



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

# THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

October 2018						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Msgr. Cyril Lamontagne VG Grenada	Rev. Robert Grant Hartford, CT	Rev. Paul Halovatch Hartford, CT	For the souls of our deceased FOP members	For prayer requests received	For our Holy Father, Pope Francis
Rev. Joseph Looney Hartford, CT	Rev. Will Malave Hartford, CT	Rev. Robert Rousseau Hartford, CT	Rev. Francis Dabre India	Rt. Rev. Bryan Eyman Indianapolis, IN	Rev. Harold Knueven Indianapolis, IN	Rev. Paul Landwerlen Indianapolis, IN
Rev. George Nangachiveetill Indianapolis, IN	Rev. Thomas Cawley CM Kansas City	Rev. Earl Dekat Kansas City	Rev. Roderic Giller OSB Kansas City	Rev. Rheel Forest Manitoba	Rev. Timothy Ekaitis Marquette, MI	Rev. Ryan Ford Marquette, MI
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Rev. Larry Van Damme Marquette, MI	Rev. Michael Woempner Marquette, MI	Rev. Raymond Zeugner Marquette, MI	Rev. Eugene Bettinger O.Carm. Grand Rapids			

## 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)

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.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other  \$100  \$50  \$25  \$10

This donation is to help the Fraternity of Priests in continuing their work of ministering to priests.

Dear Father Bob Franco,

## Evangelizing the Millennial

By Fr. Dwight Merrick

In the early 1990's, Ralph Martin gave us an insightful research study called *The Church at the end of an era - what is the Spirit saying*. It was about the rise and fall of numbers in the Catholic Church versus new Bible-based religions between 1960-1990. It also interviewed the leaders of many of these churches, regarding their strategies and explanations behind their numbers. In a nutshell, if memory serves me right, the Catholic Church went from over 90% of many South and Central American countries to as low as 50%. Simultaneously, some of the younger denominations rose to eightfold in some instances. That was not the worst aspect of Dr. Martin's findings. Several bishops, in response to these findings, were not worried about this decline. Some claimed that few parishioners have left to go to other churches, other bishops thought that these individuals would return, and others declared that the Church (R.C) still considered them Catholic, even though many of these individuals are proud to boast that they "used to be Catholic."

Interviewing the leaders of these

exploding new faiths, Dr. Martin asked to explain their success and strategies. In summary, here are their shocking responses:

1. They target Catholics first, because they seem to be the most disenchanted of denominations.
2. They instruct their followers on how to evangelize another person effectively.
3. Their followers understand that their salvation depends in part on evangelizing others.
4. Their followers understand that it's their duty to bring new people to church, while it's the duty of the pastors to keep them coming back.

This entire book is a must read for anyone concerned with the health of the Catholic Church. I must beg pardon of Dr. Martin for any serious error in my memory. The above four points have stuck with me for the last twenty years since I first read this work.

What can we learn from this study? Apparently nothing! Time and time again I keep repeating these findings at major clergy discussions to a deafening silence until the next speaker says something! Too proud to go door to door? Probably. Too lazy to

learn how to evangelize? Probably. Too comfortable maintaining to care about the mission of the church? Our mission has never changed. "Go, go, go....make disciples"

Years later and after much reading and discussion on Church renewal, I suddenly saw hope in the work by Sherry Weddell, *Forming Intentional Disciples*. She writes that we need first to have a personal relationship with Jesus and a solid prayer life before we can share him with someone else. Many of our church workers and catechists have not had a personal encounter with the Lord Jesus! Weddell explains that there are five thresholds of conversion: *initial trust, spiritual curiosity, spiritual openness, spiritual seeking, intentional discipleship*.

Weddell says, "It is important for those who are committed Catholics especially those who have never known anything else to remember that a threshold usually looks and feels very different to 'insiders' than it does to someone approaching from the outside. As evangelizers, we need to make a real effort to imagine; to see Christ, the faith, and the Church through

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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](mailto:editor@fraternityofpriests.org)

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

**I**t was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness... (opening lines of *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens)

The Pittsburgh Fraternity hosted the International Fraternity of Priests meeting last month. The presentations of Deacon James Keating inspired all the priests to grow in the relationship with the Lord. He also highlighted the benefits of regular spiritual direction. Our brother priests in Pittsburgh hosted a refreshing brotherhood day that included a tour of Pittsburgh by boat, a visit to St. Anthony Church (which hosts the most relics of any church in the world except for the Vatican) and dinner on Mount Washington, from which one can view the skyline of Pittsburgh. The week was capped off by a Healing Mass at St. Paul Cathedral on Thursday evening, attended by over 500 of the faithful. It certainly seemed to be *the best of times...the season of Light*.

