

# THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

January 2022						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Rev. John Dreher Providence, RI 30	Rev. Robert Giardina Providence, RI 31					1 For our Holy Father, Pope Francis
His Eminence Donald Cardinal Wuerl Washington, DC 2	Rev. Alan Shnob Ogdensburg, NY 3	Rev. Joseph Muldoon Ottawa, Canada 4	Rev. Robert Boyle Pittsburgh, PA 5	6 For the souls of our deceased FOP members	7 For prayer requests received	8 Rev. John Brennan Pittsburgh, PA
Rev. Tony Gargotta Pittsburgh, PA 9	Rev. Stan Gregorek Pittsburgh, PA 10	Rev. James Holland Pittsburgh, PA 11	Rev. Thomas Kredel Pittsburgh, PA 12	Rev. Joseph Luisi Pittsburgh, PA 13	Rev. John Lynam Pittsburgh, PA 14	Rev. Daniel Mahoney Pittsburgh, PA 15
Rev. Nicholas Mastrangelo Pittsburgh, PA 16	Rev. Kenneth Oldenski Pittsburgh, PA 17	Rev. Thomas Sparacino Pittsburgh, PA 18	Rev. John Sweeney Pittsburgh, PA 19	Rev. Paul Zywan Pittsburgh, PA 20	Msgr. Cuthbert Alexander Port-of-Spain 21	Rev. Gerard Bernier Port-of-Spain 22
Rev. Riginald DeFour Port-of-Spain 23	Rev. Raymond Francis Port-of-Spain 24	Rev. Clifford Graham Port-of-Spain 25	Rev. Harold Imamshah Port-of-Spain 26	Rev. Dwight Merrick Port-of-Spain 27	Rev. Ian Taylor Port-of-Spain 28	Rev. John Theodore CSSP Port-of-Spain 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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\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other  \$10  \$25  \$50  \$100  Other

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

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.

## Take Time - Know You're Loved

By Very Reverend Thomas A. Sparacino – Pittsburgh Fraternity

### Wisdom

You're strong and well, that's fine. You hope to remain so, that's natural. You may be disappointed, that's possible. You must stand before judgement, that's sure. You better be ready, that's Wisdom. ~Mary Anne

The above poem was written by my sister Mary Anne sometime before she was born to eternal life from the effects of Leukemia in November 1972. She was 14 years old.

As we begin a new the liturgical year, it is important to always keep in mind that our time here on this side of the grass is limited. In our limitedness though it is important to take time ... time to be, time to live, time to rejoice in the kingdom on Earth as it is in Heaven. Hopefully, by doing this we can come to a better and deeper understanding that we are loved.

Over the course of October and November, a recurring theme in my prayer has been - Time. The popular verses of Ecclesiastes 3:1, "There is an appointed time for everything, and a time for every affair under the heavens." (NABRE)

The words I have been hearing distinctly are: "Stop wasting my time." I am not sure the Lord is chastising me (or us) but as I continue to reflect on their meaning, it seems to me that I/we do waste the Lord's time when I/we do not remain in Him, live through Him and give our all for Him.

Time is something that seems to slip away. Living with 19 young seminarians, there never seems to be enough time for prayer, study, and/ or just down time. In my observation, now that I am knocking on the door of 60 years of age, maybe the question is not whether or not I/we are wasting the Lord's time, but maybe it is more, why aren't I/we taking the time we need to draw more closely into the embrace of His grace.

Maybe we need to stop doing and allow ourselves to be ... be in His presence, be in His care, be open to His encounter, be still and know that He is God. (Psalm 46:10). During this Advent Season of hope and joy at the coming of the Lord, maybe it is not so much about preparing, as much as it is about being. After all, we are human beings not human doings. Jesus came to be with us so that we can know the way to be with Him.

We waste the Lord's time when we do not stop long enough to ask Him what He wants. We waste the Lord's time when we do not listen to Him. The voice came from the cloud on Mt. Tabor taught us: "This is my chosen Son, listen to him." (Luke 9:35)

Taking time to listen decreases stress. When we give into stress or the anxiety of a given situation, it is because we want to control it. To listen is to surrender, to surrender is to offer our hands palm side up, so as to receive His mercy. If you are like me, maybe you ask the Lord and are listening but do not pay attention.

So, why don't we listen? Why don't we pay attention? Why aren't we patient with Him? Maybe it has to do with our own brokenness and fear. As the saying goes, time heals all wounds. It is good when we take time in our brokenness to know we're loved.

During this Advent Season as we anticipate the celebration of Christ's birth, we ought to allow ourselves to stop, wait, and pay attention. Jesus came to remind us of what God the Father had been telling us through the prophets for centuries, "Know you're loved". Ultimately, isn't love what our lives should be about? A love that has been from the very

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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:

**\$1,535.00**

Budget Deficit:

**\$3,215.00**

Current as of  
October 31, 2021.

This morning as I was in Adoration, our Lord convicted my heart about a number of areas in my life that I have not surrendered to Him. He told me that in each of these areas I was looking for something, that there was a hunger, a desire, a longing for something good, but that I would never be satisfied by the things of this world. Implicit in this is that He alone will satisfy and that He was the one for whom I was looking in the midst of my attachments. He invited me to take each attachment, one at a time, and to invite Him into that area of my life. He promised me that He would show me that for which I am truly looking in each attachment, and that I was to surrender them one by one to Him.

Well... He led me on an adventure. As I started off, He showed me how little I trust that He will satisfy my deepest desires. As He showed me the depth of my brokenness, He invited me to surrender this to Him, to let Him be King of my heart. I knew, instinctively, that just to say the words, "I surrender" would not be enough, as it had a hold on my heart. I realized that I needed to renounce the attachment in Jesus' name. After I renounced, I then surrendered, and the Lord gave me a plan of action for how to move forward.

