

# THE VISITATION

! "The Visitation" is now digital! Visit [fraternityofpriests.org](http://fraternityofpriests.org) to sign up to receive this newsletter via email and to access our online donation form. This will help the Fraternity of Priests be more efficient and to simplify costs as we enter the new year.

## Keep It Simple, Fathers! - By Fr. John G. Kiley, Boston Fraternity

As members of the Fraternity of Priests we are familiar with what we term the Kingdom Disciplines. They are the commitments we embrace when we make a commitment to the Fraternity. With God's grace and the prayerful support and encouragement of our brothers we strive live them in order to grow closer to Jesus and to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit. What are these disciplines? Let's review them: 1) To pray at least an hour a day. 2) To attend Fraternity meetings faithfully and not to be absent without reason and notice. 3) To read Scripture daily and keep a prayer journal. 4) To tithe ten percent of our income. 5) To fast weekly. 6) To accept leadership and teaching from the Fraternity. 7) To receive discernment and spiritual direction from the Fraternity. 8) To be zealous for personal committed relationships with the Lord Jesus and brother priests. 9) To proclaim the Visitation Message. 10) To empower God's people in the Holy Spirit.

Without neglecting or minimizing any of these disciplines, there is also another reality that the Church has been reemphasizing as essential for the life of the priest, namely "simplicity of life" and "voluntary

poverty."

I find we priests do not speak about or discuss this very often. The Vatican II "Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests," however, is very explicit. Number 17 reads in part: "priests and bishops should devote primarily to their decent livelihood and to the fulfillment of the duties of their proper state the benefits which they receive when they exercise some church office. What remains beyond that, they should devote to the good of the Church or to works of charity. . . . Indeed, they (*bishops and diocesan priests*) are invited to embrace voluntary poverty. By it they will be more clearly likened to Christ and will become more devoted to the sacred ministry."

The "Constitution on the Church in the Modern World" is also emphatic and extends a similar call to all the faithful. In numbers 69 and 88 the faithful are encouraged to give to the poor from their "substance" and not just from their superfluity. Pope John Paul II eloquently reiterated this call in his homily at Yankee Stadium in New York City on October 2, 1979: "The poor of the United States and of the world are your brothers and sisters in Christ. You must never be content to leave them just the crumbs from the feast. You must

take of your substance, and not just of your abundance, in order to help them. And you must treat them like guests at your family table."

Pope St. John Paul II again spoke of this in "Pastores Dabo Vobis" number 30. "In reality, only the person who contemplates and lives the mystery of God as the one and supreme good, as the true and definitive treasure, can understand and practice poverty, which is certainly not a matter of despising or rejecting material goods but of a loving and responsible use of these goods and at the same time an ability to renounce them with great interior freedom - that is, with reference to God and his plan."

He continues, "Nor should the prophetic significance of priestly poverty be forgotten, so urgently needed in affluent and consumeristic societies: 'A truly poor priest is indeed a specific sign of separation from, disavowal of and non-submission to the tyranny of a contemporary world which puts all its trust in money and in material security.'" Along with priestly celibacy a simple lifestyle is a powerful witness that happiness does not consist in material possessions, but in a living relationship with God.

This theme has also found its way into the 1983 Code of Canon Law. Canon 282 - 1: Clerics are

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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:  
**\$1,919.00**

Budget Deficit:  
**\$2,831.00**

*Current as of  
December 31, 2022.*

In January, I had the opportunity of going to Comunità Cenacolo in St. Augustine, FL again (as I did last year, see my article from February 2022).

While I was down there, I took the opportunity to visit the Servant Sisters of the Home of the Mother. A few years ago, I heard about the Home of the Mother when one of my parishioners asked me to watch a video about Sr. Clare Crockett, SHM (“All or Nothing”) – a holy young sister who died in the 2015 earthquake in Ecuador. I fell in love with Sr. Clare and wanted to know more about her community. When I went down last year, I met the sisters, enjoying my time with them. This year, I went again, and they told me to watch the video about Fr. Henry Kowalczyk, SHM (“I Am Fire” – both videos are available free on YouTube, and I encourage you to watch them). These two holy people have encouraged me in my own walk of holiness, calling me out of complacency to a greater gift of self to God and others.

