



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

THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

| October 2014 | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| | | | Rev. Richard Engle Columbus 1 | Rev. Peter Gregor Honduras 2 | Prayer Requests Received 3 | Pope Francis 4 |
| Rev. Dennis Skonseng Fargo 5 | Rev. Claude Seeberger, OSB Fargo 6 | Rev. Duane Cote Fargo 7 | Rev. Msgr. Robert Laliberte Fargo 8 | Very Rev. Dale Kinzler Fargo 9 | Rev. Donald Leiphon Fargo 10 | Rev. Michael Shea Grand Rapids 11 |
| Rev. Donald Lomasiewicz Grand Rapids 12 | Rev. Ayub Nasar Grand Rapids 13 | Rev. Thomas Hack Grand Rapids 14 | Rev. Mark Mitchell Grand Rapids 15 | Rev. Charles Antekeier Grand Rapids 16 | Rev. George Fekete Grand Rapids 17 | Rev. James Bozung Grand Rapids 18 |
| Rev. Bob Hilz, TOR Greensburg 19 | Msgr. Cyril Lamontage VG Grenada 20 | Rev. Francis Karvelis Hartford 21 | Rev. Robert Rousseau Hartford 22 | Rev. Zacharias Pushpanathan Hartford 23 | Rev. Paul Halovatch Hartford 24 | Rev. Will-Roger Malave Hartford 25 |
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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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Do you know anyone who would like to receive our Newsletter? (Please print legibly)

Dear Father John Kiley, This donation is to help the Fraternity of Priests in continuing their work of ministering to priests.

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.

_____ \$ \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other \$

Growing up in a Catholic family (the sixth of nine children) the idea of a religious vocation was always presented as a possibility. My parents were leaders in the Cursillo Movement, Third Order of Mount Carmel, the Christian Family Movement and the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in our home parish of St. Joseph in Lynn, MA. I discerned the "word" of my vocation to the priesthood with the help of members of my family and extended community.

I am one of those Catholics that can say "I am a son of a preacher man". My Dad, Deacon Lawrence R. McManus was ordained to the Permanent Diaconate for the Archdiocese of Boston in 1986. Six months later Deacon Dad was vesting me at my ordination to the Transitional Diaconate.

In June of 1987 my Dad served at my Priesthood Ordination and served as deacon and homilist at my First Mass of Thanksgiving, which as Divine Providence would have it that year, was the Feast of Corpus Christi AND Fathers' Day! My Dad took full advantage of his position as Deacon and Dad as he welcomed me into the next chapter of God's will for me as Priest of Jesus Christ.

I knew long before I was ever ordained that the preaching ministry was going to be particularly challenging for me. What a blessing it was for me to frequently call up my Dad and to ask for and share pointers regarding the next Sunday's readings and homily. But my

anxiety as a new priest put me in overdrive for the Sunday homilies. I dedicated the vast majority of my time as a new priest to preparing and writing my homilies. I would devote no less than 30 to 40 hours a week for those 5 to 7 minutes of a homily for the Sunday celebration.

I knew that a preacher is very much exposed in the pulpit, especially his faith life. I felt I needed to overcompensate for my lack of faith by not only writing out the actual text of a homily, but I also committed to memory the entire text, word for word.

I had suffered through some excellent homilies that were skillfully prepared but dreadfully read to me and others at Mass. I watched as people generally tuned out such a delivery of the homily. I knew I would not be reading my homilies as a priest. I wanted to appear as "spontaneous" and "extemporaneous" in the preaching moment.

The irony of my preaching style is that I WAS reading my homilies, not from paper copies but from my memory! For me it was like a final exam every week. I no sooner delivered a weekend of homilies that I began the 30 to 40 hour process of producing another one and a half pages to memorize and deliver.

Six months after my ordination to the priesthood I found myself worn out from the cycle of anxiety that the preaching task caused. In January of 1988, I was at the transitional diaconate ordinations of the class behind me and I remember praying as my friends were prostrate

in the sanctuary: "Do that Lord! Make them holy men of God, zealous for your Church. And while you are at it, renew the same in me because I am dying on the vine here!" I was honest before the Lord since I knew I could not last as a priest living as I was. God was to answer my plea for help in extraordinary ways.

