

November 2021						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Rev. Dale Kinzler <i>Fargo, ND</i>	Rev. Donald Leiphon <i>Fargo, ND</i>	Rev. Gary Luiten <i>Fargo, ND</i>	For the souls of our deceased FOP members	For prayer requests received	For our Holy Father, Pope Francis
Rev. Msgr. Dennis Skonseng <i>Fargo, ND</i>	Rev. Edmund Sylvia CSC <i>South Bend, IN</i>	Rev. Peter Pienaa Donzing <i>Ghana</i>	Rev. Robert Sackey <i>Ghana</i>	Rev. Charles Antekeier <i>Grand Rapids, MI</i>	Rev. George Fekete <i>Grand Rapids, MI</i>	Rev. Thomas Hack <i>Grand Rapids, MI</i>
Rev. Donald Lomasiewicz <i>Grand Rapids, MI</i>	Rev. Mark Mitchell <i>Grand Rapids, MI</i>	Rev. Ayub Nasar <i>Grand Rapids</i>	Rev. Michael Shea CM <i>Grand Rapids, MI</i>	Rev. Robert Hiiz T.O.R. <i>Greensburg, PA</i>	Msgr. Cyril Lamontagne VG <i>Grenada</i>	Rev. Robert Grant <i>Hartford, CT</i>
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Rev. Paul Landwerlen <i>Indianapolis, IN</i>	Rev. George Joseph Nangachiveetill <i>Indianapolis, IN</i>	Rev. Thomas Cawley C.M. <i>Kansas City</i>				

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

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Dear Fr. Von DeKosia,



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

THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

The Source of All Sin

By Fr. Robert J. Carr – Boston Fraternity

Doing research, I had to reread the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. There are many stories in the bible that may be misrepresented, while others may be misinterpreted. For example, the story of the woman caught in adultery is not about Jesus forgiving a woman caught in sin. It is about him confronting those who use the woman as an object to bring him down which is a sin in itself. When he says let the one who has no sin cast the first stone, he is actually standing up to those breaking the commandment against bearing false witness.

Men drag before him a woman caught in adultery and, of course, the man with whom she had relations is not with her. If they were caught in adultery, the accusers know who the man is and keep his identity secret. He might even be in the crowd. They actively break the prohibition of bearing false witness.

The first one to catch the adulterers had the right to cast the first stone. So, Jesus' words accuse the witnesses of their sin of bearing false witness. It is his way of saying: "Go ahead and throw the first stone and when you do you incriminate yourself of bearing false witness against this woman by hiding the identity

of the man with whom she was caught in adultery." When they back down realizing that he caught them, he then calls the woman to repent as he forgives her. One commandment prohibits adultery, another proscribes bearing false witness. Both are commandments and, therefore, hold serious weight. They are just as serious as killing and stealing.

The Sodom and Gomorrah Story

Similarly, many use the Sodom and Gomorrah story incorrectly. Ask anyone why God destroyed the cities and the answer will often be because of sin. Even other writers of the Bible cite the sins of the citizens there.

If you really read the account, you will learn that God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah because there were no righteous people in the city—none except for Abraham, Lot and their families. God himself tells Abraham he would not destroy the cities for the sake of ten righteous people (cf Genesis 18). Therefore, they are destroyed actually for the lack of righteous people not for any specific sin.

Why were there no righteous people? This gets us to another point in the story and an important one.

The worst sin in the Bible is often the one not noted by anyone who preaches on sin—it is idolatry. As we know, the prohibition against idolatry is the first commandment. It is to worship any being or thing as God who is not in fact God.

St. Paul labels the love of money as the root of all evil and also calls greed—the love of money—idolatry (cf 1Tim 6:10).

Throughout the Bible, we see various sins called abominations and if we are going to list those sins, we would condemn just about every person in society. You do realize that the whole credit card industry is an abomination according to the Old Testament prophets. So too is the process which saddles students with oppressive debt, especially to get a Catholic education.

However, idolatry in all its forms is actually the worst sin in the Bible. In the call of Abraham, God is actually setting aside a group of people to be those through whom he will bring his salvation. The scriptures are the communication of God to those people over the millennia.

St. Jerome in his letter to Heliodorus, Monk, cites all forms of sin proscribed by St. Paul as sins of idolatry. In fact, that is what he defines the true sin is. The fruits are obvious.

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:

\$1,593.00

Budget Deficit:

\$3,157.00

Current as of
August 31, 2021.

In this month of October, I have felt the call to write about the Rosary. This month dedicated to the Rosary is a great opportunity to grow in our devotion to Mary and in her devotion to her Divine Son.

Growing up, of course, I was given rosaries for various occasions, but they were seldom touched – the prayer was *just too long!* Despite that, I knew these beads were important – they were like holding the hand of Mary. As a young adult, I joined the Knights of Columbus. Upon entering, they gave me a Rosary and said I should carry it with me and use it often. From that time on, I began carrying the Rosary with me (even if I didn't pray it that often).

