

THE VISITATION

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Is June My New Hallowe'en? - By Fr. Robert J. Carr, Boston Fraternity

As I write this, we are about to enter the month of July and, therefore, we leave behind the month of June. I am starting to think the sixth month is beginning to be like thirty days of Hallowe'en for me. A triglot, I work in different cultures. Hallowe'en is my annual nightmare.

Many from the United States grew up with the semi-holiday, others from outside our country did not. So, if they are not well-versed in English, the visual images of that day and the marketing around it become alarming to some.

On one side, I listen to people talk about preparing for Hallowe'en as they did since childhood and on the other, I deal with people who believe Satan sent everything to Earth for the day. I as a priest from New England get caught in the middle.

June is turning into something similar for me. First, in the Catholic Church, June is the month of the Sacred Heart which is all about communicating God's mercy. In the secular world, June is Pride Month and it recognizes the pushback that began at the Stonewall Inn in Manhattan when members of the homosexual community protested and demanded civil rights. The root meaning of Pride Month is

all Americans are entitled to those basic civil rights. Of course, it is not a religious but a civil expression.

As with those from other countries talking about Hallowe'en and giving it a meaning that is not there, others are claiming an understanding of the month that also is not there. Many Catholic circles preach condemnation over and over again. One prominent Catholic lay apologist said that to fly the Pride Flag is to celebrate sin; that is not correct.

Pride as recognized in June does not mean celebrating the mother of all sins. A Catholic friend in Brazil explained it to me. He came to realize he had same-sex attraction and left religious life. It means that people do not have to live in shame for having same-sex attraction which the Church recognizes is real.

Regardless what people think of the meaning of the word Pride in the secular circles, Catholics may find themselves speaking in ways that are counterproductive to the mission of the Church. They do this by doing nothing more than shouting sin and condemnation.

The Late D. James Kennedy, a famous evangelical TV preacher from Coral Ridge, Florida, rejected the Catholic Church because he

called it a system. He obviously did not understand her. However, we can turn her into a system quite easily and that is problematic.

Our role as Catholic priests is to draw people to Christ. We have the role to shepherd others so that they encounter Our Lord and deepen their faith in Him. This is why the fraternity disciplines are so important to our ministry. So that we may do this more powerfully.

Cardinal Robert Sarah in his book *The Day is Far Spent* speaks of the need to return to Christ and allow him to more deeply convert both us and the rest of his people. This is what we need to teach and focus on in our fraternity disciplines and meetings and parishes.

Sin leads people away from Christ and even separates us from Him. The greatest source of sin is the attitude: "I want my world, my way." It includes "I want my Church my way." That has its roots in the sin of pride. I know of priests who preach all about mortal sins that will cast sinners into Hell but speak virtually nothing of the encounter with Christ that will lead them into Heaven.

Unfortunately, in the United States, we let many people, including many of the laity well versed in condemnation of sinners, to have too prominent a voice. Some even traffic

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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:
\$2,639.00

Budget Deficit:
\$2,111.00

*Current as of
June 30, 2022.*

This is my last article as Chairman. With the elections at the Fraternity Conference in June at Franciscan University, I am no longer on the Board. I want to say a special thank you to all of you who have supported the Fraternity of Priests over so many years. Having been the Chairman for the last four years has opened my eyes to the incredible support given to the Fraternity by both the clergy and the laity. I've also been edified by the speakers we have had for the Conferences and how so many of them were so supportive of the Fraternity.

In our June meeting in Steubenville, we held our business meeting. Fr. Damjan Mlinaric of Slovenia was elected to the Board. Fr. Bob Carr was also elected for his second term. They join Fr. Dwight Merrick, Fr. Joseph Meagher, Fr. John Kiley, Fr. Sylvester Nankpi and Fr. Tom Galvin.

One of the graces I have had is that when someone calls or writes in to the Fraternity, if it needs a response or come to someone's attention, the Ridgefield Group (the wonderful people who take care of the "office stuff" for the Fraternity) contact me. I have had some wonderful interactions with people over the years, seeing how much Fraternity has meant to people.

So many of you have asked for prayers, and I have brought those prayers with me before our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. As I read through the prayers month to month, I have begun to recognize some of the handwriting. It is a blessing to see how faithful you are to praying for family and friends, as well as seeing

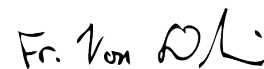
when God has answered prayer.

In one of my recent interactions as Chairman, one priest shared with me a powerful experience he had... and wanted me to

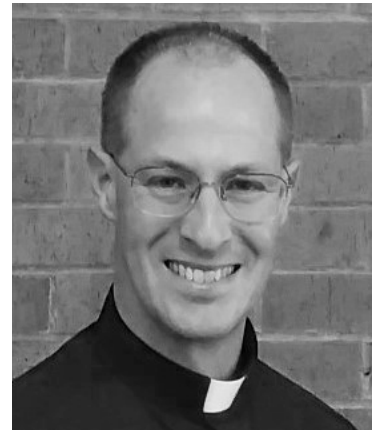
share it with others. As I understand it, he had a vivid dream in which he had died and went before the judgment seat. He experienced such love, mercy and joy in that dream, it wiped away any fear he had of death. He wanted me to share that there's no need for fear! Let Jesus embrace us in His mercy! Over and over again, we hear in the Scriptures that God says to us, "Do not be afraid!" This may seem ethereal, but the powerful experiences of others may help to drive it home – God really is taking care of us! He really does love us! His Providence really does provide for all our needs. We have no reason to be afraid!