I remember being up for morning Mass on January 25, 1988. I opened to the Mass of the day which is The Conversion of St. Paul. Under my breath I prayed "Lord, let it be so in my life!"

When I finished Mass I was led into our Eucharistic chapel and nothing short of fire landed on me at that moment. I began to shout the praises of God and sing in tongues. Thank God the church had emptied out after that Mass because if anyone heard me they would have thought I had lost it. But lose it I did! I was lost in what seemed for hours of prayer and praise. I was crying and rejoicing all at once at what was happening. I can remember ending up on my face, prostrate before the tabernacle just thanking God for His mercy being poured out on me.

I have come to realize that the experience was a sort of "baptism in the Holy Spirit". Prayer flowed as never before in my life and the Word of God in Scripture became alive for me, as though I was reading familiar passages for the first time. I kept the experience to myself for the most part since I didn't have the words to explain what was happening.

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Dear Fraternity Brothers and Friends of the Priesthood

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Editor's Box:

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!

Although you are receiving this Fraternity Newsletter in September I am writing this article following the 2014 International Fraternity Conference that was held in Tobago from July 28 through August 1. Twenty-one priests attended: three from Slovenia; five from Trinidad; and thirteen from the United States.

Our theme this year was "Return to Galilee". This was taken from the Easter vigil homily of Pope Francis. The Holy Father challenged all the baptized to return to that moment, "that Galilee", when the Lord Jesus first called them and to renew their commitment to follow the call. We considered this theme from the perspective of the Fraternity of Priests. We are to return to the "Galilee" where we first discovered, were attracted to, and then embraced the call to follow Christ as members of the Fraternity and committed ourselves to living out the Fraternity disciplines.

While each discipline promotes our growth in holiness, Fr. Bob Franco presented those that focus more on personal holiness: our daily prayer hour, scripture reading and keeping a journal, fasting, and tithing. Fr. Mike Roy shared on those disciplines that strengthen brotherhood and fraternity: being present for meetings, accepting the teachings of the fraternity, submitting decisions to the brothers for discernment; being zealous for a relationship with the Lord and with our brothers. In my own presentation I stressed the important fact that although the Fraternity offers outstanding support, we are not a "support group". We have been called to a mission for the renewal of the Church. We are called to proclaim "the Visitation Message" namely that the Lord God is visiting His people in wonderful ways in our own day and age. Our mission is to empower our people in the Holy Spirit. Fr. Joe Looney gave a presentation on recruiting new members. Fathers John Sweeney and Dwight Merrick led a session on deliverance and exorcism.

On Thursday of the Conference we elected new members to the Fraternity Board and increased the Board from five to seven members. I will continue as Chairperson for the next year. Fr. Bob Franco was elected again and will serve as Vice

Chairperson. Jim Hobert (newly elected) is secretary; Larry Van Damme is Treasurer. Dwight Merrick was again elected to the Board and Vlado Bizjak was elected to a second term. Please keep our new Board in your prayers. We also made plans for the 2015 Conference. It will be held in Tucson from Sunday evening, July 26, through Friday morning, July 31. Sr. Ann Shields from Renewal Ministries will be the main presenter.

In the name of the Fraternity I would like to express publicly our appreciation for all that our brothers in Trinidad did to welcome us and make the conference a truly memorable experience. I would also like to thank our lay women and men who pray for us and support us by their faith and goodness.

Faternally



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: **\$ 740.00**

Budget Surplus (shortage): **(\$4,010.00)**

Current as of July 31, 2014.

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But sure enough, it was time to get to the writing my homily for the coming Sunday. I was really looking forward to this task with this new energy and inspiration that I was experiencing. After my usual study and newfound prayer over the texts I went to the writing phase of my homily. I sat at my typewriter and absolutely NOTHING came into my mind to be written down. I couldn't come up with the slightest idea to begin my homily. I can remember saying in an audible voice to myself in my office "Come on, God, we're on a roll here and I need a homily for this Sunday!"

