



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

THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

| August 2020 | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| Rev. Mark Mitchell Grand Rapids 30 | Msgr. Ayub Nasar Grand Rapids 31 | | | | | 1 For our Holy Father, Pope Francis |
| Msgr. Ryan Cubera Cleveland, OH 2 | Rev. Kevin Elbert Cleveland, OH 3 | Rev. Robert Franco Cleveland, OH 4 | Rev. James Mazanec Cleveland, OH 5 | 6 For the souls of our deceased FOP members | 7 For prayer requests received | 8 Rev. Homer Blubaugh Columbus, OH |
| Rev. Richard Engle Columbus, OH 9 | Rev. Justin Reis Columbus, OH 10 | Rev. Peter Gregor Comayagua 11 | Rev. Robert Shaldone SOLT Corpus Christi, TX 12 | Most Rev. Paul Bemile Episcopal Adv. 13 | Most Rev. Sam Jacobs D.D. Episcopal Adv. 14 | Very Rev. Franc Kromberger Episcopal Adv. 15 |
| Most Rev. John Myers Episcopal Adv. 16 | Rev. Duaine Cote Fargo, ND 17 | Very Rev. Dale Kinzler Fargo, ND 18 | Rev. Msgr. Robert Laliberte Fargo, ND 19 | Rev. Donald Leiphon Fargo, ND 20 | Rev. Msgr. Dennis Skonseng Fargo, ND 21 | Rev. Edmund Sylvia CSC South Bend, IN 22 |
| Rev. Peter Pienaa Donzing Ghana 23 | Rev. Robert Sackey Ghana 24 | Rev. Charles Antekeier Grand Rapids 25 | Rev. James Bozung Grand Rapids 26 | Rev. George Fekete Grand Rapids 27 | Rev. Thomas Hack Grand Rapids 28 | Rev. Donald Lomasiewicz Grand Rapids 29 |

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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Email: contact@fraternityofpriests.org
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Dear Fr. Von DeKosia,
This donation is to help the Fraternity of Priests in continuing their work of ministering to priests.
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 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.

Finding the Water

Submitted by Fr. Greg Paffel - Permission granted by Fr. Mark Stang

Mark Stang was raised in a loving family but struggled in school and suffered low self-esteem. His reaction was to feel that he needed to be the best in order to be accepted. As a young man, he was on his way to being a farmer when he felt a "tug" to do more. He decided to enter the seminary, which meant giving up his dream. He continued to struggle with a sense of inadequacy, feeling like a fish out of the water. He eventually learned that surrendering to God--who loves him beyond his knowledge--is the way to find the water...only to be diagnosed with cancer a year before his ordination to the priesthood. His inspiring journey, including more than one supernatural event, shows us the power in surrendering to God.

Mark is one of our Fraternity brothers from St. Cloud, MN. His short 77 page biography is written by Carol Sanders. Following is an excerpt from chapter one. If you would like the entire book, it may be found on Amazon.

Boy on the Farm

My journey to the priesthood is unusual, but when we look back to the very beginning, it might seem almost planned. The beginning, of course, is my conception, for all

life begins at conception.

I was conceived in a seminary. Now let me explain. My Mom and Dad showed us children what a beautiful marriage can be like. I'm sure they had their disagreements, but they never argued in front of us children. They enjoyed similar things together like visiting with family and friends, playing cards and especially music. They truly enjoyed dancing. Their love for each other was very evident and expressed in many ways.

Another way their love was expressed was in September of 1957. My Mom and Dad traveled with my aunts and uncles to Hastings, Nebraska, to visit my Dad's brother, Br. Dan, OSC. Mom and Dad spent the weekend at the seminary in some rooms that had been converted into guest quarters. Nine months later, on June 2, 1958, Andrew and Edith (Winkelman) Stang were proud parents of their fifth child, Mark James Stang.

The family grew to ten children--six girls and four boys: Karen, Steve, Marlene, Mike, Mark, Jeff, Lori, Jeanie, Stacie and Sandra (who is now called Sister Perpetua O.P.).

In my early formative years-

until I was six years old-I grew up in a safe place that some people may even call a bubble. Our family social life consisted of close neighbors, church members and cousins, some of whom were also our neighbors. At the time, I didn't realize how protected I was.

We grew up on a farm near St. Nicholas, a town of about a hundred people in Stearns County, in central Minnesota. Our farm had it all: 160 acres, thirty-two dairy cows, chickens, pigs, two horses, one dog, and a bunch of other pets over the years. I loved to be outside, playing "farmer in the ground". I took my little red tractor and plow down to the granary where the sand was soft from the road runoff after a hard rain.

I also recall lying on the grass, looking up to the clouds, and wondering what heaven is like. The clouds were cumulus puffy ones that you can discover animals in. To this very day, clouds fascinate me-how they can change forms in minutes, how the sunlight glistens and reflects back from them. The bigger the thunderhead, the more glorious.

Looking up at the clouds when I was young, I would ask myself if there is a heaven and what it's going

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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:

\$1,215.00

Budget Deficit:

\$3,535.00

Current as of
May 31, 2020.

I am disappointed that we will not be able to have our Fraternity Conference in person next month. I was looking forward to time together with the brothers. I am glad, though, that we are still able to do something – having a virtual conference. Visit www.fraternityofpriests.org/virtual-conference/ to register online. I'm also incredibly grateful that Dr. Mary Healy agreed to speak at the conference. I know Dr. Healy will have beautiful and powerful words for us, and I know, even more, that our Lord Jesus will be present and have a word for each of us.

