



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

# THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

March 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Rev. Alan Shnob Ogdensburg, NY	Rev. Joseph Muldoon Ottawa, Canada	Rev. Robert Boyle Pittsburgh, PA	Rev. John Brennan Pittsburgh, PA	For the souls of our deceased FOP members	For prayer requests received	For our Holy Father, Pope Francis
Rev. Thomas Federline Pittsburgh, PA	Rev. Tony Gargotta Pittsburgh, PA	Rev. Stan Gregorek Pittsburgh, PA	Rev. James Holland Pittsburgh, PA	Rev. Thomas Kredel Pittsburgh, PA	Rev. Joseph Luisi Pittsburgh, PA	Rev. John Lynam Pittsburgh, PA
Rev. Daniel Mahoney Pittsburgh, PA	Rev. Nicholas Mastrangelo Pittsburgh, PA	Rev. Kenneth Oldenski Pittsburgh, PA	Rev. Thomas Sparacino Pittsburgh, PA	Rev. John Sweeney Pittsburgh, PA	Rev. Paul Zywan Pittsburgh, PA	Msgr. Cuthbert Alexander Port-of-Spain
Rev. Gerard Bernier Port-of-Spain	Rev. Riginald DeFour Port-of-Spain	Rev. Raymond Francis Port-of-Spain	Rev. Clifford Graham Port-of-Spain	Rev. Harold Imammshah Port-of-Spain	Rev. Dwight Merrick Port-of-Spain	Rev. Ian Taylor Port-of-Spain
Rev. John Theodore CSSP Port-of-Spain	Rev. John Dreher Providence, RI	Rev. Robert Giardina Providence, RI				

## The Day Is Now Far Spent by Cardinal Sarah

A Reflection

*One of the greatest gifts to our time is the e-reader. Various brand names allow us easy access to books that will help us to read the latest tomes and even ancient manuscripts that would have been out of our physical reach in previous decades. So reading is now easier for us to do and that is a good thing. Archbishop Fulton Sheen exhorted priests to never be those who last read a book in the seminary. Today, there is no excuse to be that priest with the ubiquitous available of literary material, spiritual and otherwise.*

It may turn out that the most powerful voice for the Catholic Church today is an African Cardinal named Robert Sarah. A Native of Guinea and a survivor of the dictatorship of Sekou Toure, he is now the head of Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

Reading his latest book, *The Day Is Now Far Spent*, (Ignatius 2019), I was surprised by his powerful teaching. The reactionary movements in the United States Catholic Church praise him because he embraces traditional morality and demands good Catholic liturgy. It does not take long to see there is much they praise in some flag waving political movements that he finds quite troubling.

As an African, he looks at the

United States and Europe not only as an outsider, but like he was on the Carpathia and able to see the Titanic sink below the cold Atlantic. Comparing the current Western Civilization to the final days of Rome, he sees little hope for its future.

Unlike the vast majority of bishops in the United States. He sees that Western Catholicism not only lost its bearing but its courage and backbone when it exchanged the truth for a lie— spirituality for materialism. The result is without the prophetic life of the Church to counter them, nations in the west are succumbing to a fierce tyranny as serious as Nazism and Communism, he laments.

One who truly loves the gifts of all cultures, he has concerns about the United Nations and the European Union who try to build one culture and one world out of the many. They root themselves in European unity which he also decries. He calls it “the project that consists of trying to annihilate the history of the States on the altar of financial interests,” which he labels a dangerous utopia.

*“The U.N. elites dream of a world government that will rule peoples, cultures and traditions that were formerly so different. It is a dream that borders on madness and is a sign of the contempt of the peoples for their riches.” He*

writes.

The African Cardinal not only denounces materialism and its pursuit of wealth, he considers capitalism not a solution to communism but the opposite side of the same coin.

Describing our current world as a pagan system in which gods are born and die depending on our interests, he claims that we reject the true God to create our own divinities.

