



THE VISITATION

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Jubilee Year of Hope: Much More Than Simple Encouragement - by Fr. Tom Galvin, Pittsburgh

I have been greatly downsizing everything in my life. I'm at that age and wisdom has come to the forefront. This includes many of the books that once filled my shelves. They went to the parish library or were boxed up, finding their way to the dumpster because their age equated to uselessness. Modern scholarship bypassed the wisdom of those pages. Books on one shelf remained untouched as these printings held timeless teachings as you will see.

As I began to study what Pope Francis asked Catholics to consider during the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope, it became apparent that his call was much more than us making "holy trips" -- pilgrimages to holy sites, or to cross through the threshold of ancient doors. He meant for all Catholics to examine their faith in light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, especially in and through the Beatitudes found in St. Matthew's Gospel. It is a universal call to the world-wide Church. It is meant for every diocese, every parish, every Catholic to examine how the Gospel of Jesus Christ is being lived in 2025. Ouch! As I prayed how we would celebrate this year in our parish, I was led by the Holy Spirit to revisit what I had studied and taught years ago.

In recognizing that much of this papal bull was centered on the Beatitudes, I had to go to that one shelf of books untouched by the purge. I heard in the heart, "*Listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit from of old.*" I grabbed the books I knew well, beginning with Pope Leo XIII's infamous encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, given to the Church in 1893. It was eye-opening, and should be for anyone who has studied the social justice issues of the Church. The message of the Gospel is highlighted in the documents of Vatican Council II's *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity* (1965) and the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of John Paul II in *The Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People* (1983). They are reinforced in the encyclical letters of Pope Paul VI *On the Development of People* (1967) and by JPII in *On Human Work* (1981), and his encyclical letter *On Social Concern* (1987). My brothers and sisters, these are but a few of the many such teachings which come to us from the treasury of the Church.

As I studied this latest papal bull with the leadership of Pittsburgh Cursillo, I found it amusing and saddening at the same time since the people gravitated first to the

"pilgrimage" -- going to some place where special indulgences will be gained and sins, and stains of sin, cast off. The problem I have with this is that it simply falls short! Such activity can be self-centered, individualistic, and therefore, sinful in and of itself. Notice, I said "can be" so don't call the Vatican police on me. Face it! Such activity can be very egotistical, self-centered, and lacking concern as the Beatitudes are meant to reveal in good Catholic living. All this could change if someone paid the expenses for someone unable to afford a pilgrimage.

The other part of this exhortation, this call to be immersed in the virtue of Hope, is that of service, of humbling self for the sake of another, for being that instrument of Hope in our world often found wearing blinders in everyday life. This is where the Beatitudes come into play. A believer cannot, I repeat "cannot" live the Beatitudes without extending himself or herself to the needs of others, without entering into humble service for the lifting up of others in Hope for lives lost in desolation and despair so often found in our societies. This is living in imitation of Christ. And there's no way of getting around it. This requires us praying for the gift of

...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:
\$2,305.00

Budget Deficit:
\$2,400.00

*Current as of
January 31, 2025.*

As I write this brief article for the March Newsletter I have just returned from the 80 plus degree weather of Florida to the cold and snow of New England. (May spring arrive soon!) Each February the Boston Archdiocese offers a retreat for priests at the Bethany Retreat House in Lutz, FL, in the diocese of St. Peterburg. This year we had fifty priests participating and one of our auxiliary bishops who was the inspiration behind this yearly retreat. We also had a brief visit from our recently appointed archbishop, Archbishop Richard Henning.

This gathering is termed a "fraternal retreat". While there is time for silence and prayer, it is not a "silent retreat" and each evening before dinner there is a social half hour. Several years ago one of our presenters, Father Ronald Witherup, PSS, encouraged us as diocesan priests to make a "fraternal retreat" with brothers of our diocese at least every several years. The private retreat is important but since diocesan priest do not have a religious community we need to build up a sense of fraternity among the brothers.

This year our retreat master was Father Scott Detisch from the diocese of Erie, PA. His theme was "narrative grace". All life is grace. God speaks to us in the narrative of our lives. We were encouraged to employ the Ignatian Examination of Consciousness each day to help us become more aware of these moments of grace. There were eight presentations during the week each followed by a particular prayer experience based on scripture.

The retreat enabled us to look back over our lives prayerfully and ask the Holy Spirit to assist us in becoming aware of these graced times both in the



wonderful events of our lives and in the painful moments. We were challenged to become aware of how Christ is with us even in and especially in our brokenness. This hopefully will lead us to a sense of gratitude and assist us in giving praise and thanks to God. The more we become conscious of these moments of grace, the more we can be led to greater trust in God as we move into the future, not knowing the particular circumstances we will encounter. Grace is and always will be present.

Finally, I wish each of you a blessed Lenten Season as we prepare for the Sacred Triduum and the Season of Easter. Please keep in prayer the Fraternity Board meeting which will take place from Tuesday, April 1, through Thursday, April 3. Also another reminder that our summer Fraternity Conference will take place at the 50th anniversary of the Steubenville Conferences for Priests, Deacons, and Seminarians from June 23 – 27. Register directly at Steubenville: <https://steubenvilleconferences.com/events/priests-deacons-seminarians-retreat> (A letter of suitability is necessary.)



