

THE VISITATION

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Let's Make Sure We Live in the Spirit - By Fr. Tom Galvin, Pittsburgh Fraternity

When Pope Francis stated in mid-March that he would review the Church's position on celibacy, ears perked up -- among the laity, seminarians, young and old priests, Catholics and non-Catholics alike. "Celibacy is a temporary prescription...celibacy is a discipline," he said.

I had only one thought when I heard these comments -- Pope Francis was again stirring up the troops. Was he going to deal with this quickly, knowing that he was leading a Church with an ancient tradition of moving slowly when making major decisions? Did he believe that it would probably be years before such a thing would be considered? Was he setting the stage for his predecessor? I tend to think that this would follow a pattern of Pope Francis is known to use -- make people think while keeping the Church alive in the thoughts of Catholics and non-Catholics globally. But I digress from what I wish to do in this article, which only indirectly has anything to do with priestly celibacy.

Pope Francis has stirred up the thoughts of many people time and again. It's his way of getting people to think of the Church and faith in new light with new eyes. It moves them from simply spouting off their own opinions, to be open to a new

Spirit and not be satisfied existing within the current framework of human expectations. A prime example -- and the reason for this article -- came at the beginning of this Lenten season. During his audience series on Ash Wednesday Pope Francis spoke about prayer to the Holy Spirit. He asked clergy and laity alike two simple questions: "Do we ask the Holy Spirit for help? How many of us pray to the Holy Spirit?" And then he provided the answers, which had been given him when he had previously asked these questions to another group. "No Father, I pray to Our Lady, I pray to the Saints, I pray to Jesus, sometimes I pray to the Our Father, I pray to the Father...." He continued: "And the Holy Spirit? Don't you pray to the Holy Spirit who is the One who moves your heart, who brings you consolation, who brings you the desire to evangelize, undertake mission?"

With a little research on the internet, I learned that this was not the first time Pope Francis challenged believers to examine their individual prayer to the Holy Spirit and ultimately their life in Christ -- as well as each one's involvement in the mission of the Church. In a homily on the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord, he referred to Christians who hear the Gospel but do not respond to the Word

as being "deaf" to the voice of the Spirit. And those who do not move by the promptings of the Spirit in announcing the Kingdom, as "mute" to the mission of the Church -- who fail to evangelize. Unfortunately, this is a refusal to the grace that enables believers to act in a new way. "Why is this so?" Pope Francis asked before answering his own question: "...to get to the point, the Holy Spirit annoys us, because He moves us He makes us travel, He pushes the Church forward."

I'm of the firm belief that something else must be acknowledged before we simply say that the Holy Spirit annoys us -- that is, unless people only associate the Spirit of God with the Charismatic renewal which may be seen as a disturbance of the "normal." When I ask the laity about the Holy Spirit, I receive blank stares. I interpret them as "Yes, we have popsicles in the freezer section. But who wants them in the middle of winter? Come back. They're on sale in the spring." And the Spring is when we most often think of the Holy Spirit -- when we wear red at Pentecost and when parish celebrations of the Sacrament of Confirmation often take place. The third Person of the Blessed Trinity has become a seasonal event rather than a life experience, a

daily meeting. Knowing that most Catholics refer to the Spirit as

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Fraternity Financial Report

Monthly Budget:
\$4,750.00

Actual Donations:
\$830.00

Budget Deficit:
\$3,920.00

*Current as of
February 28, 2023.*

April brings us the power of Holy Week and the glory of Easter. It is also an opportunity to ponder the power the Holy Spirit moving in our lives. Throughout Easter, we read primarily from the Acts of the Apostles (and the Gospel of John). I remember learning that St. Luke made his two volumes (Luke and Acts) about the Holy Spirit – the Gospel focusing on how the Holy Spirit moved in the life of Jesus, and Acts about how the Holy Spirit moved in the Apostles and early Church. This makes Easter a great opportunity to reflect on our relationship with the Holy Spirit.

I'm often reminded of this quote about the Holy Spirit:

“Without the Holy Spirit, God is far away, Christ stays in the past, the Gospel is a dead letter, the church is simply an organization, authority a matter of domination, mission a matter of propaganda, the liturgy no more than an evocation, Christian living a slave morality.

