



THE VISITATION

! "The Visitation" is now digital! Visit 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.

Leave Lazy Preaching Behind - by Fr. Robert J. Carr

I spoke with a former parishioner the other day. She left the parish because she moved to another state. Granted since I am in New England, another state is really not more than three hours max away and that is only if you head to New York from Along the I-93 corridor. Every other contiguous state to Massachusetts is no more than an hour and a half away and usually less than even an hour.

She told me she may speak with a leader for another denomination after a homily delivered at her new parish. The pastor and homilist there turned her off completely by listing all the types of people who could not be part of the Catholic Church as they hold positions we Catholics do not embrace.

"Did he speak at all about prayer?"

"No, he just listed these types of people."

"Well, there you go." I said.

I would hope she would speak to the priest who gave the homily but I have to admit this type of preaching that only lists sins and sinners and never teaches of prayer are typical in their form, lack of substance and negative consequence. They have no place in the Catholic Church.

One of the greatest problems we have in our church today are what we call influencers. These are men and women who hold their own

video or podcast channel, answer to no one and speak anything they want. We also see it among priests on the altar who even if they are not influencers in social media speak in ways similar. You will hear them complain of sinners and sins and/or politicians who hold positions they disagree with and use their pulpit for this kind of speech. They do not realize that the fruit of their actions is to have people leave the Church who find their words too harsh. Those who stay make a congregation that applauds harsh words. This serves no one.

Preaching on nothing but sins, publicly naming people whom people call sinners has no place in the pulpit or on social media channels. Preaching about how to turn from sin and come to Christ; teaching how to encounter Christ even if one is following a path that the Church teaches leads away from Christ, these are the challenges those who communicate the Church's message need to speak.

We know that Jesus spoke to sinners but he educated them and that is why he spoke to them, he did not condemn them because that serves no one.

I know that many people applaud the priest who rails against President Joe Biden and other politicians in their homilies but the president is

probably not attending their church and their words do nothing for the congregation.

Our preaching needs to be well-researched, well put together and delivered in such a way that we do not condemn the sinner. We instead educate the sinner while also afflicting the comfortable and comforting the afflicted.

How do we do this? Research. I use a software package called Verbum which I highly recommend. This enables me to learn what the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, the Catechism of the Council of Trent also teaches as well as a plethora of magisterial documents. This enables me to understand what I am going to preach more deeply and preach more accurately what the Church actually teaches.

Recently, I was asked to interview one of these priest influencers by his publisher. He writes books and has a social media presence. I said no. Why? I see in his social media lots of condemnation by citing doctrine but little on how to live the Catholic faith or even why to those he condemns. For example, he will mock the concept of pride month without explaining what the Church actually teaches to those who may struggle with same-sex attraction. This is a form of condemnation that does great damage.

I learned through my own
...continued on page 3

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:

\$1,582.00

Budget Deficit:

\$3,168.00

Current as of
September 30, 2024.

During the month of September, I had the opportunity to make a brief visit to Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio to make a presentation to the young men in the Priestly Discernment Program. The purpose of the visit was to speak about the importance of Priestly Fraternity and to make the students aware of the International Fraternity of Priests that had its origin at Franciscan University in 1983. There are presently about thirty men in the program. Several are sent there by their diocese for college. Most at this point have no specific commitment to a diocese or religious community but are discerning a possible priestly/religious vocation. In addition to sharing prayer and life together the members attend classes with the other university students. Keep these men in your prayers that they may clearly hear and respond to the call of the Lord.

During my stay I was warmly welcomed by the students and by Father Patrick Whittle T.O.R. who heads up the program and had the opportunity to spend the night at Holy Spirit Friary and to join the Franciscan Community for morning prayer. I concelebrated two Masses with the University Students in the temporary chapel in the J. C. Williams Center while Christ the King Chapel is undergoing extensive renovations. It is always a wonderful and moving experience to celebrate the Eucharist with young people who are alive in their faith and manifest love of Jesus.

One aspect of the Priestly Discernment Program that impresses me is that in addition to the Four Pillars of Seminary Formation that come from the document *Pastores Dabo Vobis (I will Give You Shepherds)* of St. John Paul II: formation that is *human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral*, the program at Steubenville adds *fraternal*.

Certainly the International Fraternity of Priests which had its origin at Franciscan has been a wonderful grace for the priesthood and for the Church. However the Fraternity is not

well known even among the faculty and students at Steubenville with some exceptions. Our challenge as members of the Fraternity and you, our lay supporters, is to do all we can in prayer and sharing to make others aware that we exist. Talk to priests. Share the Newsletter. Invite people to check out the website: www.fraternityofpriests.org.

Let me conclude with a reminder to my brother priests that our annual summer conference in 2025 will be held in conjunction with the annual Steubenville Conference for Priests, Deacons, and Seminarians. In 2025 Franciscan celebrates the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Priests Conference. I was present at that first conference in 1975 and am looking forward to the anniversary celebration which will be held in the recently completed conference center. The dates are Monday June 23 through Friday Noon June 27. Check it out online at: steubenvilleconferences.com and make plans now to be present. During the week we will schedule times for the Fraternity to meet. As always let us continue to pray for each other.



Fr. John Kiley

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

preparation for homilies and teachings that every word counts in every magisterial document. When you study what the Catholic Church actually teaches, notice in documents like *Humanae Vitae* for example that every word in that document has weight on the final message. So, if you paraphrase it, you will see that Pope Paul VI spoke against artificial contraception and if you sum it up, it will be that the Church does not allow any form of unnatural contraception. She promotes abstinence and natural family planning. All of which is true, but the Pope also wrote to those that find this teaching difficult and explained of the need to employ all the tools the Church offers to live the deep message the Church gives on Catholic family life.