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
humility, humble service, Christian action.

Last month when we heard St. Luke's "Sermon on the Plain," his version of the Beatitudes, I stated in my homily that the greatest sin we commit may be that of omission. I said that I knew that it's the least confessed sin. Hearing these words a man in his mid-to-late thirties got up, walked down the side aisle and left the church. Was it something I said? Or was it hitting home. Perhaps he went to make amends with someone. I don't know. But that's what happens when the pilgrimage we take does not become a "journey to the Heart." Our journeys need to examine our lives, our relationship with Jesus Christ, and our involvement in God's work of restoring all of creation to its original goodness. You see, in our sins of omission, not only do we fail to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit in living the Gospel, but we fail to see our serving Christ in one another. Sins of omission create a chill that stands against the warmth of Hope. Such sins keep us from a growing oneness with our God.

A Pilgrimage to the Heart

It's unfortunate that so many Catholics and their parish leaders have focused on one element of the Jubilee Year of Hope -- that of pilgrimage. I make that statement knowing that some parishes have done absolutely nothing to make this Jubilee Year, and the virtue of Hope, come alive in the life of their parish, individual members, and the various ministries which could be

activated, or in some situations, be renewed. So, unless parish leaders -- laity, priests and deacons -- speak of the prime journey being that of a **pilgrimage to the heart** life is affected and faith remains words. This "pilgrimage to the heart" is needed since the heart is our billboard announcing our inner thoughts and motivations. "*For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.*" said Jesus in the immediate teachings following the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 6:21). Our treasure needs announced in word and deed, in offering hope, in word and deed each day.

It is time that we see how the whole of the Gospel is a directive for us to journey into the Gospel of Justice, the Gospel of Truth, the Gospel of Hope. With this journey we will become the Gospel of Light in oneness with Christ, bringing hope to people living in darkness. We are called to be instruments of Hope for a world in need, a world filled with individuals who have lost their personhood to the lies and misconceptions found in society. Ironically, this isn't much different than when Pope Leo XIII spoke out in support of a society whose members were abused and minimized in 1893. This is what every one of the papal documents previously cited calls for from every member of the Body of Christ.

"Thus the Lord unites us with himself through the Eucharist -- Sacrament and Sacrifice -- and he unites us with himself and with one another by a bond stronger than any natural union; and thus united,

he sends us into the whole world to bear witness through faith and works, to God's Love, preparing the coming of his Kingdom and anticipating it, though in the obscurity of the present age." (JP III, *On Social Concern* #48)

As mentioned earlier, the Jubilee Year of Hope is meant to address the needs of "others" and not so much for "self." The Beatitudes are meant for "the other." I encourage all to read (perhaps for the first time) the Apostolic Exhortation of John Paul II, *The Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People (Christifideles Laici)*. It almost acts as a reader digest version of the Gospel, calling "*for all to rediscover and make others rediscover the inviolable dignity of every human person... and the most precious possession of a individual (3#7)* and to recognize that "*communion with Jesu, which gives rise to the communion of Christians among themselves, is an indispensable condition for bearing fruit.*" (#32)

So much can obviously be written concerning this Jubilee Year of Hope and our response. However, we need to think of it this way: the call of Pope Francis should be a vocal blast which opens sacred doors that frees others, offers hope, frees believers from limited thinking and poor societal parameters, creates new opportunities to touch the leper, gives new sight to the blind, offers hope for those held by societal limitations, and activates a "*a pilgrimage to the heart*" for ourselves and those we take with us in faith and hope.

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

April 2025						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		Most Rev. 1 Vitalij Skomarovski <i>Ukraine</i>	Rev. 2 Francis Dabre <i>India</i>	3 For the souls of our deceased FOP members	4 For prayer requests received	5 For our Holy Father, Pope Francis
Rev. 6 Bennette Tang Becheyie <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 7 Stephen Dassah <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 8 John Bosco Eledi <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 9 Paul Gaa <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 10 Victor Ganaa <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 11 Stephen Kantubog <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 12 Aloysius Kpiebaya <i>West Africa</i>
Rev. 13 Cletus Kulah <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 14 Chrisantus Kulbile <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 15 Vincent Kuubatge <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 16 Godfrey Naagyie <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 17 Sylvester Nankpi <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 18 James Nasaalbeteryeb <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 19 Nicodemus Nongnenuor <i>West Africa</i>
Rev. 20 Aloysius Nuolabong <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 21 Aloysius Sunnoba <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 22 Romanus Tampah <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 23 Cyracus Tang <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 24 Frederick Tantie <i>West Africa</i>	Rev. 25 Matthew Tuurosong <i>West Africa</i>	Msgr. 26 Stan Jaworski <i>Winnipeg</i>
Rev. 27 Michael Nault <i>Winnipeg</i>	Rev. 28 Francois Paradis OMI <i>Winnipeg</i>	Rev. 29 George Dunkley <i>Worcester</i>	Rev. 30 Jean-Paul Gagnon <i>Worcester</i>			

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.

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

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