It was then I heard the voice of the Lord Jesus clearer than any other time in my life up to that point. He only spoke two words to me which were "Trust Me!" I knew instantly what He was saying and offering to me; something I had never even dreamed of asking Him for in my priesthood. At the same time of hearing those two words, a scripture passage also came to mind: "...do not worry beforehand about what you are to say. But say whatever will be given to you at that hour. For it will not be you who are speaking but the Holy Spirit." (Mark 13:11)

"Trust Me!" He repeated. I knew He was asking me to give up my need for control over the homily and allow His Spirit to work. "Oh, Lord", I sighed, "that is such a huge request for me. I have never gone to the preaching task without a text (written and memorized). "Trust Me!" He repeated.

As the next Sunday Mass approached I could not believe that I was heading into that celebration without anything prepared to preach. I kept chuckling to myself and shaking my head as I moved into the pulpit to proclaim the Gospel. I then kissed the words of the Gospel, closed the lectionary and carried it to the front of the sanctuary as was my custom (still without a clue as to what I was going to say). I opened my mouth and preached a homily that Sunday

and I haven't stopped preaching ever since!

God was and is utterly faithful to His Word! It was given for me to understand that up to that time I was more focused on myself and about how I came across in the homily (the real cause for my anxiety) instead about "getting the Good News of Jesus Christ". An image of a candle came to mind in my prayer. I was certainly not the light that came from that candle but the Lord explained that He was asking me to be the wick of that candle. If I allowed myself to be consumed, like the wick of a candle, He would use me to get His Word out. I was also given to understand that if we allow the Holy Spirit to use us whenever we preach or teach or give counsel, encouragement or consolation, we could just about "babble like a child" and the Holy Spirit will not only anoint what we say but also anoint the ears of those who hear us. Thus the Holy Spirit rightly gets all the credit and the focus is taken off of us.

I was blown away by God's mercy and generosity towards me and my priesthood. Oh, I still prepare homilies through study and prayer over the sacred texts, but the preaching moment is given over to the Holy Spirit.

My prayer life was so enlivened by this experience. I recall finally sharing the experience with my Dad and telling him "it is as though I was a pagan before this". And Deacon Dad responded to my testimony to what the Spirit was doing in my life by saying "Paul, and tomorrow may you consider that even today you are a pagan given that the Holy Spirit is ever new and renewing our lives!

Within about a month of this new found "life in the Spirit" I got a call from a charismatic Melkite priest named Fr. Ross Frey who said "I heard the Spirit got you. We should get together." Within a short time we were meeting every other week with other priests from the area. We would gather at each other's rectory for prayer and

praise, asking for guidance from the Holy Spirit for our parishes and communities.

Fr. Ross Frey had spent time with Fr. Jim Ferry one of the founders of the Fraternity of Priests. By April of 1988 we invited Fr. Ken Gallagher from Visitation House of the Fraternity of Priests to give us a retreat where he would lay out for us the "Visitation Message" and what we could concretely do to respond to what the Spirit was doing in the Church.

A group of about 15 priests made the retreat. Of those about 8 decided to give this Fraternity of Priests a serious shot. This wasn't an "Emmaus" group of priest friends or other such priestly support group that met at most once a month or for a season. This was a group of brothers who were committing themselves to daily prayer for each other and to a weekly gathering to pray and worship and seek the Lord's word.

For over 26 years the Boston Fraternity of Priests has been meeting regularly every week to ask a word (rhema) from the Lord in the "Throne Room" of His Eucharistic Presence. Our numbers have always remained strong even though some brothers have come and stayed only for a while, some have left the active ministry and other members have been called home to the Lord.

This band of brothers in the Fraternity of Priests has been a source of joy for my life. We stand with each other and encourage each other to be renewed in our priesthood through conversion of heart; to be healed and strengthened through the mutual ministry of intercessory prayer for specific needs and, when needed, to be taught through fraternal correction offered in love. I am blessed to be a member of the Fraternity of Priests.

Fr. Paul serves as parochial vicar for Hispanic Ministry in St. John the Baptist Parish in Peabody, MA and Immaculate Conception Parish in Salem, MA.

Please send us your prayer intentions:
