev. Peter Kirchner St. Cloud, MN 2	Rev. Todd Schneider St. Cloud, MN 3	Rev. Alvin Quade St. Cloud, MN 4	Rev. Greg Paffel St. Cloud, MN 5	Rev. Martin Mannion St. Louis, MO 6	Rev. Mr. Edmund Griesedieck St. Louis, MO 7	Rev. Albert Danter St. Louis, MO 8
Rev. James Dyer St. Louis, MO 9	Rev. Gerald Knueven Toledo, OH 10	Rev. Jerome Nowakowski Toledo, OH 11	Rev. Edward Littellmann Toledo, OH 12	Rev. James Brown Toledo, OH 13	Rev. Thomas Oedy Toledo, OH 14	Rev. Nicholas Weibl Toledo, OH 15
Rev. Norbert Howe Toledo, OH 16	Rev. Dale Branson Tucson, AZ 17	Rev. Domenico Pinti Tucson, AZ 18	Rev. James Hobert Tucson, AZ 19	Rev. Ray Ratzenberger Tucson, AZ 20	Rev. Issac Flynn Tucson, AZ 21	Rev. Henry Dauphinais Tucson, AZ 22
Rev. Liam Leahy Tucson, AZ 23	Rev. Pietro Hewlet Ukraine 24	Rev. Jeff Johnson Michigan 25	Rev. Raymond Zeugner Michigan 26	Rev. Ted Brodeur Michigan 27	Rev. Darryl Pepin Michigan 28	Rev. Larry Van Damme Michigan 29
Rev. Michael Steber Michigan 30						

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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Do you know anyone who would like to receive our Newsletter?
(Please print legibly)
Name _____
Street _____
City, State and Zip _____

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This donation is to help the Fraternity of Priests in continuing their work of ministering to priests.
Dear Father Bill Cosgrove,
\$ _____ Other \$ _____



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

THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

Church Documents Highlight Spiritual Direction

By Fr. Vlado Bizjak

This academic year I was given the opportunity to live and study in Rome, the heart of Catholic Church. I am here to grow in my understanding of formation for candidates to the priesthood. This will be my service to the Church for years to come. Beside this beautiful city full of history, especially Christian history, with the graves of apostles, martyrs and awesome Churches, I am blessed be taking this course of studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University in its Center for the Formation of Priesthood and Consecrated Life Educators. We are 35 students from 23 countries of the world – former and future rectors, spiritual directors, novitiate leaders, professors et cetera. This interdisciplinary program is very balanced, giving not only theoretical but also practical wisdom on formation. We study not only theology, but also anthropology, sociology, psychology and pedagogy. One of the important topics of our course is spiritual direction. As we have begun, I have already found many good and useful recommendations about spiritual direction in various documents of the Church. I would like to share with you about this important issue, which I believe is not missing in the life of our Fraternities. This topic is not only important for priests but also for the people we serve.

The expression “spiritual direction” is not hard to find in the

decrees of the Vatican II. Spiritual fatherhood is mentioned especially in connection with the religious life because men and woman in religious state are in the first place called to the perfection of Christian life and to the richness of the inner life in Christ. Spiritual direction is also explicitly recommended also for young people in their search for their Christian vocation. This is also a very important in the phase of seminary life and formation. The liberty of those who receive spiritual direction and the choice of their director are emphasized. The documents of Vatican II say that priests are “exercising the office of Christ, the Shepherd and Head, and according to their share of his authority, priests, in the name of the bishop, gather the family of God together as a brotherhood enlivened by one spirit. Through Christ they lead them in the Holy Spirit to God the Father” (Presbyterorum Ordinis 6). The priest is above all the one who gives spiritual direction to others, especially to the laity, to the community, to the young people seeking their vocation and to adults exercising their role in the world, with their various charisms and states of life. “The chief instrument of formation is personal dialogue, a practice of irreplaceable and commendable effectiveness which should take place regularly and with a certain frequency.” (PO 6) The aim of this work is the education of people

