



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

THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

| May 2022 | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| Rev. Greg Downs Alexandria, LA | Dcn. Norman Gremillion Alexandria, LA | Rev. Harold Imamshah Alexandria, LA | Rev. Bennette Tang Becheyie Alexandria, LA | For the souls of our deceased FOP members | For prayer requests received | For our Holy Father, Pope Francis |
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Love Your Enemies and Pray for Those Who Persecute You: Mt.5:43-48

By Fr. Sylvester Nankpi - Ghana Fraternity

St. Nicholai Zica - says love consists of, "Patience forgiveness, Joy. Without which this is not true love it is like giving the name of a goat to a pig.

Gregory Brown in the The Bible Teachers Guide Series (via Bible.org):

The Sermon on the mount: Experiencing God's Kingdom on earth. Describes this text as "Radical Love: The ethic of Kingdom Citizens" (Mt.5:43-48). The whole text from (NET) Reads like this "You have heard that it was said". Love your neighbor and hate your enemy, But I say to you. Love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you so that you may be like your father in heaven since he causes the sun to rise on the evil and good, and send rain on the righteous and unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Even the tax collectors do the same, don't they? And if you only greet your brother, what more do you do? Even the Gentiles do the same, don't they? So then be perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect (Mt.5:43-48 NET)

Our Lord Jesus Christ set the highest standard we should aim at as his friends and disciples—to be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect. It will sound like sounding a note of impossibility. However,

with God everything is possible. Perfection in this sense gives hope to grow and get mature in the practice of virtue, we are invited to aim high and set as a goal to achieve what God has set for us as standard and mark of membership to the Kingdom, "Like father like son".

St. Catherine of Siena in her book the Dialogue chapter II reveals something very consoling about the call to perfection.

- God says - our fasting and sacrifices and mortification are pleasing to Him but in a finite way - But our desire for Him is pleasing to Him infinitely. That means our desire for God is our means to this perfection.

True salvation, therefore, implies a change of life, mindset and character. You can't love only your own, it doesn't give any true or crucial change in the old system. For example, he said it deeply in (verse. 47) what difference does it make when you love your friends and your own. It is very early to think that oh; I am a sociable person liked by people. You can have thousands of friends but your real love will be challenged by one enemy you are not able to forgive or help. There is a saying of some people, "either you are with me or get out of my sight." Lk 10:20-37, explains who our neighbor is and how we should relate

(The Good Samaritan). Everybody is a neighbor and the child of God and should be helped and loved. That is why it is very critical to check our connections.

Most connections affect or reveal our sentiments: "I am for Paul and you are for Peter, Apollos. I am for Christ" 1Cor.1:10. There are many principles of the Kingdom that can be discerned from this text "you have heard that it was said to love your neighbor and hate your enemy. This statement has been challenged by the Jews and all of us and generations to come. Lev. 19:33-34 teaches already how to relate to the acceptance of the foreigner and on not oppressing them.

Acts 6 talks about the discrimination against Greek widows. Paul confronted Peter about Gentile Christians. Gal 2 is still a challenge for the church and society to accommodate certain categories of people when it comes to moral issues.

It is in trying to read Prayer for Enemies by St. Nicholai Zica (which I have used for the past 20yrs); I discovered that intercessory prayers for our enemies even daily are important, it's a great sign of love and hope for conversion in your heart and that of the other: it is a desire for conversion in you and the so-called enemy.

I would like to share a few other thoughts from some saints on this

...continued on page 3

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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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:

\$727.00

Budget Deficit:

\$4,023.00

Current as of
February 28, 2022.

At the Fraternity of Priests Board meeting in March at the Ark and the Dove, we listened for a word from the Lord. This word was given on March 23rd, just a couple days before Pope Francis' consecration of Russia and Ukraine:

"My sons, *Fraternities are dying*. What began, like many things in the Church, over time is not bearing fruit. You have been told many times that the Fraternity of Priests was established for the time in which you are now living.

"I call you, I challenge you, I command you to prayer and fasting for the renewal of the Fraternity. Recover the vision, recover the disciplines. Reach out constantly and invite brother priests. As the Holy Father consecrates Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the Mother of My Son, I ask you to find a time and an opportunity soon to consecrate the Fraternity of Priests to her Immaculate Heart. She is the Mother of Priests and has a great love for every priest, even the fallen ones, and especially the hurting, broken, and discouraged ones. This consecration will bring about tremendous fruit and will be an important means for the renewal of the priesthood."

This word struck us, and we had some deep conversations about it at the meeting. We realized the truth of this word. In so many ways, Fraternities are dying. We are not bearing the fruit the Lord has willed for us. Our Lord has recognized this and has given us a remedy. We are inviting all members of the Fraternity of Priests (and any lay people who support us) to consecrate ourselves, each local Fraternity, and the Fraternity as a whole to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Our date of Consecration will be Thursday, August 4th – the feast day of St. Jean Marie Vianney, patron saint of priests. This will take place during our Annual Fraternity Conference. However, we ask that even those not attending the Conference consecrate themselves and their Fraternities to Jesus through Mary.