*The postmodern world is the kingdom of idols, sorcerers, and astrologers. These gods and their clergy are cruel. They do not care about life and joy. Behind the black curtains of a false humanism, they are at the service of financial capitalism.*

Many outside the Church, who reject our morality, will disagree with his moral teaching, but they will be fascinated with his diagnosis. Cardinal Sarah, while embracing Catholic morality would tell the Christians pointing the condemning fingers at those who live lifestyles we reject to note the three fingers pointing back. The current rise of changes from traditional morality are symptoms that the Catholic community severed itself from spirituality. He particularly laments and cites as cause the lack of a discipline fostering silence—a world without distractions—in Catholic lives today, especially among priests and bishops. This, he says, coupled with the proliferation

### 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

Email: [contact@fraternityofpriests.org](mailto:contact@fraternityofpriests.org)  
<http://www.fraternityofpriests.org>

Please cut and return this form with your donation.

Do you know anyone who would like to receive our Newsletter?  
(Please print legibly)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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

Dear Fr. Von DeKosia,

# Dear Fraternity Brothers and Friends of the Priesthood

## EPISCOPAL ADVISORS

Archbishop John Myers  
Newark, NJ

Bishop Sam Jacobs  
Houma-Thibodaux, LA

Bishop Paul Bemile  
Wa, Ghana

## DIRECTORS

Fr. Volney DeRosia  
Manchester, New Hampshire  
Chairman

Fr. Robert Carr  
Boston, MA

Fr. Gregory Paffel  
St. Cloud, MN

Fr. Dwight Merrick  
Trinidad

Fr. John Kiley  
Boston, MA

Fr. Ray Ratzberger  
Tucson, AZ

Fr. Tom Sparacino  
Pittsburgh, PA

### 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!

One of the recent readings from daily Mass was about Saul's disobedience to the LORD (see 1 Samuel 15). Samuel told Saul that the LORD wanted Saul to punish Amalek and put everything under the ban. Saul attacks and wins the battle, but keeps all of the best sheep, oxen and lambs. When Samuel confronts him about his disobedience, Saul claims that he kept them to offer sacrifice to the LORD. From this comes Samuel's famous line, "Obedience is better than sacrifice" (1 Sam. 15:22 NABRE). After this, Saul admits he sinned, and asks Samuel to forgive him (note that he doesn't ask the LORD's forgiveness), and when Samuel refuses, he begs him, "I have sinned, yet honor me now before the elders of my people and before Israel. Return with me that I may worship the LORD your God" (1 Sam 15:30).

As we prepare for Lent, this is a good passage on which to meditate. Notice Saul's relation with the God – he doesn't have a relationship with Him. When talking to Samuel, Saul refers to the "the LORD your God," not "my God" or "our God." He sees the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as one god like all the other gods – someone to "buy off" with sacrifices, but not one with whom to have relationship.

What is the purpose of our Lenten sacrifices? Are we trying to build our relationship with God, or are they the "same-old, same-old" that we have done for years? Are we trying to "buy God off"? More often than not, I find I'm more focused on myself in the sacrifices and less on God. Too often, they speak to my identity – when I fail, I am failure; when I succeed, I have done great things. Yet, our sacrifices are meant to place self-will in the proper place – last – placing God's will first.

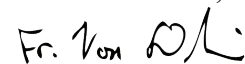
**Obedience is better than sacrifice.** Samuel's words show us that we have a limited view and God has a full view. We ... okay, let me rephrase that ... I often think I know what is best. Yet, it is God's will, not my own, that needs to

be obeyed. In Proverbs, we read, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, on your own intelligence do not rely; In all your ways be mindful of him, and he will make straight your paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6 NABRE).

I may think that this sacrifice or that practice will lead me to God, but have I asked God what He wants me to do? St. Maximilian Kolbe, my confirmation saint, said that holiness is an easy algebra equation:  $W + w = S$ . The big "W" is God's will, the little "w" is my will. When my will is united to God's will, then I have Sanctity ("S"), holiness!

As we prepare for Lent, let us ask God to help us keep relationship with Him at the forefront of everything we do – each sacrifice, each practice we take on. Let us as Him to give us the courage to say "No!" to our own will, so that we can say "YES!" to His. This obedience is better than all other sacrifice.