towards Christian maturity, to teach them that they should live “according to the demands of the new law of charity” and help people “to see what is required and what is God’s will in the important and unimportant events of life” (PO 6). “Priests should uncover with a sense of faith, acknowledge with joy and foster with diligence the various humble and exalted charisms of the laity” (PO 9) and lead them all to unity. Therefore it is recommended that spiritual directors be well trained while yet in the seminary. To stay spiritually fit, priests themselves should make use of these practices: a daily examination of conscience leading to a conversion of heart, sacrament of Penance, acts of reparation, the Word of God, Eucharist, spiritual reading and prayer. He must keep his soul nourished.

If the documents of Vatican II set the foundation and give some general insights into spiritual direction, the more specific role of the directors, receivers and spiritual direction itself can be found in the following documents. After the Vatican II some important questions emerged. One area has been the celibacy. In living out this special charism, priests are reminded that spiritual warfare cannot be won without spiritual means, among them unity of spirit, fraternal help and counseling: “So the unity of spirit among priests should be active in their prayers, friendship and help of all kinds for one another. One cannot sufficiently recommend

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Editor's Box:

Please send articles, comments, and photos to the FOP Newsletter editor, Fr. Bob Franco via e-mail at editor@fraternityofpriests.org or fax to 440-327-2204.

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

Something beautiful occurs in nature during the fall season in the northern half of the United States. God has reserved some of nature's greatest beauty as the trees go dormant. God is speaking to us through this fall season, telling us to behold the beauty of the "dying" of Mother Nature.

Most people become anxious when the subject of dying and death is brought up. If people could choose a season of life to perpetually live in, most would choose the seasons spring or summer, when life is in bud and blossom or in full maturity. Yet, nature tells us a different story. With the season of fall and its dying process, we see the brilliance of God's pallet of colors. God's magnificence is revealed when the sun shines upon the fall maples, ashes and oaks.

A friend of mine gave me a book entitled "Living Well, Dying Well". Though I haven't read it yet, the title intrigues me. My own experience with people who are dying, highlights the truth of this title: if one lives well, that one will die well. It's often been said that it is not how long one's life is. What counts is how well one lives those years. One person can live many years and be miserable. Another person's years can be few but full.

The season of fall is a time to reflect on our own death. Our dying does necessarily have to be gloom and doom. Like the leaves of fall, it can reflect God's glory.

November is the month the Church reminds us that we live in communion with all our baptized brothers and sisters, both living and dead. By celebrating All Saints Day and All Souls Day, we are reminded that the Church is much bigger than what we see on earth. It consists of the Church militant (on earth), the Church suffering (purgatory) and the Church triumphant (heaven). We are a Church of sinners, saints and sojourners.

During November we remember the deceased priests who have been part of the Fraternity through the years. In a special way we remember Fr. Jim Ferry, Fr. Forrest Rouelle, and Fr. Richard O'Gorman. These former leaders of the Fraternity led us by example and service to embrace the disciplines of the Fraternity and the gifts of the Spirit. We also remember all

our loyal lay benefactors who have passed on to the glory that awaits us all. May God grant them eternal happiness, light and peace in Christ.

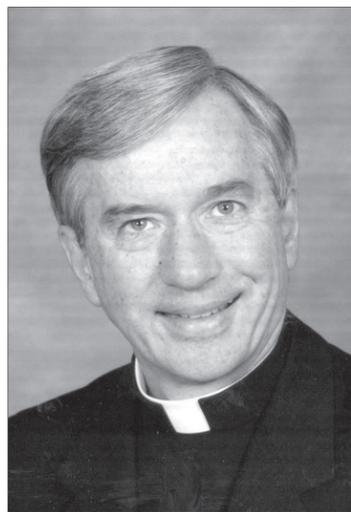
As we gather to give thanks at the end of November, let us pray that the final season of our lives also be filled with thankfulness and praise. And as you thank God for your parish priests, know that Fraternity of Priests is grateful for your prayer support.