Fr. Henry and Sr. Clare knew each other. This made me start to think about how many saints were friends. Of course, we think of Francis of Assisi and Clare, Francis de Sales and Jane Frances de Chantal, the siblings Benedict and Scholastica, Basil and Gregory, and more recently John Paul II and Mother Teresa. So often, when reading the lives of the saints, we hear about how their lives intersected with other saints. This is no coincidence. God has planned that we walk with others on the way of holiness. I can think of several close friends who, by word and example, have led me to a greater holiness of life, a greater intimacy with God. I like to think of it as their holiness “rubbing off” on me.

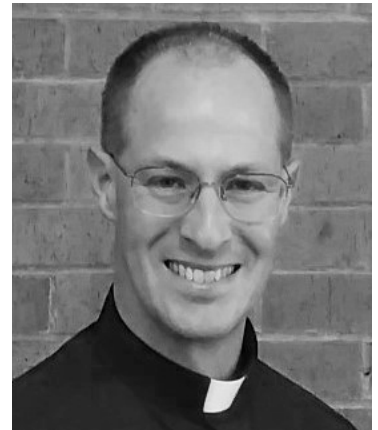
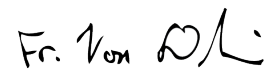
I think this is one of the aspects that

is so important about Fraternity. We’re not just a bunch of like minded priests getting together. We are called to be saints and to help each other become saints. As one of the founders of my local fraternity used to say, “There are only two things you need: to get holy and stay holy!” We need each other to get holy and to stay holy! It is so easy as a priest to be a “lone-ranger.” As a natural introvert, I know that without Fraternity I would have isolated myself much more than I do. The regular meetings with the brothers force me to become much more self-giving and transparent. They call me to holiness, and help me to be holy. In short, Fraternity calls me to be a saint.

I pray that you are surrounded by people who call you to greater heights of holiness. Better together!

Please note that the 2023 Fraternity of Priest Conference – celebrating 40 years – will take place where we began: at Franciscan University at the Priest, Deacon, Seminarian Conference. More information about registration will be forth-coming, but the dates are June 11-16, 2023. If you are able to come in Sunday, when registering on the Franciscan Conferences website, use promo code **FOPHousing-2023** to waive the fee for the Sunday overnight. Visit [steubenvilleconferences.com/events/pds/](http://steubenvilleconferences.com/events/pds/) to register. Early registration ends on March 31st.

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](mailto:editor@fraternityofpriests.org). Newsletter material from all Fraternity members is gratefully accepted.

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to cultivate a simple style of life and are to avoid whatever has a semblance of vanity. Canon 282 – 2: After they have provided for their own decent support and for the fulfillment of all the duties of their state of life from the goods which they receive on the occasion of exercising an ecclesiastical office, clerics should want to use any superfluous goods for the good of the Church and for works of charity.

An excellent and particularly challenging book on this subject is “Happy Are You Poor: The Simple Life and Spiritual Freedom” by Father Thomas Dubay. Read it and take it to prayer if you dare. In a chapter on clerical poverty he mentions priest and bishop saints who observed simplicity in an outstanding way, men like St. John Vianney, St. Claude de la Colombiere, St. Robert Bellarmine, St. Thomas of Villanova, St. Antoninus, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Pius X, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Francis de Sales among others. It would be helpful and inspiring to become familiar with their lives.

This call to “simplicity of life” and to “voluntary poverty” takes us beyond our Fraternity discipline to tithe 10% of our income. There are priests in many parts of the world and in some Fraternities who live out the reality of material poverty each day because they live and minister in poor and destitute countries. Even though materially poor these brothers are also challenged to cultivate a spirit of detachment. They deserve our prayers and material assistance.