If, however, sin still exercises its hold over them, they are not to lose heart. Rather must they, humble and persevering, have recourse to the mercy of God, abundantly bestowed in the Sacrament of Penance. In this way, for sure, they will be able to reach that perfection of married life (Humanae Vitae #25)

Notice instead of condemning those who struggle and fail at living the high standard the Church calls married men and women, the Pontiff recognized that for some this will be difficult. He calls them to understand the mission, and to avail themselves to the Sacraments to assist them to live the fullness of their call.

When was the last time you heard some of these harsh Catholic influencers making that statement. The same harsh language preached from the altar blindly ignores what the Church actually teaches by recognizing for some this is a difficult

call and that the church has all the tools necessary to assist in growing towards this standard.

Notice what it requires, prayer and the sacraments. I preach every week of the importance of family prayer. It is essential. However, when an influencer, a priest or one who is both does nothing but condemn and speak harshly, little they say matches what the Church actually teaches.

Take for example the priest influencer I refused to interview. He uses his forum to sardonically speak of Pride month, the Vatican actually teaches the following:

An authentic pastoral programme will assist homosexual persons at all levels of the spiritual life: through the sacraments, and in particular through the frequent and sincere use of the sacrament of Reconciliation, through prayer, witness, counsel and individual care. In such a way, the entire Christian community can come to recognize its own call to assist its brothers and sisters, without deluding them or isolating them.

From this multi-faceted approach there are numerous advantages to be gained, not the least of which is the realization that a homosexual person, as every human being, deeply needs to be nourished at many different levels simultaneously. "The Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons #16"

I always consider preaching focusing on sin and saying nothing about prayer is lazy preaching.

Our preaching must be deeply researched in order to give an accurate response to what the Church teaches. You are not going to find this level or preaching in a Catholic magazine or social media that is not focused on giving a professional

level of Catholic understanding.

For example, I study the Catholic documents as they pertain to the readings for that weekend. I do not engage in any form of homily helps from any Catholic publication. They do not have any focus on the specific needs of any congregation but give a general understanding of a particular reading.

It's nothing for me to get up to twenty-five pages of researched notes before I write my homily because I want to know exactly what information is best in order to deliver a homily.

We have to be able to educate our parishioners on just how to preach the message of the Gospel, just how they are to receive it in their own homes and lives and meet them where they live taking what the Church actually teaches.

As we prepare for Advent coming soon, maybe we can begin by ensuring for this upcoming year that our homilies are well researched and we focus not on what is popular in social media but on what the Catholic Church actually teaches. We must keep in mind that in every encyclical every word counts and that many of our parishioners may be confused by the two-dimensional black and white teaching of Catholic influencers who have literally no authority to be teaching on whatever subject they are teaching now. Even if they hold eighty-five degrees in why the Church does not support Contraception and in the proper use of the term Eschatology, they speak with no more authority than any other baptized Catholic.

Let us really educate our parishioners this year in what is true Catholic teaching.

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

December 2024						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Rev. 1 Mark Mitchell <i>Grand Rapids</i>	Rev. 2 Ayub Nasar <i>Grand Rapids</i>	Rev. 3 Michael Shea CM <i>Grand Rapids</i>	Msgr. 4 Cyril Lamontagne VG <i>West Indies</i>	5 For the souls of our deceased FOP members	6 For prayer requests received	7 For our Holy Father, Pope Francis
Rev. 8 Robert Grant <i>Hartford</i>	Rev. 9 Paul Halovatch <i>Hartford</i>	Rev. 10 Joseph Looney <i>Hartford</i>	Rev. 11 Will-Roger Malave <i>Hartford</i>	Rev. 12 Robert Rousseau <i>Hartford</i>	Rt. Rev. Dr. 13 Bryan Eyman <i>Indianapolis</i>	Rev. 14 Paul Landwerlen <i>Indianapolis</i>
Rev. 15 George Nangachiveetill <i>Indianapolis</i>	Rev. 16 Thomas Cawley C.M. <i>Kansas City</i>	Rev. 17 Earl Dekat <i>Kansas City</i>	Rev. 18 Roderic Giller <i>Kansas City</i>	Rev. 19 Rheal Forest <i>Manitoba</i>	Rev. 20 Timothy Ekaitis <i>Marquette</i>	Rev. 21 Ryan Ford <i>Marquette</i>
Rev. 22 Christopher Gardiner <i>Marquette</i>	Rev. 23 Benjamin Hasse <i>Marquette</i>	Rev. 24 Jeff Johnson <i>Marquette</i>	Rev. 25 Dustin Larson <i>Marquette</i>	Rev. 26 Thomas Merkel <i>Marquette</i>	Rev. 27 Brandon Oman <i>Marquette</i>	Rev. 28 Darryl Pepin <i>Marquette</i>
Rev. 29 Michael Steber <i>Marquette</i>	Rev. 30 Larry Van Damme <i>Marquette</i>	Rev. 31 Michael Woempner <i>Marquette</i>				

A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

PO Box 442

Stuebenville, OH 43952-5442

Email: contact@fraternityofpriests.org

<http://www.fraternityofpriests.org>

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. John Kiley,

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

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

The Fraternity of Priests pledge of financial accountability: We take very seriously the trust you put in us when you send a gift. We stand accountable before God and you to honor that trust. We pledge: To use your gift carefully and wisely, and not to ask for money that is not needed.

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(Please print legibly)

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