Finally, let us enjoy these fall days as an anticipation of seeing the glory of the Lord face to face.

Faternally,



Father Bill Cosgrove



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: **\$4,126.00**

Budget Surplus (shortage): (**\$624.00**)

Current as of September 30, 2012.

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to priests a life lived in common and directed entirely toward their sacred ministry; the practice of having frequent meetings with a fraternal exchange of ideas, counsel and experience with their brother priests; the movement to form associations which encourage priestly holiness" (Sacerdotalis Caelibatus, 80). Priests "may feel a lively responsibility for fellow priests troubled by difficulties which gravely endanger the divine gift they have. They should have a burning charity for those who have greater need of love, understanding and prayer, who have need of prudent but effective help, and who have a claim on their unbounded charity as those who are, and should be, their truest friends" (Ibid., 81). The new situation in the world highlights the need for priests not only to be able to give spiritual direction. They must receive spiritual direction for their own growth and formation. They should be able to put themselves into hands of a wise brother. This is a tremendous opportunity for their own growth and this will enable them to be more competent in spiritual direction of others. From this document we can see that Fraternity of Priests is a providential gift of God. In these days of increasing individualism and solitude, Fraternity of Priests helps gather and form priests.

For seminarians spiritual direction is recommended many times, even in the Canon Law of the Church. This is to be expected. After ordination, seminarians will be called upon for spiritual direction. The best school for

learning this art is their own reception of it. Spiritual direction should be also a special call for the religious men and women. Consecrated persons are especially suitable for spiritual directors and they should be trained for that service. God the Father himself through the "gift of Christ and the Spirit is the educator par excellence of those who consecrate themselves to him. But in this work he makes use of human instruments, placing more mature brothers and sisters at the side of those whom he calls. Formation then is a sharing in the work of the Father who, through the Spirit, fashions the inner attitudes of the Son in the hearts of young men and women" (Vita Consecrata, 66). Even consecrated women should cooperate in formation of future priests with their support. Therefore appropriate structures for the training of spiritual directors are encouraged. The best of candidates should be trained for this important task. Seminary spiritual directors especially have to be well educated in spiritual theology, pedagogy or other human sciences. Psychological and other help of secular sciences can assist in spiritual direction but not replace it. Good spiritual direction of a seminarian may help him to reach a mature and free decision. This is a very important means of formation. In formation it is important that the 'forum internum' (internal forum, meaning confidentiality), which is the field of spiritual direction and 'forum externum' (external forum) are strictly respected.

In the recent years, spiritual direction has not only been encouraged. It should also become

the project of a priest's life. It should contain:

1. Daily meditation on the Word
2. Daily personal encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist apart from the celebration of the Holy Mass
3. Marian devotion
4. Periods of doctrinal formation
5. Due rest
6. Effort to put into practice the indications of the Bishop and to verify his convictions of adherence to the Magisterium and to ecclesiastical discipline
7. Care for his communion and friendship with other priests. (Cf. Directory On The Ministry And Life Of Priests, 76)

Global secularization and permissiveness in education create a climate that is ever more hostile to Christian culture, values and ways of living. The faithful follower of Christ is the exception, not the rule, in contemporary society. Good formation and ongoing spiritual direction are more critical than ever. As Blessed John Paul II said, "Spiritual direction has a wonderful purpose. We could say it is indispensable for the moral and spiritual education of young people who want to find what their vocation in life is and follow it wherever it may lead, with utter loyalty. It retains its beneficial effect at all stages of life, when in the light and affection of a devout and prudent counsel one asks for a check on one's own right intention and for support in the generous fulfillment of one's own duties." (Pastores Dabo Vobis, 81).

Rev. Vlado Bizjak is a member of the FOP Board of Directors and writes from the Slovenia Fraternity.

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