Please remember to save the dates for our annual Fraternity Retreat, August 9-14, 2020 in Parma, Ohio, U.S.A.

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: \$ 4,003.00  
Budget Deficit: \$ 747.00

Current as of December 31, 2019.



...continued from page 1

of electronic devices, is what is destroying spirituality and society. The symptoms of it are the moral breakdown.

Cardinal Sarah, echoing Pope St. John Paul II, cites the disastrous decisions of the Western intervention into Iraq as well as Yemen, Syria and Libya and believes that this was done in support of Western financial interests at the expense of the peace in these societies. The wildest radical screaming "No Blood for Oil" does not seem to be as strong as Cardinal Sarah in condemning that military intrusion.

He warns that the Church's call is to foster reason and purify it. This is a radical split from those who talk Christianity as a Bible based church that sees the United States as the new Israel and that bonks people over the head with Leviticus. No, the Church is here to purify reason. This is to build a just society where peace flourishes. He warns our failures in this role produce law that has no transcendent foundation which "turns into a totalitarian power." Therefore, he explains, that the role of the Church is to "set up a barrier against totalitarian arbitrariness that emancipates itself from natural law."

In other words, the true role of the Christian is to foster wisdom, love and justice for all in the society.

The solution, he teaches, is to return to traditional spirituality in all its splendor. He calls priests and bishops to foster silence in their lives and build parishes around Eucharistic adoration. This is silent prayer around the tabernacle containing the Eucharist—the Body and Blood of Christ.

Drawing heavily on the teachings of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, he calls clergy to reject materialism and

prayerfully embrace the virtues. The cause of the sex abuse crisis was not homosexuality or the demands of celibacy, the Cardinal explains, but embracing consumerism and materialism when we must live the prophetic virtues of poverty, chastity and charity among others. Materialism and consumerism anesthetize the contemplative life, he teaches, and make one falsely believe he is powerful. Rejecting them leads one to see his existence in the truth by seeking the one who is the truth.

*The consumer society is inebriating; it sets man against God. Like a man who staggers because he has drunk too much, Western man defies God and refuses to adore him. He believes that he himself is all powerful, whereas he has never been so frail.*

He predicts that many in the Church in the west will suffer actual martyrdom and notes they are experiencing a daily martyrdom — suffering the contempt of the world. Especially, he notes, Christian parents. "You must confront the contempt of the world when you choose to give life."

The Cardinal insists on living the virtue of fortitude which he defines in St. Augustine's terms of "love readily bearing all things for the sake of the loved object," and it "is the virtue that helps us to confront bodily and spiritual dangers." He goes further to remind people that "Jesus said that we are the salt of the Earth, not the sugar of the Earth."

I do not see Cardinal Sarah calling for an angry activism that many equate with a politicized Christianity we see today. What I do see is the call to live disciplined spirituality that allows one to see the world from the outside and love

those on the inside.

Cardinal Sarah's words are a powerful reminder of why Jesus founded His Church. We discover in the pages of *The Day Is Now Far Spent*, what Christ is saying to us through the current chastisement and where we must go from here.

Of course, part of our fraternity meetings involve a form of study. We are coming to the end of the reading Fr. Raneiro Cantalamessa's words to the US Bishops, all eleven talks.

Clearly, Cardinal Sarah's book might be something to consider to study, but to be honest, I spoke about it so much to my fellow fraternity members others are already reading it.

In any case, the words of Cardinal Robert Sarah make for a strong reflection upon the future of our Church and our direction in serving her in the parishes.

This is especially true because he gives a perspective that is different for those of us in the US and Europe, but more in line possibly with our brothers in Trinidad/Tobago and Africa among other places. Since we truly are a universal church, this perspective may help us as we continue to fight for the faith in our own worlds; especially in the United States where a hostile environment to our work is more common than maybe we saw previously in the twentieth century.

In either case, the book is a reminder how much reading has to be a part of our ministry and keeping up to date on the latest reading not only from our own perspective but also the perspectives from other parts of the world as well. This is especially true since, Cardinal Sarah rails against the sending of aid to his native continent that has strings attached in western morality.

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