As most of you know, there are a multitude of ways to consecrate yourself to Mary. There's the traditional consecration of St. Louis de Montfort, the newer *33 Days to Morning Glory* (Fr. Michael Gaitley, MIC),

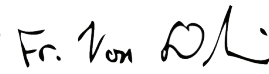
and a nine-day preparation in the spirit of St. Maximilian Kolbe. There are others as well. The particular form is less important than that there is actually preparation. There needs to be penance, fasting and prayer. There needs to be reparation for the Fraternity. Taking time to prepare as an individual and as a Fraternity is essential in order to open ourselves to the graces which God desires to pour upon us.

As a Board, we have decided to prepare ourselves using the St. Maximilian Kolbe prayers (which can be found on the Marytown gift shop website: marytown.com). We invite you as Fraternities to choose a method of preparation together. We also strongly encourage you (if you are not coming to the Conference) to meet together on August 4 for the Consecration, even if you don't usually meet on Thursdays. We will provide a consecration prayer in an upcoming Newsletter.

Fraternities may be dying, but we know **"unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit"** (John 12:24 NABRE). Our joy will be to see how God will bring resurrection, new fruit from our prayer, fasting, penance and Consecration to Mary.

I invite you to join us for the **Fraternity Conference in Tucson, Arizona**. This year's conference will be held **July 31-August 5, 2022**. Mark your calendars.

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.



...continued from page 1

very important topic: "There are various reasons for loving people, we can love someone because he is generous, his parties and gifts give us pleasure we can love someone who is lovable and pleasant, some way we can love someone for God's sake: seeing him as either a potential child of God or Actual child of God. For charity always has on its motto (propter Deum), love for the sake of God. (Ven. Fulton Sheen).

Fulton Sheen further says that, because "God poured part of His goodness and love within me then began to apply this charity to my neighbor if I do not find him lovable I have to put love into him as God puts, love into me, and thereby I provoke the response of love. Now my personality is restored and I make the great discovery that no one is happy until he loves both God and neighbor," Ven. Fulton Sheen

And Pope St. John Paul II said, "we must be the compassionate neighbor of those in need not only when it is emotionally rewarding or convenient, but also when it is demanding and inconvenient" He further says that "the person who does not decide to love forever will find it very difficult to really love even one day". And in a very short but inspiring way (St. Raphael Mary). Says "we ought to respect the image of God in everyone. It is there". And St. Damien says "Here I am in the midst of my dear lepers. They are hideous to look at but they have souls redeemed at the price of the blood of our Savior". (St Damien de Veuster.)

St. Francis de Sales: "We can be excused for not being always cheerful for cheerfulness is not ours

to summon up at will. But we have no excuse for not being always kindly accessible courteous, that is always within the scope of our willpower. All we need to do is make up our minds to rise above our mood, or tendency to do the opposite".

My father was very wicked towards my mother, one day I came from school and found him beating my mother so I planned to harm him but my mother showed me a picture black with soot on the wall (picture of Divine Mercy) that struck me sharply so I went back to school weeping. I was 8 years by then. My father left the house and 3 days later he died in Kumasi, from then Divine Mercy has become part of my life checking my anger and hatred for others.

In the Diary of St. Faustina Kowalska note Book III No 1209 we are called "on each day you will bring to My Heart a different group of souls, and you will immerse them in this ocean of My mercy, and I will bring all these souls into the house of My Father. You will do this in this life and in the next. I will deny nothing to any soul whom you will bring to the fount of My mercy. On each day you will beg My Father, on the strength of My bitter Passion, for graces for these souls".

"We must above all show charity to our enemies. Do good to those that hate you, by this you may know that a man is a true Christian for he seeks to do good to those who will do him evil". (St. Alphonsus Liguori).

I would call attention to the fact that we are all broken people... unkindness reveals that brokenness. Unkind behaviour comes from hurt. So in praying for such people we need to consider the hurt and

brokenness they have and our own brokenness...St Nicholai Zica says if we don't "Practice patience, forgiveness and joy which are the characteristics of love we are like a person calling a sheep when it is a goat or a pig."

We realize that no one is ever without a person whom he doesn't like or who doesn't like him. Whichever way we have no excuse not to love and pray for the person's blessings. So true love—enemies included—defines true believers.

St. Nicholai Zica: Emphasized by saying, "Enemies have taught me to know what hardly anyone knows that a person has no enemies in the world except himself. One hates his enemies only when he fails to realize that they are not enemies, but cruel friends. It is truly difficult for me to say who has done me more good and who has done me more evil in the world; friends or enemies". Your best friend could be your worst enemy and your worst enemy become your best friend. (Bob Marley).

To do this indicates your own salvation as a disciple of Christ. And so, it is a condition for our reward in heaven.

We have a great fraternity of priests formed since 1983, we have kingdom disciplines how does it reflect on us as individuals and society to those outside our camp, even those within the camp vis a vis the command: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

As we enter the Lenten season, let us have a second look at this text visa vi- the vision and mission of the fraternity of priests.

Article for the International Fraternity of Priests by: Rev. Fr. Sylvester Nankpi

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