Our plan for the virtual conference is to have our members join us live if they can (but it will be recorded for your use afterward)... with your brothers. We hope that you will gather with your local fraternities to enter into the conference. We will pray and praise together online, and then have some silent time to reflect on the scriptures, and after Dr. Healy's presentations. We invite you to take the time with those around you to discuss the presentations and how they affect your priesthood. If you can gather with your fraternity, this will make the conference so more than just "watching a screen," but truly an opportunity to grow in brotherhood.

This is the whole point of the Fraternity – that we are not lone rangers, or masters of our fiefdoms! Jesus called us to the presbyterate – a brotherhood. We are not in competition with each other, nor are we left on our own. We are brothers, and brothers have to support each other.

Just before I was ordained, I made the commitment to myself I would not allow myself to be isolated. I was ordained in 2003 and saw how the

isolating effect of the scandals of 2002 had hurt some of my newly ordained brothers. I went searching for a "support group" of priests to help me stay faithful as a priest. After a couple of months, I entered the fraternity, and these men– these brothers – have helped me so much over the years. I have gone to them for advice and sought healing and mercy in confession. They have held me accountable in my weakness and supported me when I was wounded by the weight and stresses of priesthood. I also found strength and purpose as they came to me seeking my loving support as a brother.

Brotherhood has meant so much to me over the past seventeen years, helping me continue to grow into the priest God made me to be. As we gather in August – albeit not in person – I hope that this international brotherhood will strengthen us in our calling to follow God as priests of Jesus Christ.

Please note that, since Mondays can be chaotic in the parish, we have moved the dates of the Conference to Tuesday, August 11 and Wednesday, August 12, 2020. Both days will still be from noon-3pm Eastern Daylight Time (UTC -04:00).

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.

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to be like there. Angels playing harps? I would get a warm feeling in my heart-until my back got cold and wet. Looking up, I would ask myself, Is Joanne there? My aunt Joanne died very young, leaving two young sons behind. I went to her wake. I didn't see her body in that box because I was too short, but I remember looking around and feeling the sadness in the room.

Later I would ponder and actually want to talk to Joanne: "where are you?" I felt a deep connection to the beyond. The idea of heaven made me feel a closeness, like a friendship. A safe place. To this day I enjoy contemplating the sky.

Growing up in the country, I spent most of my time outdoors. We had a daily routine of chores, taking care of the animals and playing with the pets. Pepper, our black lab, would enjoy playing "figure 8". He would race in a circle pattern on our big lawn and get just close enough to us that we could almost touch him. If we dived toward him when he got close, we could possibly touch his back leg. This was our simple country life.

My father always encouraged us kids to join in with the work, but we never lacked time for play. He would give us time to play softball in the spring and summer and football in the fall. With nine brothers and sister, I never had a hard time finding others to play with. At night after chores, we would at times cross the field to our neighbors 'place, or they would come to our place. They were also

our cousins-ten children in their family too. I really enjoyed playing these games. I wasn't the best athlete, but we had a great time.

Farm life meant chores. Dad was not one to buy new machinery; he liked to go to farm auctions. He would get a good deal on used machinery to keep us boys busy learning how to repair it. Instead of telling us what to do, he would be patient and show us how. Once he knew we could handle the responsibility safely, he allowed us to do the work. Dad was generous with praise-and fifty cents a week. Each lesson made us feel a little more grown up.

I felt like an adult the first time that I got to drive a tractor. We were picking rocks in an open field-that's also how my older siblings learned to drive. I was eight years old and barely able to reach the clutch and the brake of the H Farmall tractor. At first, I thought it was more fun imagining driving a tractor when I played with my toys. Now I was responsible for my safety and the safety of the equipment, but most especially the safety of others. This made me nervous. Later on, that evening, Dad told Mom at the supper table that I had done a good job. I felt proud that Dad trusted me. My other siblings smiled and then teased me, "he drove so crooked we thought he was on the road to Richmond." This positive experience gives me a sense of accomplishment even today as I enjoy being out in the field on my day off, driving a tractor.

My mother was a kindhearted woman who never played

favorites. She treated all of us children the same. We knew we could go to her with any problem. She was wise enough to know when we were just whining about something; she would often remind us, "don't make a mountain out of a molehill." I find myself in situations today where this wisdom helps me stay calm and focused.

Mom was a wonderful cook. Freshly baked bread was a treat. We could add butter that would melt on the soft, warm bread and create a snack of buttery goodness that welcomed us home from school. Her specialty was pies-real lemon, apple and rhubarb with raisins. Mom truly made our house a home, even when money got a little tight and she had to take a job off the farm. She worked in Eden Valley at Animal Fair, where they manufactured stuffed animals. She liked the job because Dad said she could do with the money whatever she wanted. Soon we had new pots and pans and dishes.

I never saw myself as a spiritual person or having grown up in a spiritual family. I saw ours as a normal family. We were not perfect. We had our arguments. As a young boy, I remember praying the rosary every day, especially during Lent. We would usually say this prayer after supper. Dad would lead, and all of us would kneel down around the table with our elbows on our chairs. I was one of the biggest complainers. This was much more of a pain for me than a spiritual experience. I would much rather be outside working. ...

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