As a young priest, I was convicted to pray the Rosary every day, and so I began the practice of the daily Rosary. I remember, though, not really having a great devotion to Our Lady. I mean, I loved her and all, but I didn't really seek her as the fastest, easiest, safest path to Jesus. One time, a mystic in our parish came to me and asked, "Fr. Von, do you have a big devotion to Mary." Embarrassed, I replied, "Well, I pray the Rosary, but I wouldn't say I have a big devotion to her." Perplexed the woman said, "That's strange, since I see her standing behind you when you celebrate Mass." Not sure what to do with this, I kept silent. The next day, this woman came to me again and said, "I realized what it meant. Not that you have a big devotion to her, but that the Blessed Mother has a devotion to you." Shocked and awed, I kept that, pondering it in my heart as Mary beckoned me closer and closer to her Immaculate Heart over the years.

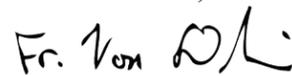
I'm sure we all have heard the story of the Battle of Lepanto and how Pope St. Pius V called for all of Christendom to pray the Rosary in order to preserve

Christianity against the invasion of Islam. The idea of the Rosary being a weapon holds special importance to us in this time of spiritual battle. As we see the darkness gathering and trying to smite the light of the world, we know that **our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens.** (Ephesians 6:12 NABRE) We need our Lady to be fighting for us and with us. The Rosary becomes a weapon – not of mass destruction, but of *mass conversion!*

A former parishioner of mine – Dr. Mario Enzler – used to be a Swiss Guard for St. John Paul II. When he came to my parish to celebrate John Paul II's 100th birthday, he shared a story of when the Pope gave Mario his Rosary. Pope John Paul looked at him and said, "Mario, the Rosary is my favorite prayer: marvelous in its simplicity and profundity. Take my beads, and make them your most powerful weapon." (www.youtube.com/watch?v=uf76L-RPjkc)

In this holy month dedicated to the Rosary, may we grow in our devotion to the Rosary and to Mary, using this weapon of love to allow her devotion to us to transform us and the world.

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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Hence, we will learn, is the sin that will lead to all other sins. Therefore, if I were to preach against any sin, I would have to have in the background the worst of all sins—idolatry, seeking another God.

In Romans 1, people will focus on the lament against unnatural sex acts and cite it as God's condemnation of them. This leaves wide open those who commit other sins which are just as serious. A more accurate reading of Romans 1 is that it begins with idolatry and that is the source of all other evils cited in the passage. If you look closely at the reading, worshiping the creature instead of the creator is the source of what leads first to moral breakdown and then to civil breakdown. The root threat to society is the sin of idolatry.

This leads me to criticize even leaders of my own faith when they cite that one must live a virtuous life. That is true but that teaching comes from the Greeks who first discovered natural law. Catholic teaching makes it clear that one must be a person of prayer to live the virtuous Catholic life. We cannot do it without prayer. Therefore, to demand someone to a standard of behavior without addressing the issue of a relationship with God is more pagan than Christian.

Many pagans lived strong virtuous lives but that does not mean they lived holy lives. This confusion often leads one to take the prayer life for granted.

This leads me back to the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. If you were to ask what is the sin of Sodom

and Gomorrah, some would say homosexuality and others lack of hospitality. The truth is the problem in the cities is the sin of idolatry which produces moral breakdown and civil breakdown.

For example, people will say that the sign of the sin of homosexuality is that the angels are visiting.

Lot and men are at this door seeking sex with them. When was the last time you saw a gang of men banging down someone's door to attack other men in that household. Hopefully never. The fact is that is not just an act of homosexuality but a society out of control, lost in anarchy and the unbridled passions. This is the moral and civil breakdown that is at the bottom of a society collapsing. The source of this collapse is turning totally from God. Other societies screamed out to God because the evil of these cities spilled across their borders. There is no record of anyone from Sodom and Gomorrah doing the same.

This story comes to us from the book of Genesis which begins with the prophetic account of creation. The first temptation which leads to the fall is to become like gods. When we ditch any connection to the God, we either give to another the role of the divine as we see in Romans 1 and Exodus 32 and so many other places when people abandoned God to worship the deities of the surrounding cultures. Otherwise, we take this deity upon ourselves as we see in today's world. We can only live without God if we are divine ourselves, otherwise we seek to do what we have no capacity to do. We

become like the five year old trying to be mayor of a city. This would be disastrous.

This is what is actually happening in Genesis. You see a total breakdown, a split from the divine and an embrace of the idea that since there is no god, they are now gods which we learn later leads to moral breakdown and then civil breakdown.

We are living in a unique time and often many forget this. So, when they draw upon the source of other forms of preaching over the millennia, they may forget that all the preaching from the epistles to the words of some of our greatest saints were given to people who already had some relationship to God.

Today, we deal with people who believe being an atheist is a virtue. Atheism is only about two hundred years old and came from the Enlightenment. Previously, an atheist was someone who did not believe in our god(s). This is unique in the history of the world. Since long before the arrival of homo sapiens, humans worshipped some form of deity. Our current time is the first where we define ourselves as the gods. The fruit of this is a growing immorality in our world while others in Christianity pick and choose sins to condemn without looking at the roots of civil or moral breakdown. They do not notice that the real problem in our society and the prevailing sin begins with rejecting God. Until we recognize that sin in our society, we have no way of healing our currently troubled world.

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

