

March 2021						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Rev. Maurice Larochelle Boston, MA	Rev. Jurgen Lias. Boston, MA	Rev. Paul McManus Boston, MA	For the souls of our deceased FOP members	For prayer requests received	For our Holy Father, Pope Francis
Rev. Thomas Reilly Boston, MA	Rev. Chris Wallace Boston, MA	Rev. Donald Roy Burlington	Rev. Andy Bord Cardiff, Wales	Rev. Barry English Cardiff, Wales	Rev. Donal Gillespie Cardiff, Wales	Canon John Griffiths Cardiff, Wales
Rev. Matthew Jones Cardiff, Wales	Rev. David O'Donnell Cardiff, Wales	Rev. Barnabas Page Cardiff, Wales	Rev. Ryan Cubera Cleveland, OH	Rev. Kevin Elbert Cleveland, OH	Rev. Robert Franco Cleveland, OH	Rev. James Mazanec Cleveland, OH
Rev. Homer Blubaugh Columbus, OH	Rev. Richard Engle Columbus, OH	Rev. Justin Reis Columbus, OH	Rev. Peter Gregor Comayagua	Rev. Robert Shaldone SOLT Corpus Christi	Most Rev. Paul Bemile Episcopal Advisor	Most Rev. Sam Jacobs D.D. Episcopal Advisor
Very Rev. Franc Kromberger Episcopal Advisor	Most Rev. John Myers Episcopal Ad.	Rev. Duaine Cote Fargo, ND	Rev. Richard Goellen Fargo, ND			

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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Please cut and return this form with your donation.

Dear Fr. Von DeKosia,

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

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

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.

VOLUME XXX ISSUE 3 FEBRUARY 2021

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

THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

Teaching Our Parishioners about the Catholic Standard of Freedom of Speech

By Fr. Robert J. Carr - Boston Fraternity

We are witnessing the inevitable clash between two standards of law in the United States and in the world. Whenever there is a dispute, dig for the unspoken issues behind the entrenched positions. You will find the source of the fight.

The positions are whether or not Twitter and other big tech companies can de-platform anyone in this age of freedom of speech. This is not an American issue, it is a worldwide issue. Twitter is an international forum. National leaders decried the move to de-platform then President Donald Trump and the President of Mexico wants Twitter's and the other tech giants actions addressed at the G20 summit.

This incident is central to what we believe as Catholics and something we priests can address with parishioners. The difference between the letter of the law and its spirit.

This matter came to a head following the January 6 breach of the US Capitol building. Pictures of the riot included a despicable message among other horrible slogans and actions. It said: "Camp Auschwitz".

Any modern day demographic in this country of those who suffered and died in Auschwitz and the other concentration camps is my fellow American; those outside of this country are my fellow human beings.

St. Maximilian Kolbe gave his life for another prisoner a Jewish man at that same death camp. He along with other priests were imprisoned for preaching the Gospel which the NAZIs hated along with the Jews the main target of the NAZIs. For the record, my father was one of the soldiers that liberated Dachau. He talked little about it except for the pile of shoes that were once worn by thousands of the victims in the camp, of course, most were Jews who were killed for being Jewish.

The clash included tech giants purging accounts including those of the then President of the United States and the removal of Parler from Amazon Web Services.

The First Amendment vs Private Groups

The United States Constitution prohibits the government from censoring speech except in the rare case of causing a panic. The First Amendment protects the message on the sweatshirt described above. It is not protected by the spirit of the law. In other words, it is a legal protection, not a moral one.

John Adams taught that the constitution was written for a moral people. Richard Samuelson writing at the John Adams Center for the study of faith, Philosophy and Public Affairs said:

"These words of President Adams

remind us of what used to be a common idea—liberty entails responsibility, and absent religion (even with it, alas) many people will choose immorality and irresponsibility."

The standard of morality is charity. Jesus defined it as the golden rule: "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you." Societies need laws to make up for where there is no charity. The less charity in a society the more laws it requires. The more people practice charity the less laws they need.

The law is the minimum standard.

St. Paul said it well in 1 Corinthians 13 which every bride and groom know. If we live without charity even though we may be doing heroic actions, we are nothing more than "a noisy gong, a clanging cymbal."

Lawyers teach the law is a follower and sets up the minimum standard in reaction to a situation. Laws come to existence after a reason for them appears and not the other way around.

The law as the minimum standard legally protects the horrendous message above in the United States — it is criminal in Europe. The reason is so what I am writing now cannot be prohibited just because someone in government does not like it, even though I am writing nothing so offensive as the message on the sweatshirt. If that offensive message is protected then what I am writing is

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: **\$4,180.00**
Budget Deficit: **\$570.00**

Current as of
December 31, 2020.

Recently, the Lord spoke to our Fraternity about the troubling times we were experiencing. The Lord's word through me was:

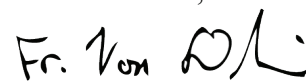
"My Sons: Do not be disturbed by the circumstances surrounding you. Remember: 'Let nothing trouble you, let nothing frighten you, everything passes; God never changes.' I take care of everything. Your primary duty is to get close to Me – to work on our relationship. From this proximity of hearts, you will get your 'marching orders.' Leave the other evils of the world to Me. Even the evils within yourselves that you cannot conquer – do not let those disturb your peace. Eyes on Me! I will take care of everything." Song of Songs 1:2, 4 (RSVCE) "O that you would kiss me with the kisses of your mouth! For your love is better than wine... Draw Me after you, let us make haste. The king has brought me into his chambers. We will exalt and rejoice in you; we will extol your love more than wine; rightly do they love you."

