



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

THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

September 2017						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 For prayer requests received	2 For our Holy Father, Pope Francis
Rev. 3 John Helmueller Sioux Falls, SD	Rev. 4 Joseph Vogel Sioux Falls, SD	Rev. 5 Richard Baumberger Sioux Falls, SD	Rev. 6 Charles Duman Sioux Falls, SD	7 For the souls of our deceased FOP members	Rev. 8 Rodney Farke Sioux Falls, SD	Rev. 9 Edward Pierce Sioux Falls, SD
Rev. 10 John Rasmussen Sioux Falls, SD	Rev. 11 Joseph Short Sioux Falls, SD	Rev. 12 Gregory Frankman Sioux Falls, SD	Rev. 13 Roger Geditz Sioux Falls, SD	Rev. 14 Randy Phillips Sioux Falls, SD	Rev. 15 Jerome Ranek Sioux Falls, SD	Rev. 16 Robert Hamel St. Cloud, MN
Rev. 17 Peter Kirchner St. Cloud, MN	Rev. 18 Gerald Mischke St. Cloud, MN	Rev. 19 Gregory Paffel St. Cloud, MN	Rev. 20 Leroy Schik St. Cloud, MN	Rev. 21 Todd Schneider St. Cloud, MN	Rev. 22 Mark Stang St. Cloud, MN	Rev. 23 James Statz St. Cloud, MN
Rev. 24 Daniel Walz St. Cloud, MN	Rev. 25 Albert Danter PhD St. Louis, MO	Rev. 26 Anthony Dattilo St. Louis, MO	Rev. 27 James Dyer St. Louis, MO	Rev. Msgr. 28 Edmund Griesedieck St. Louis, MO	Rev. 29 Martin Mannion St. Louis, MO	Rev. 30 Aaron Nord St. Louis, MO

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.

Fraternity of Priests, Inc.
PO Box 442
Steubenville, OH 43952-5442
Phone: (740) 283-4400
Fax: (740) 283-3622
Email: contact@fraternityofpriests.org
<http://www.fraternityofpriests.org>

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

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Spiritual Friendship

By Fr. Vlado Bizjak, Slovenian Fraternity

Friendship is not something discovered in some recent social revolution. It was known in history and written about by, as we know, ancient Greek and Roman pagan writers.

Church fathers and spiritual writers took what was good in those cultures and added Christian values to it. Friendship was one of those values. Not just a value. At most we have seen it by Jesus himself as his life attitude towards people. Although God, He claims himself as a friend of his disciples, human beings. This is completely blasphemous for the Jewish or Islamic concept of transcendent omnipotent God. But Jesus as the Son of God said: "I don't speak to you as my servants. I speak to you as my friends, and I have told you everything that my Father has told me" (Jn 15,15). On this point it was clear that friendship is something God wants and it should be cherished among men, especially among Christ's disciples.

Let us saints and spiritual writers help to ponder about the importance and qualities of a Christian friendship.

St. Thomas Aquinas - Friendship

with God

The goal of our life is to become saints. St. Thomas sets his vision of men in the perspective of holiness. His idea of human's happiness is to become a friend of God. We are created to become his friends. He admits that there is no equality among God and us, which is a common characteristic of friendship. Even though he insists that we are called to become friends of God and this should be a source of our happiness. As Thomas explains the commandment of love towards God is not just about love, but about a kind of friendship towards God, there is an exchange, mutuality in love among God and man. This friendship starts in this life and continues in glory with Him. God wants to share with us his glorified life, his eternal exchange of love in the Holy Trinity. The Holy Trinity is the paradigm of real human friendship.

Friendship with God is made possible and can be realized mainly in the sacrament of Eucharist through our only mediator Jesus. Jesus is for us also a model, what we have to become as men to be good friends of God. The Eucharist is a sacrament of friendship with

God. It reveals the fullness of life lived as a gift, as an offering. The Eucharist is the sacrament of love. As physical food it feeds us, restores us, gives us growth and in the end "we become what we eat", ever more godlike. This sacrament helps us and is indispensable for friendship with our Lord.

St. Augustine - Friendship Among Brothers

He had many friends, he was a man with great ability to establish and foster friendships. As a young man Augustine was attached to another adolescent friend. He was shocked when the friend died at 17 years old. They were like "alter egos" (other I) to one another, one soul in two bodies. Later as a converted Christian he explained, that this wasn't a real friendship, because Jesus was not in the center. Real friendship namely joins persons connected with God through the Holy Spirit abiding in their hearts. Many times young friendships must be purified because they lack maturity and because they are too dependent on emotional states.

Later he met Nebridius who helped him with his conversion

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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!

My father Joseph passed away on July 8. His death was not unanticipated, just unexpected. He was 93 and had some significant health issues. However, the 3:00 AM phone call from his assisted living facility was not expected.

Though I grieve his passing, I can see many things that made it a blessed death. First, let me say that any death in Christ is a good death. No matter what outward circumstances look like, whether they seem tragic and untimely or peaceful and full, as long as one dies in the Lord-that is a blessed death.