As I leave my role on the Board of Directors, know that I will keep you in my prayers. Please keep me in your prayers, as well as Fr. John Kiley, as he takes again the role as Chairman.

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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in the sin of detraction including against Pope Francis to get the Church the way they want it. So, while they teach our people that “those people are going to Hell,” they do nothing to lead “those people” to know Christ.

The problem with “Pride month” is not that people fly rainbow flags; it is that Catholics need to do more to help those who most need to know Christ to Him through His Church.

Today, many reject the Catholic Church and her teachings but we have not changed our way of communicating to help them understand what we actually believe. So, we talk to people as if they had the same understanding of our faith as those fifty years ago. The fact is they do not.

What is the big question people ask at Saturday afternoon weddings? “Does the wedding Mass fulfill the obligation to attend Mass on Sunday?” Why do they ask? Because they see our faith first as a set of rules. “If I don’t attend Mass on Sunday, I am going to Hell but if the wedding counts, I can sleep in.”

This is a great indication that people do not understand what we believe. Many think they have to jump through some hoops to make sure they are going to Heaven. That is not Catholicism in fact, it is closer to the system that DJ Kennedy condemned.

Catholicism is Jesus giving himself to us—His Church through his death and resurrection, through the Liturgy of the Word and in the Eucharist—His Body and Blood.

We give ourselves to Him when we receive the Eucharist. It is a covenant between Christ and us through His Church. Many Catholics explain the word communion means that we are in communion with other Catholics who believe as we do. Communion also means we are in communion with God through His Son Jesus Christ giving us of Himself.

The hosts of Heaven are with us as God does all he can to lead us to the eternal life to which he calls us. The more we celebrate that in the Thanksgiving of the Lord’s actions, the more we discover how wonderful God is in our lives. We go to Mass as a part of this relationship with Christ and his Church and we celebrate it asking the Lord to lead us more and more to be what he calls us to be.

That is the message we are supposed to teach. This is why the Sacrament of Confession is so important, it is a tool the Lord uses to break down those barriers within us that keep us from drawing closer to Christ.

However, if all we do is take this gift of faith God gives to us and use it to condemn others for not understanding it, then we are acting in ways that will bring condemnation upon ourselves. It is like the Lord gives us a treasure to share and we distribute it only to those we decide should receive it while screaming at others for not meeting our standards. Whereas the Lord would want us to teach how to help people most appreciate the treasure so they can most receive it too.

Pride month and the month of

the Sacred Heart are now one year away. Now is the time to mark your calendars for holding meetings in April and May on how best your parish can address the mercy and meaning of the Sacred Heart during June in the way Jesus would want. Make this a discussion then in your Fraternity meetings as well.

Discuss what the Church actually teaches about chastity. Invite people to adoration by explaining what it is and why we do it. One does not have to be in a state of grace to sit before the Eucharist. This exposition may bring conversion of hearts. Another suggestion is to have a guest speaker on the devotion to the Sacred Heart.

During the month explain why you do not have a pride flag in your church, which was one of my homilies last month. (It would mean that this group has a special invitation but all of us have that special invitation as long as we have the desire to come to know Christ and allow Him to transform us.)

Maybe even do some research on what people hear the Catholic Church teaches. You might be surprised to learn that many in the homosexual community believe the Vatican is their worst enemy, that Catholics hate them. I hope that is not the message you want to tell Jesus you successfully communicated.

Put together maybe a prayerful devotion asking the Lord how He wants you to best communicate His Church’s teachings in a way that is most like the way Jesus would do it Himself.

Our role, after all, is to lead all to Christ, not to preach to the choir.

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

August 2023						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		Rev. 1 Jean-Paul Gagnon <i>Worcester, MA</i>	Rev. 2 Greg Downs <i>Alexandria, LA</i>	Rev. 3 For the souls of our deceased FOP members	Rev. 4 For prayer requests received	Rev. 5 For our Holy Father, Pope Francis
Dcn. 6 Norman Gremillion <i>Alexandria, LA</i>	Rev. 7 Harold Imamshah <i>Alexandria, LA</i>	Rev. 8 Silverino Kwebuza <i>Alexandria, LA</i>	Rev. 9 Martin Laird <i>Alexandria, LA</i>	Rev. 10 Ron Matthews <i>Alexandria, LA</i>	Rev. 11 John O'Brien <i>Alexandria, LA</i>	Rev. 12 John Pardue <i>Alexandria, LA</i>
Rev. 13 Thomas Paul <i>Alexandria, LA</i>	Msgr. 14 John Mrz <i>Allentown, PA</i>	Rev. 15 George Winne <i>Allentown, PA</i>	Rev. 16 John Brennan <i>Boston, MA</i>	Rev. 17 Robert Carr <i>Boston, MA</i>	Rev. 18 William Carroll <i>Boston, MA</i>	Rev. 19 Donald Clinton <i>Boston, MA</i>
Rev. 20 Volney DeRosia <i>Boston, MA</i>	Dcn. 21 Paul Dow <i>Boston, MA</i>	Rev. 22 Gerry Fraser <i>Boston, MA</i>	Rev. 23 Christopher Gaffrey OFM <i>Boston, MA</i>	Rev. 24 Patrick Gilbert <i>Boston, MA</i>	Dcn. 25 Chuck Hall <i>Boston, MA</i>	Rev. 26 Elson Kattookkaran <i>Boston, MA</i>
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A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

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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.

Please cut and return this form with your donation.

Dear Fr. Von DeRosia,

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

\$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____

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