

THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

December 2019						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Rev. James Lawrence Burlington 1	Rev. Donald Roy Burlington 2	Rev. Andy Bord Cardiff, Wales 3	Rev. Barry English Cardiff, Wales 4	For the souls of our deceased FOP members 5	For prayer requests received 6	For our Holy Father, Pope Francis 7
Rev. Donal Gillespie Cardiff, Wales 8	Canon John Griffiths Cardiff, Wales 9	Rev. Matthew Jones Cardiff, Wales 10	Rev. David O'Donnell Cardiff, Wales 11	Rev. Barnabas Page Cardiff, Wales 12	Rev. Ryan Cubera Cleveland 13	Rev. Kevin Elbert Cleveland 14
Rev. Robert Franco Cleveland 15	Rev. James Mazanec Cleveland 16	Rev. Homer Blubaugh Columbus 17	Rev. Richard Engle Columbus 18	Rev. Justin Reis Columbus 19	Rev. Peter Gregor Comayagua 20	Rev. Robert Shaldone SOLT Corpus Christi 21
Most Rev. Paul Bemile Episcopal Advisor 22	Most Rev. Sam Jacobs D.D. Episcopal Adv. 23	Very Rev. Franc Kromberger Episcopal Adv. 24	Most Rev. John Myers Episcopal Adv. 25	Rev. Duaine Cote Fargo, ND 26	Very Rev. Dale Kinzler Fargo, ND 27	Rev. Msgr. Robert Laliberte Fargo, ND 28
Rev. Donald Leiphon Fargo, ND 29	Rev. Msgr. Dennis Skonseng Fargo, ND 30	Rev. Edmund Sylvia CSC South Bend, IN 31				

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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<http://www.fraternityofpriests.org>

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

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

Dear Fr. Von DeKosia,



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

THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

Coming to Catholicism

By Fr. Jurgen Liias, Boston Fraternity

Since announcing my decision to become a Catholic and to seek ordination through the Anglican Ordinariate, I have had many an inquiry from folk wondering, "Why?" Some of these were authentic expressions of inquisitiveness; others came with perplexity; not a few came with consternation and dismay.

My first reason is that this decision is an act of obedience to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As my Spiritual Autobiography details, this has been a long personal journey of twenty five years or more. However, I would add that as personal as it is, it is not just a private or uniquely individual call. It is not simply a private denominational predilection.

There is in the Christian life a force of gravity which draws the believer ever deeper into union with Christ. That union is not only a private mystical union—though it is that—but a deepening union with the mystical body of Christ, the Church. It is a dogmatic principle of the Catholic Church that "this Church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, subsists in the Catholic Church." (*Lumen Gentium*). If this is true, then this gravitational pull of Christ's Spirit is universally active, drawing all humanity to Christ the Head and to the fullness of his saving grace which he mediates through His Body the Church.

St. John Henry Newman, an

Anglican convert to Rome, insightfully quipped that there was no steady state between Atheism and Catholicism! There is always in the human soul that spiritual battle, the *psychomachia*, between the centrifugal forces of the world, the flesh, and the devil drawing us away from the Love of God, and the centripetal dynamic of the Holy Spirit pulling us ever deeper into the love of God. There is a *gravitas* to the Catholic Church, to the See of Peter, that is I believe a true and objective charism intended by Christ to draw his followers into union with him in the fellowship of the Catholic Church. Whatever the individual contours of my own movement into the Catholic church have been, I believe they are part of this larger, universal gravitational grace that emanates from the Heart of Jesus which is in his Body.

That, of course, already displays the second reason for my decision, theological. The great divide between the churches of the Reformation and the Catholic church is in the domain of Ecclesiology--What is the church? In the protestant world Anglicanism sought to maintain a Catholic ecclesiology, that is to say an ordering off the body that is organic, universal, and apostolic. Bishops, creeds, sacraments, and conciliarism have been maintained as integral pieces of Anglican ecclesiology—Papal Primacy alone being set aside. Within that Catholic structure,

Anglicanism has also asserted a principle of theological freedom and diversity. One *may* believe in spiritual regeneration in baptism but one *may not*. One *may* believe in the real presence in the eucharist but one *may not*. One *may* believe in the authority of scripture, but one *may not*. One *may* believe in the sanctity of marriage but one *may not*.