“But in the Holy Spirit: the cosmos is resurrected and groans with the birth-pangs of the kingdom, the risen Christ is here, the Gospel is the power of life, the church shows forth the life of the Trinity, authority is liberating service, mission is Pentecost, the liturgy is both memorial and anticipation, human action is deified” (Metropolitan Ignatios of Latakia, “The Main Address”, the Uppsala Report 1968 [Geneva: WCC, 1969], quoted in Ralph Martin, *The Catholic Church at the End of an Age: What is the Spirit Saying?* [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994], p. 108).

The Holy Spirit is moving in our midst, drawing us into the mystery of Almighty God! HE is the One who makes what Christ did 2000 years ago alive and efficacious today!

I invite you, during this Easter Season, to spend extra time growing closer to the Holy Spirit. Maybe it will be by spending more time praying in the Holy Spirit.

Maybe it will be by studying the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. Maybe it will be by reading a good book on the Holy Spirit (one of my favorites is Raniero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap's *Come, Creator Spirit*).

Maybe it will be by praying a novena to the Holy Spirit. Whatever it may be, I encourage you to seek to grow closer to the Holy Spirit who animates the Church!

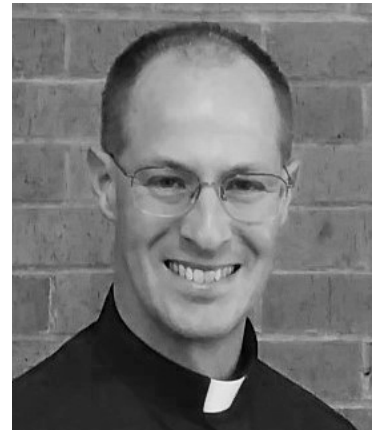
I pray that many from the Fraternity will be able to join us for the PDS Conference and Fraternity Meeting at Franciscan University. The dates are June 11-16, 2023. The PDS Conference goes June 12-16, but we will gather on the 11th and meet and pray together on the 12th before the PDS begins. If you are able to come in Sunday, when registering on the Franciscan Conferences website (steubenvilleconferences.com/events/pds), use promo code **FOPHousing-2023** to waive the fee for the Sunday overnight. If you fly in, please fly into Pittsburgh International Airport. More information will be coming about travel reimbursement and Brotherhood Award nominations. Please spread the word and invite current and former members of your fraternity to join us.

Also lay members of your parish may want to consider helping to fund their priests to attend the conference as well.

Fraternities outside of the United States, please contact Father Von at vderosia@rcbm.org for information about finance.

Grace and Peace,

Fr. Von



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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"it," (an object), I think it is not so much an annoyance as Pope Francis mentioned, as it is an ignorance on the part of the whole Church. Not admitting to a need and a want for the Holy Spirit to renew us is like letting frost build up on those popsicles -- grace wasted.

I cannot and will not blame the laity's lack of understanding concerning the Holy Spirit completely on their shoulders. Yes, we have a Church filled with illiterate adults. Most will tell us that they were never taught much of the Holy Spirit other than the Isaiah gifts memorized to pass the test for Confirmation reception. Dare I put the blame on the clergy for the ignorance of the laity? I can't do that either as they admit -- young and old alike (and seminarians today) that there was very little to no emphasis and teaching concerning the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. The Holy Spirit seemed like a post-script during Triune God discussions. Yet He is the Spirit present from the beginning of creation, who tests even God himself. As Pope Francis said, He was forgotten. He is forgotten. And in many minds and lives, dare I say, purposefully ignored, because as Pope Francis noted, "He causes us to move."

He causes us to read the Word of God with a different insight, with an openness that "connects the dots" of Old and New Testament Scriptures, enabling us to see the action of God in our lives, It is the Spirit who causes us to envision the dry bones having the breath of God bringing new life into those previously thought dead, whomever they may be. It is the same Spirit who was the

force when the "Word became flesh" for the sake of giving new life to believers. You and I know that the Spirit of God all but demands that we have a personal relationship with our Lord and Savior, Only in this oneness can we honor the action of God (Spirit) as He filled Christ with the love of the Father, and now moves the Church with that same gift. The life of the Spirit fulfills mission!