However, within a week of our gathering Attorney General Josh Shapiro of Pennsylvania released a report that highlighted the clergy sex abuse scandals in six of the eight dioceses in Pennsylvania. (Philadelphia and Altoona-Johnstown were excluded because those statistics were compiled and released in 2005.) On top of the Archbishop McCarrick scandal, many people were feeling that it was *the worst of times...the season of Darkness*.

What are we to make of all this? First, it is a season of purification for the Church. St. Peter reminds us that "it is a time for the judgement to begin with the household of God..." (I Peter 4:17a) Jesus Christ wants a holy bride. He will not stop at bringing that to fruition, even if it means exposing the sins of the clergy.

Second, we need to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ. Yes, the Church

is his Body. And its leaders are his chosen instruments. However, ultimately it is Jesus who saves us. Rooted in Christ, we become part of the solution and not the problem.

Finally, "One who winks at a fault causes trouble, but one who frankly reproves promotes peace." (Proverbs 10:10). These words remind us that serious sins cannot be overlooked. They need to be addressed quickly and firmly. Painful as this may be, looking the other way is more painful. More people are hurt and scandals grow to epic proportions.

During these tumultuous times, priests need priests more than ever. I encourage my brothers in the Fraternity to be faithful to the Fraternity disciplines, especially meeting regularly and keeping one's life in the light with at least one other brother.

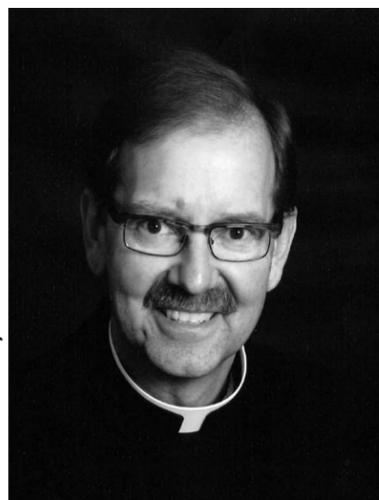
At the Easter vigil, as the priest blesses the new Paschal candle, he proclaims that "all time belongs to Him, and all the ages." Whether our experience is one of the best of times or the worst of times, Jesus is Lord of all time and eternity. Glory be to Him!

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: \$ 3,317.10  
Budget Deficit: \$ 1,432.90  
Current as of July 31, 2018.

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the eyes of outsiders. The same threshold can seem overwhelming and insurmountable to them while looking very simple and obvious to us." But most interestingly and to our main point, Weddell says about the so-called Generation X and Millennials, the majority of whom do not attend Mass, "They are not coming to us, so we have to go to them. But who will do so?"

In the very next paragraph strikes us priests straight to the heart. She says, "For the clergy it is easier to be pastors than to be fishermen-that is, to nourish those who come to the Church through the word and the sacraments than it is to seek out those who are far off in cultural environments that are very different. The parable of the lost sheep is reversed today: ninety-nine sheep have gone off and one remains in the sheepfold. The danger for us is to spend all our time nourishing this one remaining sheep and not to have time, also because of the scarcity of clergy to, to seek out those who are lost."

We must form intentional disciples of our own Catholics who are capable and equip to "go make disciples of all nations."

Now some insight from Fr. James Mallon's Divine Renovation; Bringing your parish from maintenance to mission:

• A bracing call to move every parish community from a maintenance model to a mission model...or die! I can heartily

recommend it to every parish priest and his parish council. (Terrance Prendergast, S.J. Archbishop of Ottawa)

• Fr Mallon has 'walked the walk' and is now sharing with all of us the frustrations, the victories and the humour in transforming sleepy Catholic parishes into places of dynamic encounter and mission. Well worth reading for anyone interested in a more dynamic parish life. Mallon himself writes: "The Church is at its best when it experiences this kind of cycle. She evangelizes and makes disciples and sends them out as missionaries to go and evangelize, to make disciples who can be baptized and taught, and eventually sent out. When the Church is healthy, she does this. When the Church is not healthy, when she is turned into herself, she has forgotten her great calling to be lumen gentium, a light to the nations, just as Israel had forgotten at the time of Jesus."

But now we hear that the above strategies of evangelization won't work unless we take notice that they are a digital generation. That's the challenge facing the Catholic Church: modernize and get the Gospel message digitalized or surrender. Are we up to the task? If not now, when? If not us, then who? *Here I am Lord, I come to do your will.* Sound familiar? Now to the task of re-packaging the Good News for millennials. Just this past month, I used an app called "Whatsapp" to communicate with

my youth leader. He was able to confirm my flights from Pittsburgh to Trinidad after the "Annual Fraternity of Priests Conference". Not only can technology get me to Trinidad, but it can also be a way to communicate with Millennials the love of Jesus.

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Thank you to everyone who attended our annual conference in Pittsburgh last month!



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