For much of my life as an Anglican, that freedom was a pleasant gift. But increasingly it had become a source of distress and a profound impediment to my priestly work as a pastor and preacher. How could I proclaim from the pulpit, the Bible teaches or Christianity asserts....when my Bishop says quite the opposite? How could I advise a person in the confessional when the priest in the neighboring parish would advise the opposite? And I speak here of matters essential and primary. My authority as a teacher and confessor needed to be based on something other than my own best opinion. (Of course, this quandary becomes even more confusing in the vast panoply of protestant denominational theologies on almost any given point of doctrine or morality.)

Flannery O'Connor spoke of the glorious freedom she experienced in being delivered from the "tyranny of her intellect." Fides ut intelligam! That has become my experience. It is the paradox of true intellectual freedom by submission to "the church's teaching."

It is a glorious freedom, not only in
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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!

In the United States, November celebrates Thanksgiving. November helps me to be more focused on giving thanks to God. A few years ago, inspired by a reflection in the *Magnificat*, I read *One Thousand Gifts: A Dare to Live Fully Right Where You Are* by Ann Voskamp. (Zondervan 2011) In it, she reflects on giving thanks and joy:

With an expiration of less than twelve hours, what does Jesus count as all most important? "And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them..." (Luke 22:19 NIV) ... In the original language, "he gave thanks" reads "eucharisteo." ... The root word of eucharisteo is charis, meaning "grace." Jesus took the bread and saw it as grace and gave thanks. ... It also holds its derivation, the Greek word chara, meaning "joy." Joy. Ah ... yes. I might be needing me some of that. ... Was this the clue to the quest of all most important? Deep chara joy is found only at the table of the euCHARisteo – the table of thanksgiving. I sit there long ... wondering ... is it that simple? Is the height of my chara joy dependent on the depths of my eucharisteo thanks? So then as long as thanks is possible ... I think this through. As long as thanks is possible, then joy is always possible. Joy is always possible. (One Thousand Gifts . . . by Ann Voskamp, found in chapter 2)

When I first read this, I was amazed and in awe. I have known for a long time now that Eucharist means "Thanksgiving," but I never connected *thanks* with *joy*. Isn't this what we all need? Isn't this for what we are all searching?! **JOY!**

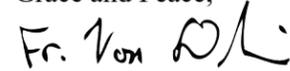
Think about this: all the times that we think how much happier we would be **if only**... hmm... **if only** we had this car, this house, a more stable work environment, a better vacation, a pain free body... The list could go on and on. The "If onlys" end up making us more miserable, for we lose track of the gifts, the graces we have right in front of us. We *can* find joy everywhere and in all things. There were people who lived through the terror of Nazi Concentration Camps and those who lived through the Soviet Gulag who

claimed to be able to find joy. Wow! I have experienced this in small ways, as I have been graced to look at my sufferings as gifts from God to offer back to Him. In those moments, I have truly experienced great joy! Here is the truth: **we can find joy all the time, in all things, everywhere, no matter what the circumstances.** It can be found in how we recognize the gifts God has poured upon us, and continues to pour upon us each day.

I think this is the reason Jesus made such a big deal about gratitude. Sometimes we think of Jesus asking for our thanks because He would be hurt if He is forgotten. "Poor Jesus, He gave so much and never got a "Thank You" card from His kids." AS IF! Rather, Jesus' greatest joy is *our joy!* God **wants** us to be happy, joyful! He knows we receive joy not by griping about what we don't have, but by gratitude – *eucharisteo* – for what we *do* have.

May we who have the Eucharist – Jesus' infinite thanksgiving to the Father – so available to us learn truly to give thanks to God in all circumstances, and so find great joy!

Grace and Peace,



Fr. Von DeRosia

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: \$ 1,272.00

Budget Deficit: \$ 3,478.00

Current as of September 30, 2019.