He then led me to look at the next area of my life...

Yeah... it was an interesting morning. It was full of love and healing from the Lord, but also some shame and anger at my own weakness and inadequacy. As I went into the office, I listened to the "Ask Christopher West Podcast Hosted by Wendy West" (Episode 150) as I do every week. Christopher began the podcast by speaking about how God showed him his (Christopher's) poverty – that as creatures, we are always in a state of *needing the Creator!* In sharing his own failing as a father, I was reminded of the many failings of late I have seen

in myself as a spiritual father... and more, my own anger at myself when I don't get it right; when I fail, and so *feel that I am a failure!* As I listened to how Christopher shared his own coming to grips with his creatureliness – thanking God for his poverty, and opening that poverty to God's richness – I realized this was God still ministering to me from my morning prayer.

God wants me to entrust my weakness to *His* strength, my poverty to *His* richness, my brokenness to *His* healing, my sin to *His* redemption. I am reminded of when I heard Christopher West quote Cardinal Ratzinger, "Prayer, properly understood, is nothing other than becoming a longing for God." Christopher also said, "We worship that which we think will satisfy our deepest hunger. In his first commandment, then... God is simply saying: 'I am your satisfaction; I, and I alone, can satisfy your hunger.'" (My apologies for not remembering where these quotes came from!)

What struck me from all of this is that as we approach Christmas, Jesus knows that He alone is our satisfaction, and that He longs for our longing for Him. He wants the gift of our surrender to Him more than anything. How delighted He will be if we can surrender more of ourselves to Him through this Advent and Christmas Season. I pray that my encounter with Jesus – and His invitation for a fuller surrender – will bless your life and help you to surrender more to the God who emptied Himself in order to fill us!

Grace and Peace,  
*Fr. Von DeRosia*  
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](mailto:editor@fraternityofpriests.org). Newsletter material from all Fraternity members is gratefully accepted.

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beginning of time. And this brings us back around to taking time.

At the appointed time, after thousands of years of waiting, the Lord broke into human time to show us a way, the way, to fully embrace His unconditional love.

The past few weeks, the Lord has given me an image in which to spend time in prayer. The image is that of a baby. A baby that He has placed in my arms. As I have sat with this image, rather held the newborn infant in my arms, I found myself, bouncing, rocking, embracing, and loving the little bundle of joy. What is the Lord trying to tell me?

As I hold the baby during prayer, I recognize the fragileness of the child. The responsibility that it takes to care for him. How will I change him? How will I feed him? How will I be able to do all he expects from me? How will I protect him? How will I love him?

I am sure you, like me, have seen many different images of Saint Joseph holding the baby Jesus. I would like to paint a picture in your mind of my favorite picture. It is from a Christmas card I received many years ago. The drawing is of the Crèche. In the background, Mary is sitting on the floor up against the wall. Exhaustion is on her face as she sleeps. In the foreground is Joseph with his sleeves rolled up, holding the baby Jesus. He is looking down at the child in love and amazement. The child is tenderly asleep.

From this image, we learn that our lives are fragile, maybe broken

and maybe at times messy. But, in time, the Lord wanting us to know of His love for us, has shown us love, pure love in the baby Christ child. The Christ child is the way through our fragility, our brokenness, our messiness, to peace and ultimately joy.

Look at the Crèche, look at the Cross. He did that for you. He did that for me. He did that for all. "I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly." (John 10:10)

All the spiritual masters teach us the way to this abundant life. They teach us to walk the way to a deeper relationship with God so to live fully alive - for Him. The walk is through the stages of the Purgative and the Illuminative, to arrive at the Unitive. For simplicity sake, I will call them surrender, embrace and light,

**Surrender-** to surrender all that is not of God in our life, thus finding we have all the time we need to contemplate.

**Embrace,** to embrace the way and the truth so as to understand the light, Jesus the true light.

**Live,** to live in the oneness of the God of Love, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

But this takes time. The embracing of God's time. For me, this is what the baby the Lord has placed in my arms is all about. In my prayer, it is a fulfillment to my understanding that God busted into human time to remind me, to remind us, with a sweet simple kiss of a baby, to know we are loved. I have to get rid of everything that is not of him and allow Him to

illumine my way, so as to live, fully alive in Him.

Many years ago, my oldest brother gave me a porcelain clown for Christmas as I collected clowns as a hobby when I was younger. What was unique about that clown is the broken foot. You see my brother somehow broke the foot into many pieces before he was able to wrap it. Rather than throw the clown in the trash, he (my brother) took the time to glue the foot back together. I still have that clown. Often I look at it with its imperfection because it reminds me of my own imperfections, my own brokenness and how God took the time to put me back together. He does this on a daily basis.

I encourage all of us to take time this Advent to contemplate the baby in the manger. Think about the fragileness of the child. Pray over how you will care for him. Listen how He speaks to you. Then follow.

Taking care of a baby may be a little disconcerting at times, but we will be okay. We have great role models in our Blessed Mother Mary and Saint Joseph. They always lead us to Him. It is amazing what can happen when we take time to sit and ponder the wisdom of God shown to us in a little infant. Let's not wait until we are called to stand before judgement. Let's live strong and well in Him, so as not to be disappointed. That's Wisdom. May you have a blessed Advent and a joyous Christmas.

May you embrace the baby that changed everything so that you may- Know You're Loved.

Please send us your prayer intentions: \_\_\_\_\_

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