When a brother priest asked for an explanation of the difference between the sacramental grace of Confirmation (as heard is Isaiah 11:2-3) and that grace which flows from the gifts given by the Spirit for expressed purposes at various times, it was readily seen that a true lack of study and/or acceptance of any teaching has been grasped. In St. Paul's Letters to the Corinthians (1Cor 12), Romans 8 and Ephesians 4, we can see church and presbyterate suffering. By our very inability to speak of the fruits and graces which are the Father's gifts we reveal a need to again examine our personal relationship with our Lord as well as our acceptance to live in the mission of Jesus.

I invite you to consider the sacramental life of the Church. Do we speak of the involvement of the Holy Spirit when celebrating these -- even as the Spirit is called upon time and again. Do our people understand that there is no sacrament of Baptism without the Holy Spirit? No sacrament of Reconciliation without the Holy Spirit. There is no Eucharist without the Holy Spirit? No anointing of the sick without the Holy Spirit? And while there is no ordination or marriage without

the involvement of the Holy Spirit, how many are trying to live these vocations without the Spirit for guidance, courage and strength.

And of the Fruits of the Spirit which flow to us when we accept and live the Gifts of the Spirit? Is the teaching of these presented on our human experiences of joy and peace, etc., etc.? If so, we are failing since these fruits find us happy in living the will of God, finding the Father's joy for us once we have given ourselves over for the living of His will. Isn't this what our Lord did time and again? Our joy moves from a temporary earthly joy to a divine joy found in the sharing of God's life -- all through the Spirit's gifts working in and through us.

So, what do I suggest, my brothers? Let's make sure we live in the Spirit beginning with our prayer to Him, asking for the ability to act in oneness with our Lord Jesus in mission. Let us make sure we look to see -- and pray to see -- the Holy Spirit joining us to His action for the sake of ourselves and others. Let us study scripture only after asking the Spirit of God to awaken Wisdom, Knowledge and Understanding in every planned activity and in every decision made. Let our homilies allow our people to see the action of the Holy Spirit in one or all of the readings of the day. And in every sacrament, emphasize the involvement of the Holy Spirit in the Church's action and ministry, its purpose and mission. And let our people see our spirit being joined with the Spirit of our God.

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

May 2023						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Rev. 1 John Theodore <i>Port of Spain</i>	Rev. 2 John Dreher <i>Providence</i>	Rev. 3 Robert Giardina <i>Providence</i>	4 For the souls of our deceased FOP members	5 For prayer requests received	6 For our Holy Father, Pope Francis
Rev. 7 Gerry Sabourin <i>Providence</i>	Rev. 8 Michael Kelley <i>Providence</i>	Rev. 9 Roland Lepire <i>Providence</i>	Rev. 10 Michael Roy <i>Providence</i>	Rev. 11 Terry Brenon <i>San Angelo, TX</i>	Rev. 12 Robert Bush <i>San Angelo, TX</i>	Rev. 13 Bernard Gully <i>San Angelo, TX</i>
Rev. 14 Santiago Udayar <i>San Angelo, TX</i>	Rev. 15 William McCarthy <i>Sioux City, IA</i>	Msgr. 16 Edward Burian <i>Sioux Falls, SD</i>	Rev. 17 John Helmueller <i>Sioux Falls, SD</i>	Rev. 18 Joseph Vogel <i>Sioux Falls, SD</i>	Rev. 19 Richard Baumberger <i>Sioux Falls, SD</i>	Rev. 20 Rodney Farke <i>Sioux Falls, SD</i>
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Rev. 28 Gerald Mischke <i>St Cloud, MN</i>	Rev. 29 Gregory Paffel <i>St Cloud, MN</i>	Rev. 30 Todd Schneider <i>St Cloud, MN</i>	Rev. 31 James Dyer <i>St Louis, MO</i>			

A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

Fraternity of Priests, Inc.
PO Box 442
Steubenville, OH 43952-5442

Email: contact@fraternityofpriests.org
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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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