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the mind's love for God, but in the vocation of priest in the theological and spiritual formation of disciples of Jesus.

This theological conversion thus is not first of all a conversion to the peculiar Catholic beliefs that my inquirers challenge me about: What about Mary? What about purgatory? What about contraception? Rather it is a conversion to the faithfulness of Christ's gift to the church of an authentic authority to bind and to loose. At its deepest it is a question of pneumatology even more than ecclesiology. How does the Spirit of Truth actually function in the Church? Whatever complexities and seeming incongruities may be discerned, the Magisterium is at minimum a reasonable and practicable answer to the question of truth that is trustworthy. At best it is what the church proclaims, the provision by Christ to his people of the gift of unerring guidance.

Finally, and perhaps most urgently, my decision to become a Catholic is driven by our Lord's high priestly prayer, "May they be one." The unity of the church has been for me a primary and constant imperative of following Jesus. It has been expressed in my leadership of the local parish where congregational unity has been enfolded in a principle of unanimity in all decision making. It has been expressed in my vision of shaping a parish to be "fully Catholic, fully, evangelical, fully charismatic." It has been expressed in my collegial work cross denominationally not only in the official ecumenism of the mainline churches but with active fellowship with independent evangelical and pentecostal clergy. "May they be one, that the world might believe."

The unity of the church is not only an imperative for the internal

life of God's people but an essential dimension of her evangelical mission. There is no greater scandal and impediment to the conversion of the world to the love of Christ than her divisions. Pope Benedict established the Anglican Ordinariate both as a concrete instrument to begin to heal organically the divisions of the Reformation and as an essential strategy for the sake of "the new Evangelization." Many have seen in this initiative a bold prophetic action. As an Anglican I have received it.

Unity with All in Eucharistic Adoration

One of the gifts we have in the Catholic Church is our unity through the Eucharist. We believe that Jesus is Emmanuel: God with us. He is physically present in the Eucharist. This brings forth concord across religious and cultural lines throughout the world.

I had a powerful experience back around 2004 during Eucharistic Adoration in Brazil. It was my first time there and I spoke not one word of Portuguese, despite being fluent in Spanish. However, we were united together through the Eucharist which transcends all languages and speaks to each of us through the heart.

When we then prayed in tongues, I experienced that charismatic gift with others with whom I genuinely did not speak the native language. We were further united in adoration and praise in the Holy Spirit.

This hits home for me when dealing with those who are angry at the Catholic Church through a misunderstanding of our teachings. Rejecting what we believe, they reject Christ and embrace atheism. What is worse is that others believe that whatever personal struggles with sin they suffer that they must be the worst

of all sinners. It is a false attitude that closes them off from powerful call of God's grace unnecessarily.

The powerful gift of the Eucharistic adoration is the call to all sinners to understand our being loved by Christ and to be open to His transforming us. St. Paul in Romans call for us to have a renewal of our minds and we do that by submitting to Christ's wisdom and conforming our wills to His.

Those who feel, falsely, that their sinfulness makes them rejects of our Church may not be ready to receive the Eucharist but that does not mean they are outside of Christ. They can approach the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament as the curious sinner approached Christ giving His Sermon on the Mount.

Some of His hearers that day did not understand His teachings at first, but eventually embraced Christ after He transformed them in His presence and wisdom.

We can often forget that the apostles were not angels, some were outsiders and others were natural enemies until they met Christ.

This is the power of the Eucharist that goes beyond the decision to receive or not receive at Mass. In adoration it transforms the most hardened sinner, the most obstinate of holdouts and the greatest enemies of our faith into those who begin to understand and get it.

It is tragic that people receive the message that they are outside of Christ when they do not yet understand who Christ is and what He offers them. The exposition of the Eucharist is Christ calling people to investigate and to seek to understand the truth that is Christ in their own lives and to find his mercy and the graces of conversion.

It is a powerful gift that Christ left us so that He could be Emmanuel, God with Us. –ed.

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

