

THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

May 2021						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Rev. William Cosgrove New York 30	Rev. Tom Devery New York 31					1 For our Holy Father, Pope Francis
Rev. Thomas Cawley C.M. Kansas City, MO 2	Rev. Earl Dekat Kansas City, MO 3	Rev. Roderic Giller OSB Kansas City, MO 4	Rev. Rheel Forest Manitoba, Canada 5	6 For the souls of our deceased FOP members	7 For prayer requests received	Rev. Timothy Ekaitis Marquette, MI 8
Rev. Ryan Ford Marquette, MI 9	Rev. Christopher Gardiner Marquette, MI 10	Rev. Benjamin Hasse Marquette, MI 11	Rev. Jeff Johnson Marquette, MI 12	Rev. Aaron Nowicki Marquette, MI 13	Rev. Brandon Oman Marquette, MI 14	Rev. Darryl Pepin Marquette, MI 15
Rev. Michael Steber Marquette, MI 16	Rev. Larry Van Damme Marquette, MI 17	Rev. Michael Woempner Marquette, MI 18	Rev. Raymond J. Zeugner Marquette, MI 19	Rev. Eugene Bettinger O.Carm New Jersey 20	Rev. John Gordon New Jersey 21	Rev. Timothy Graff New Jersey 22
Rev. William Halbing New Jersey 23	Rev. Joseph Meagher New Jersey 24	Rev. Brendan Murray New Jersey 25	Rev. Paul O' Donnell New Jersey 26	Rev. Lewis Papera New Jersey 27	Rev. John Primich New Jersey 28	Rev. Stephen Toth New Jersey 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.

Fraternity of Priests, Inc.
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Email: contact@fraternityofpriests.org
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Do you know anyone who would like to receive our Newsletter?
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This donation is to help the Fraternity of Priests in continuing their work of ministering to priests.
Dear Fr. Von DeKosia,
\$ _____
\$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other



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

THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

Communicating the Message Effectively

By Fr. Robert J. Carr - Boston Fraternity

If there has been a lesson throughout the whole pandemic, it should be one to be studied for decades: How communication undermined efforts to slow the effects of the pandemic. Mass media is something not even dreamed about one hundred fifty years ago. When WSM began broadcasting the Grand Ole Opry in 1925 out of Nashville, Tennessee did anyone at that time think of what media would look like in almost one hundred years.

Remember, when radio began, just as when the internet began, the big question was how can it support itself. Once the solution came through advertising, it became a huge industry. The internet, of course, changed the world more than radio did.

With all that media power, the pandemic became a source of conspiracy theories and other issues because of bad communication. Such ideas usually come by not understanding how something is heard or even not caring and just speaking rules or demands or whatever.

The call to wear masks, to shutdown economies and tell people to remain indoors are all

major changes in human behavior. They cannot be pontificated. They must be spoken of ways to help

people understand why they are making these changes and address each of their issues and concerns.

My doctor explained to me perfectly the whole mask mandate. He explained why one variant is super contagious and the original is less contagious. He explained that the mask does not stop the virus but slows the spread by lowering the exposure to the virus. Our mass media has not really explained all this well, neither have our government officials who make rules on how to respond to the virus.

So, conspiracy theories run rampant. Some complain about the "plandemic" and decide the whole thing is a hoax because of something called the Great Reset. They find sources that undermine the credibility of the "experts" and it all turns out like something from a science fiction novel from the 1940s.

Why is this important? We are in the communication business. What is evangelization? Communicating the Gospel message to others.

We need to study the failure of communication in the pandemic to understand further the failure of our own communication to teach the Gospel.

The first rule the FCC taught when I was studying for my broadcast license in the 1970s was "it does not matter what you say, it matters what

people hear." If you tell people to start wearing masks to stop the virus, you better understand what they heard to prevent them from believing the wrong message.

What is our message? Jesus gave his life that all may be saved. He died for our sins and rose to open the gates of Heaven for all who seek his promise of salvation.

What do people hear? If they heard that message, they might not be so much against the Church.

I like to encourage people to read the Prologue of John. If you look carefully, as we know, the message is not *good people go to Heaven and bad people go to Hell*; it is rather we discovered the man Jesus and He is light shining in the darkness and the darkness will not overcome it.

So how do we go from that message which is written in great excitement and joy to "good people go to Heaven and bad people go to Hell?" Where did we fail to communicate the message over the years?

One problem may be the loss of context. If you read a lot of the saints from the Middle Ages and even the Enlightenment, you see a strong focus on sin and Hell. Those now holy preachers spoke to a Catholic congregation. The people to whom they were speaking had a basic understanding of the faith. Today, we speak to many people who long

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:

\$1,772.00

Budget Deficit:

\$2,978.00

Current as of
February 28, 2021.

April is a month of great mercy! We begin with the Holy Triduum, moving into the great celebration of the Resurrection, and at the end of the Octave of Easter, we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday. As such, I have gone through Fr. Michael Gaitley's *33 Days to Merciful Love* again. In this book, he shares a story of a conversation he had with Fr. Seraphim about consoling the Heart of Jesus. In this conversation, they discuss the truth that we console the Heart of Jesus primarily through *trust* in Jesus. Fr. Seraphim says, *The way you live trust is by praise and thanksgiving, to praise and thank God in all things. That's what the Lord said to St. Faustina. (33 Days to Merciful Love, p. 40).*

As a Fraternity we meet regularly and begin our time with praise and worship of Almighty God. We are called not just to praise God in those times, though, but in all of the ups and downs of our lives. Our fraternal gathering of praise is meant to train us to praise God through every moment of our lives.

