

July 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			Rev. Thomas Brown Alexandria, LA	1 For the souls of our deceased FOP members	2 For prayer requests received	3 For our Holy Father, Pope Francis
Msgr. John Mraz Allentown, PA	5 Rev. George Winne Allentown, PA	6 Rev. John Brennan Boston, MA	7 Rev. Robert Carr Boston, MA	8 Rev. William Carroll Boston, MA	9 Rev. Donald Clinton Boston, MA	10 Rev. Volney DeRosia Boston, MA
Dcn. Paul Dow Boston, MA	12 Rev. Gerry Fraser Boston, MA	13 Rev. Patrick Gilbert Boston, MA	14 Dcn. Chuck Hall Boston, MA	15 Rev. Richard Kelley Boston, MA	16 Rev. John Kiley Boston, MA	17 Rev. Maurice Larochele Boston, MA
Rev. Jurgen Liias Boston, MA	19 Rev. Paul McManus Boston, MA	20 Rev. Thomas Reilly Boston, MA	21 Rev. Chris Wallace Boston, MA	22 Rev. James Lawrence Burlington	23 Rev. Donald Roy Burlington	24 Rev. Andy Bord Cardiff, Wales
Rev. Barry English Cardiff, Wales	26 Rev. Donal Gillespie Cardiff, Wales	27 Canon John Griffiths Cardiff, Wales	28 Rev. Matthew Jones Cardiff, Wales	29 Rev. David O'Donnell Cardiff, Wales	30 Rev. Barnabas Page Cardiff, Wales	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.

Please cut and return this form with your donation.

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(Please print legibly)	
Name	
Street	
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The Fraternity of Priests pledges 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 carefully and wisely, and not to ask for money that is not needed.

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

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

Dear Fr. Von DeRosia,



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

THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

The Holy Hour Is Your Most Important Activity Today

By Fr. Robert J Carr

One of the rules of the Fraternity of Priests is to do a daily holy hour—a daily time of prayer. Archbishop Fulton Sheen recommended it to priests as well. He taught that the priest who did a holy hour would not be lost.

This daily prayer time is essential; it really gets us in touch with He whom we serve.

Those to whom I minister, especially when I was doing youth ministry, know that I would often ask them if they were talking to my boss. They knew I was not referring to the pastor or the archbishop, but to Jesus in prayer.

It can be so easy to get lost in doing good things and trying even to live a virtuous life, but without a life of prayer we can lose a sense of whom we are. When we pray, we get in touch with the Holy Trinity the source of our being who draws us closer to Him and to whom He creates us to be.

When we do not pray then we focus more on whom we think we should be, not on whom God creates us to be.

Often times, I remind priests of the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer who explained that when one is in ministry if he becomes disillusioned, that is a good thing. The reason, he taught, was that

up until that point the ministry was the minister's. Once he gets disillusioned then his ministry becomes Christ's. It is no longer his own vision of what he should be doing, but Christ's vision of what he wants his mission to be.

It is a difficult lesson to learn.

Prayer sustains our lives and ministry in service to Christ. If we do not pray then the disillusionment can lead to discouragement, despair and finally walking away. We had our own vision of ministry and God's plan for us did not match it, so we left.

This means that at times our ministry can be a mystery to us. We do what we should be doing, and we do it at our best, but it may not be what we expected. That creates the friction.

One of my favorite books is *He Leadeth Me* by Fr. Walter Czizek, S.J.

The priest grew up in a tough New Jersey neighborhood and desired to do all he could for God. Taking his fighting spirit to Eastern Europe towards the end of the World War II, he brought his vision behind the Iron Curtain. It did not last long. The authorities arrested him and sent him to Lubyanka prison where he spent time in

solitary confinement. Eventually the Soviet Authorities tortured him, forcing him to sign a false confession that he was a spy for the Vatican. They sentenced him to the GULAGs for fifteen years in Siberia. In his solitary confinement, after his arrest, he prayed about how all his plans as priest were dashed. He felt the Lord tell him during this time that those were his plans, not the Lord's.

While in the GULAGs, he and other priests there were able to minister to the prisoners in secret even doing secret Masses for them and hearing their confessions clandestinely.

His 'day job' was as a slave carpenter. The Soviets were developing communities in Siberia. They used the slave prisoners to build housing there. Czizek came upon the reasoning that even though he was forced into this work, as a prisoner for his faith in the GULAGs, he was going to do his work for God. So, he worked not as other prisoners did, doing a poor job because of their slave status. He reasoned it was not the Soviets asking him to build these houses, but God and so he gave his best into his work for the glory of God.

Remember, these were the same people who tortured him into making ...continued on page 3

Dear Fraternity Brothers and Friends of the Priesthood

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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 Budget:
\$4,750.00

Actual Donations:
\$2,676.00

Budget Deficit:
\$2,074.00

Current as of
April 30, 2020.

As I write this (mid-May), we have hope that we may reinstitute public Masses in the near future. That being said, when the Fraternity Board of Directors met (virtually), we decided, given so many unknowns with COVID-19 and the world situation, that we would NOT have the Fraternity Conference in Ohio this year.

We're branching out... we're going to do a virtual conference. Dr. Mary Healy is still planning to speak to at this conference. We're planning on having praise time over the internet. We're hoping that this format will allow more brothers – not fewer – to be involved, since they will not need to travel. Obviously, this is not ideal, but we will make the best with what we have. When we have more details worked out, we'll let you know.