Recently I met a priest from Bangladesh in the Boston’s Logan

Airport who gets no salary and has no health care but depends totally on the Lord and the goodness of God’s people. Many of us, however, live in a materially prosperous culture and need to respond to this call of the Lord to increasing generosity. Regular teaching on this topic and appropriation should take place in our groups. Are we committed to helping each other respond to and live out this call in our dining, clothing, purchases, hi tech items, recreation, vacations etc.? Do we eagerly and joyfully help a brother in material need? How generous are we to the poor throughout the world and to those who come to our door? Do we try to distinguish seriously between our legitimate needs and our wants? These considerations are especially important today when some of our parishioners have lost jobs and even homes and are struggling financially as a continuing effect of Covid-19.

This call to simplicity of life and to voluntary poverty was not emphasized in my own seminary formation for the diocesan priesthood. However, there was an innate sense among many of us that it was important. If we witnessed or knew of a priest who was living a rather extravagant lifestyle, we frequently resorted to criticism with the phrase: “Well, after all, Father deserves the best.”

In our idealism, little did we realize that this attitude of “Father deserves the best” which we were criticizing in a brother could easily creep into the hearts of any one of us, if we were not constantly vigilant. Since we had given up marriage and were committed to

celibacy, didn’t we deserve the best of material things? We could easily slip into the life of a comfortable bachelor. How far we could drift from Jesus who emptied Himself and became poor for our sake!

Cardinal Timothy Dolan wrote an excellent chapter on “simplicity of life” in his book *Priests for the Third Millennium* (2009, OSV). In a very down-to-earth and realistic way he uncovers some of the pitfalls that we priests can succumb to if we neglect to examine our lifestyles with the help of God’s grace and the support of brothers. He writes: “priests and future priests are impelled to the simple life not just because the Master requires it, not just because it makes it easier to reach God, not just because it promotes a more just society, not just because it reminds us that only God can ultimately satisfy us, not only because it prompts trust in Providence, but because it gives good example, and because not to do it gives grave scandal.”

Cardinal Dolan also shares a powerful personal story. When he was a graduate student, he would occasionally stop by at a Dominican House for an overnight on his way home from the university. He became friends with a wise and elderly Dominican. On one visit noticing how plain and simple the priest’s room was, he asked him where he kept the rest of his stuff. He was told “this is it.” The Dominican said, “if I go down to your room all you have is your suitcase.” Dolan said, “but after all I’m only passing through.” The wise Dominican responded, “Aren’t we all?” Keep it simple, Fathers, we’re only passing through!

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

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# THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

March 2023						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			Rev. 1 Earl Dekat Kansas City	2 For the souls of our deceased FOP members	3 For prayer requests received	4 For our Holy Father, Pope Francis
Rev. 5 Roderic Giller OSB Kansas City	Rev. 6 Rheal Forest Manitoba, Can	Rev. 7 Timothy Ekaitis Marquette, MI	Rev. 8 Ryan Ford Marquette, MI	Rev. 9 Christopher Gardiner Marquette, MI	Rev. 10 Benjamin Hasse Marquette, MI	Rev. 11 Jeff Johnson Marquette, MI
Rev. 12 Dustin Larson Marquette, MI	Rev. 13 Thomas Merkel Marquette, MI	Rev. 14 Aaron Nowicki Marquette, MI	Rev. 15 Darryl Pepin Marquette, MI	Rev. 16 Benjamin Rivard Marquette, MI	Rev. 17 Michael Steber Marquette, MI	Rev. 18 Larry Van Damme Marquette, MI
Rev. 19 Michael Woempner Marquette, MI	Rev. 20 Raymond Zeugner Marquette, MI	Rev. 21 Anthony Bekpare Nasaalbeteryeb	Rev. 22 Nicodemus Unezumeh Nasaalbeteryeb	Rev. 23 Eugene Bettinger O.Carm. New Jersey	Rev. 24 Paul Cannariato New Jersey	Rev. 25 John Gordon New Jersey
Rev. 26 Joseph Meagher New Jersey	Rev. 27 Brendan Murray New Jersey	Rev. 28 Lewis Papera New Jersey	Rev. 29 John Primich New Jersey	Rev. 30 Ernest Rush New Jersey	Rev. 31 John Wassell New Jersey	

## A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

**Fraternity of Priests, Inc.**  
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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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*(Please print legibly)*

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