Having said that, two things made my father's passing a blessed death. First, I was able to celebrate the sacraments of the Anointing of the Sick and Holy Communion the day before he passed. The week before his passing was one of his more active weeks. On Sunday we visited the cemetery where my mom is buried (and now my dad) and had dinner with my sister. I took him to dinner on July 4. We saw a doctor for his ear on July 6. On July 7, the First Friday, I Anointed him and gave him Holy Communion. I also read to him part of Sunday's gospel:

"Come to me all you labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me... you will find rest for yourselves." (Matthew 11:28-30)

Sixteen hours later that phone call came. If at all possible, the Church encourages us to receive the Eucharist as we near death. We have a special title for our Last Holy Communion: *Viaticum*. It translates food *for the journey*.

The second reason my father Joseph's death was blessed was because he lived a blessed life. In his middle 30's my father had a minor operation. While in the hospital, he opened his heart to the priest chaplain. My dad said, "I have a good job. I have a wonderful wife and two great kids. We live in a comfortable bungalow. Yet, I

don't feel peace. Why?" The priest wisely answered, "You will not have peace in your heart till you have peace with God."

My dad picked up the bible that was in the hospital room and his eyes fell upon the words of Jesus:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Mark 12:30-31a)

That became my dad's personal creed. It was the 'yoke' he embraced by which the Lord guided his life.

As priests, we are called to help people live a life yoked to Jesus Christ and the Church. The ultimate reason for doing this is so that our flock can die in Christ. May we pursue this call with zeal!

Again, as members of the Fraternity, we are grateful for your prayers and support.

In Christ,



Fr. Robert J. Franco

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 thank those many faithful benefactors who help make our service possible. Thank you!

Fraternity Financial Report

Monthly Donation Budget: \$ 4,750.00

Actual Donations: \$ 2,722.20

Budget Surplus/Deficit: (\$ 2,027.80)

Current as of June 30, 2017.

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and they stayed connected until he also died unfortunately, soon afterwards. But after this death Augustine reacts differently. He believes that his friend is still alive and he will never really lose him, because he lives in God. He became free of pain, because he is able to see his friend in God. Real friendship takes us towards eternal life and leads us beyond this life.

Augustine's mother Monica wished all the best for her son, but he describes her as possessive and almost suffocating. His mother fell into a crisis as Augustine went far away from home and also internally distances himself from her. The breaking point was as he lived with a woman and was visiting Manichaeists. Later their relationship starts to grow as he converts to the Catholic church. At this stage they develop spiritual friendship. They talk about heaven, open their hearts and ponder into common contemplation of God. At her death he experiences strong loss. He cannot hold back tears anymore, but he feels Jesus close to him in these moments.

Augustine takes the idea of friendship from Cicero but adds Christ, only in him friendship can be faithful, can it bring real happiness and can it last without end. This is his eschatologic dimension of friendship. Our friendship has to be transcendent and should accompany us in eternity. God has to be central in our friendships and his love a

fundamental of these relationships. Friendships are good because they lead us to love, to God himself and are a school of love.

Discovering the treasure of friendship Augustine decides to establish a priest community which is still alive today. He wants this kind of community to live as "one heart and one sole soul", which is one of his most important statements describing the nature of friendship. This ideal derives from St. Luke's description of the first christian community in the Acts 2:42-47. It is a bit idealistic, but for Augustine real, inspiring and reachable. In Tagaste he lived that way for three years with his brothers in solitude, away from the eyes of the world, fasting, praying, exercising good works and meditating on the word of God. He was quite attached to this way of life. He claimed that a community has to be established on the base of renouncement of the worldly things, a way of "fuga mundi", fleeing from the world. So he didn't even visit his important friend Nebridius in this time. This communal life for him was more than just being together in prosperity and comfort. The important thing for him was to be together in Christ!

Later he became bishop and he had to leave the community and establish new friendships: Christian love wants to embrace more and more people, but our internal community life is a place where we train how to love other

persons. Some principles of his vision of communal life were: to be united in one soul and body, to search the Kingdom of God together, a duty of all members to create a pleasant, friendly environment and to live in a spirit of unity: "Live in unanimity and concord, honor God in one another whose temple you became. You are God's temple!"

S. Augustine recommends four features/characteristics of good friendship.

First, our friends are first and foremost a gift of God.

Second, every friendship has to be rooted in God. This means that it has to be consistent with the will of God and it has to seek God first, not only the good of our friend or worse, the good of ourselves.

Third, a Christian friendship has to be shaped and even transformed by God's grace. Real friends want to live a super-natural virtual life and finally reach eternal life together. Real friendship leads us towards good.

Fourth, a friendship will reach it's fulfillment only in eternity, not here. We don't have to have high expectancies from our friends in their human fragility in this world. But the perfect Love is our goal and it is also a purpose of a real friendship.

Let's call one another not only brothers and sisters but ever more also friends of God and friends of men.

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____