In the midst of all of this, I keep reminding myself that I was made for this time. In the midst of chaos and woe, we can often fall into the "Why me?!" syndrome. Yet, the truth is that the troubles of this time are not beyond God's knowledge and providence. He knew this pandemic would be here when He made me ... and you. This gives me great assurance, despite the cessation of public Masses, the staying-at-home, and the change in ministry.

As I have looked on what has been going on, I've had to remind myself that being a priest is not synonymous with the work of a priest. I remember Fr. Benedict Groeschel, C.F.R.'s book *A Priest Forever: The Life of Father Eugene Hamilton* (which came out as I was graduating college and preparing to go to seminary... I got several copies as gifts that year!). Here was a priest who died shortly after his ordination. He never celebrated Mass, never heard confessions, never did anything

that most priests – including myself – count as an integral part of our identity. Yet, he was a priest, and the ontological change has an effect on his soul for all eternity.

This time of pandemic has made me look again at my priesthood and ask, "What am I really?" I can't do so many of the things I used to do. I don't get all of the acclamation and even the personal high from my usual "priestly accomplishments." I have had to look at and reroot myself in Christ, in prayer and adoration. As priests, we are priests by virtue of our ordination not because of what we do.

In the book *In Sinu Jesu: When Heart Speaks to Heart (The Journal of a Priest at Prayer)*, Jesus is constantly telling the author that to be a priest is to be invited into a deep intimate friendship with Christ. I encourage you, my brothers, in this time of purification and mercy, to look to Jesus the great High Priest. Invite Him to help you reroot your priestly identity in Him, and not in the "work" of priesthood – to be that intimate friend of Christ first, and then a minister of the mysteries as a result of that friendship. May God's blessings be upon you.

Our annual Fraternity Priests' Conference will be on August 10-11 with Mary Healy. It will be held virtually from 12 noon to 3pm on both days.

Grace and Peace,

Fr. Von DeRosia

Editor's Note: Please send articles, comments, and photos to the our editor, Fr. Bob Carr, via e-mail to editor@fraternityofpriests.org. Newsletter material from all Fraternity members is gratefully accepted.



...continued from page 1

a false confession, sentenced him to fifteen years in Siberia as a slave. Despite this, he gave them his best work in response because that is what God wanted him to do, he decided. He certainly was not only a long way from home but a long way from what he planned in his ministry. That book is one of the most important in my priesthood which is another benefit he gave us from his situation that certainly he never planned.

I have an image I use called the three sided cage. It comes from my ministry where a person is praying for an end to his problems but will only accept one answer. If any other answer comes, he will not listen to it or even notice it because it was not the answer he wanted.

The three sided cage image comes from describing the person as being locked in a cell. He is shaking the doors demanding to be let out. The prisoner wants someone to get the key and open the door to the cage so that he can be free. Everyone else looks at this situation and says to each other: "Does he not notice there is no back to that cage? All he has to do is let go of the door, turn around and walk out."

Why does he not do that? Because he only wants to resolve the issue his way.

People pray demanding God answer in the way they want and do not see His response even though it is right before them. They are blind to His action because that is not the answer they wanted or expected.

When we pray and make that holy hour a central part of our ministry,

we are more able to surrender our own vision of ministry and of ourselves and give it over to Christ to lead us.

Those who know me know that I love to write and write all kinds of material daily for various venues. I do not write for money, but to enhance others' lives. It does not matter to me if ten thousand people read my work or three persons. What matters is that those who read it are better because of it.

One of my series is interviews with authors and recently I spoke with Fr. Donald Haggerty about his latest book *Contemplative Enigmas* (Ignatius).

That book changed my holy hour and led me to create a half hour of quiet time to it. The other half hour includes spiritual reading and the rosary. Spending that time in silence daily before either the Blessed Sacrament or a live video feed to the Blessed Sacrament on YouTube has driven home to me the real need for this prayer.

One fascinating theme in the book I learned and it really comes out in the prayer is that we encounter God on his terms not our own. That seems fairly obvious, even as the colloquial expression goes, "a no brainer". In practice, however, it is not so easy. We can easily assume we are doing what God wants us to do but without prayer, we may find we are doing things on our terms not His.

The habit of sitting before the Blessed Sacrament for an hour and sitting in silence for a half hour are both important elements to our entire ministry. They help us maintain our understanding of

Please send us your prayer intentions:

whom we are and whose ministry we are actually doing.

When we are dealing with God, we encounter paradoxes and one which Haggerty points out and which all people of prayer discover is that God speaks to us in the silence. We need to listen to Him in that silence to know where He calls us. Cardinal Robert Sarah, in his latest book *The Day Is Now Far Spent* (Ignatius) also teaches the importance of silence in the life of priest. He laments its lack in many rectories. There we learn that God's answer may not be instant but it comes.

The other day, I watched a time lapse video of the weather. You could see the clouds changing shapes so dynamically as they rolled by the camera. In reality, the clouds move so slowly as we know, we cannot see their constantly changing shape as it happens so slowly. I realized then that God can often work the same way—doing powerful things in a slow way. It is in His time and not ours. There is a saying: "The Church moves in centuries," maybe God moves in millennia. Whatever the case, God moves in his time and he calls us to be in touch with Him so that He can move us in His time, His way and not ours.

Without prayer, we lose a complete sense of His action and when disillusionment sets in or any other kind of difficulty, we can give up quickly. We want to do our ministry, but God may not be on board with where we are going. He has something up that is beyond our imagination. We need to wait patiently in prayer to see it.