This, of course, is private revelation (and so must be discerned), but it has been a consolation to me through some of these difficult times in our world and in my own life. We know these things, of course – that God is faithful and trustworthy – however, I find that every time I come into a new set of problems or troubles, I have to be reminded that God has it all. It's funny that I never seem to learn this lesson, but that I have to keep relearning it over and over. I keep going back to the Divine Mercy revelation – "Jesus, I trust in You" – and the words from the Surrender Novena – "O Jesus, I surrender myself to you, take care of everything!" And here, in the midst of new struggles, the Lord is reminding me again. And I believe He is reminding all of us that we are to keep our eyes on Him. He takes care of

everything in our lives, everything is in His control (whether His perfect will or His permissive will). The one thing He needs *me* for is to come into relationship with Him – to say "yes" to the great love story He has in store for me!

This Lent, I encourage you to remember this truth – the most important thing is to get closer to the Heart of God. In our prayer and fasting and almsgiving, in the daily taking up of our crosses, in the daily struggle of our lives, may we first and foremost use them as opportunities to get close to the Heart of God. May we, like St. Thérèse of Lisieux, "gather flowers, the flowers of love and sacrifice, and ... [offer] them to God in order to please Him" ("The Yellow Notebook, 6 August 1897" *St. Therese of Lisieux: Her Last Conversations*). May our Lent not be primarily about growing in discipline, but in growing in intimacy with the Heart of God, the great lover of our souls.

Grace and Peace,



Fr. Von DeRosia

The Providence Fraternity informed us that Fr. Frank Giudice died early in the month and was buried out of his home parish in Westerly, RI. Eternal Rest grant unto him O Lord and all the deceased members of the Fraternity and let your perpetual light shine upon them.

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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protected. The spirit of the law which Augustine defined as "in all things charity" prohibits any association with the message because it is so offensive.

Discerning the difference

How do you figure out the difference and how do you teach your parishioners who may be using these platforms on their own. Here is one test. If it is legally protected imagine yourself arguing your case before a judge. The judge could easily say he finds the statement on the sweatshirt horrendous but the law says that he has no power to prohibit you from wearing it.

Now imagine yourself arguing the same case but the judge is Christ Himself. Do you think you would win in the higher court of law where the rule is in all things charity? You can argue forever and may end up doing so, you will never win.

Let's look at the Twitter case. One of the arguments for not getting de-platformed on Twitter is that the Ayatollah of Iran and the Chinese Communist Party still maintain accounts on the platform. Again, are you going to argue that case before Christ? Do you really want to claim moral ground by comparing your words to the tweets of the Ayatollah or the communists?

Here in the United States—home of Twitter and Facebook, et al., American culture measures everything by the legal standard which is a minimum standard instead of the moral standard which is a higher bar. How many times do we hear from people of all ages: "I have my rights!! We have free speech in this country!"

St. Paul calls to us to live at a higher standard than the law—doing

what is best for another instead of doing what the law allows me to do.

The Bill of Rights assumes charity

The protections in the Bill of Rights assume charity as John Adams said. When a society lives without charity, it falls back on the law to protect the whole society. The way to push the legal boundaries is to eliminate charity from your life and do what you want. You may even be able to argue successfully you are doing the right thing. If you are doing it without charity you fit St. Paul's description of the noisy gong and clanging cymbal.

I can say anything I want in this country because of the First Amendment but charity mandates me to say only what is best for others and society. So, I can stake my life on the freedoms of this country standing on the laws but I further the freedoms of this country by living the law of charity.

The sweatshirt is an example of protected speech. My hatred of the message and my choice not to associate with anyone who would wear such a vile garment nor patronize anyone who would sell it is my testifying to the higher standard of charity.

I spoke and wrote many times that one place Catholics do not belong is Twitter. Many use the platform to make statements expressed inefficiently at best and often uncharitably. One rather notorious tweet was when one Catholic evangelist made extremely uncharitable, unsubstantiated detractions against the Obamas. Fortunately, he suffered great pushback. Another is the case of the bishop who loves to use Twitter and wrote that Catholics in his diocese

did not belong at the city's gay pride parade because it was immoral. He received such intense push back from many non-Catholics, he tempered his message defeating his purpose of writing it in the first place.

Twitter is an international forum and before one uses it he or she may want to read Matthew 7:6. The bishop received such pushback because he used the wrong forum for the message which he directed specifically to Catholics in his diocese, not to English speaking atheists in Singapore and everyone else in between.

If you use Twitter to put forth your position in a way that avoids charity then, paraphrasing St. Paul, you are nothing more than a tweeting gong. If you are even that.

I write and preach that if there is one place Catholics do not belong it is Twitter. You cannot say anything of value in our Catholic faith in two hundred and eighty characters. Case in point, the Catholic teaching in the Catechism on chastity, which all Catholics have a calling to live, is fourteen paragraphs long. You cannot sum it up in two hundred and eighty characters. You cannot even sum it up in two hundred and eighty words.

I learned long ago, social media, due to its impersonal nature, fosters uncharitable interaction and cyberbullying. People try to prove they are always right or make a stand for their positions angrily or adamantly as charity goes out of the window.

John Adams understood the letter of the law but also the spirit of the law. The Constitution was created for a moral people who likewise can discern the difference. I am not so sure he would be excited to learn about social media and even Twitter.

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