I remember when I was a fairly new priest, I was at the Priest, Deacon, Seminarian Conference at Franciscan University... and I got a call from the Bishop. He told me that I was moving to a new assignment. My heart broke. This was my first move, and was very difficult for me. That night at the gathering, I remember Bob Rice led the music with *Blessed Be Your Name* by Matt and Beth Redman. As we sang, the words "You give and take away, You give and take away, My heart will choose to say Lord blessed be Your name," tears filled my eyes. I knew that I needed to surrender my will, my comfort to the Lord... and still to bless the name of the Lord.

Praise is a real, physical act that opens us to trust in the Lord; it is a way of saying, "I know you've got this, even if I don't see how. And so, I thank you and praise you, Lord!" I invite you to greater praise. May the praise we begin in our Fraternities permeate our whole lives, and may we truly console the Heart of Jesus by the trust we accomplish by that praise.



As I mentioned last month, we are looking for information for institutional memory of the Fraternity. If you have outlines of the foundation retreats or other information from the early years of Fraternity that we don't want lost to history, please contact me. My e-mail is vderosia@rcbm.org, or you can send them via snail mail to the Fraternity at PO Box 442, Steubenville, OH 43952. Thank you!

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Fr. Justin Reis, of the Columbus Fraternity, who died recently.

Also, I invite you to save the dates for our Fraternity Conference this summer: July 18-23. The plan is to meet in person in the Cleveland, OH area with Sr. Briege McKenna, OSC as our speaker. We will let you know if we are unable to meet in person.

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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rejected God and so they define today as the post-Christian era. Therefore, they are more like the first listeners to apostles. The early Christians first heard something new that is counter to what the official message was from the synagogue or the pagan temple. It was a whole new understanding of what it means to be human and what our destiny is if we choose to seek to follow this Jesus Christ.

I recently wrote an article about a seminar given by Ignatius Press on the publishing of George Weigel's Book: *The Next Pope: The Office of Peter and a Church in Mission* (Ignatius 2020). The seminar, entitled *Announcing the Gospel to the World: A Conversation on the Papacy and the Road to Renewal and Reform* featured George Weigel, as well as Mary Ellen Bork and Francis X Maier of the Ethics and Public Policy Center and Fr. Robert Imelli of the Archdiocese of New York and retired professor of theology for thirty years at Boston College.

Participants said people wanted to hear more from their pulpits on prayer. Mary Ellen Bork reiterated this: "I've never heard a homily, except once on a retreat, about contemplation and we cannot conform ourselves to Christ and allow God's grace to work in us unless we learn how to pray. And we learn the importance of contemplation as a profound part of our Catholic life."

Too often they hear morality. There is a problem with this kind of preaching—an atheist can live Catholic morality. There are even churches for atheists to attend on Sunday mornings. So, yes, atheists

can even live the third commandment as well as the ones following and still be atheists. The only one they cannot obey is the first because, well, they are atheists.

This does not mean that teaching about morality is not important, of course it is, but we are not speaking to the same congregation as St. John Vianney or St. Alphonsus Liguori, etc. We are speaking to a unique group who beg to hear more about the encounter with God through Jesus Christ.

I often lament an instruction by one bishop who wrote about the need to teach the pursuit of virtue, countering the message of others on sexuality issues, especially homosexuality. I noticed there was not one word of prayer in his column. Two other bishops affirmed his message of the need to pursue virtue. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says that it is impossible to live the commandments if we do not pray. Therefore, our most important message should be about how our prayer transforms us and leads us closer to Christ. You cannot live true Catholic virtue without the transforming power of prayer.

There is something else in this Catholic message. Prayer does in fact transform us and deepening our prayer leads us to further understand the message of the prologue of John.

A basic rule I learned many years ago from a wise pastor is that a priest never wants to hear applause at his homily because that means he just said what people want to hear. We have a mission to challenge the people. If you look at social media you will see people retweet and applaud and give a thumbs up and a like to homilies by priests. Why?

Because he is telling them what they want to hear. Is he deepening their faith? Is he leading them to know Christ in a transformative way? Or is he teaching them to be good models of virtue that Aristotle would applaud? Aristotle never met a Christian because he died two hundred years before Christ walked the Earth.

We are in the midst of the Easter Season. Easter Day is over, Easter Season continues and we need to teach people how to be Easter people even during ordinary time. They can only learn this if they develop their relationship with Christ through prayer. If they seek to do His will at the cost of their own. If they seek humble service to Christ in the community. If they seek to grow in love of God and neighbor by growing in prayer, they will find Christ. They will be transformed in Christ and they will be signs of His presence. They will then communicate to their neighbors more effectively the words of the Gospel. None of that can happen if we do not communicate the message well. Just ask anyone who is convinced that the "plandemic" is a sign of the Great Reset engaged by a group of multi-billionaires living somewhere who plan to take over the world.

I won't argue their conspiracy theories, I do not have time. It does not matter. Our message is that God is greater than anything called a great reset, in Him do we put our hope. Are we communicating it effectively? Or are we as effective as the people demanding we wear the mask without helping listeners understand the dynamics? Those people provide the soil for conspiracy theories to grow.

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

