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The Visitation

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Reading the Bible

By Fr. Damjan Mlinarič, Slovenian Fraternity

Let's think about it, who still reads books today? Given that we are in the age of the Internet and television, the number of people reading books is decreasing. But if they do read anything, they are of course books that are less demanding, that do not require as much concentration. For example, one of the best-selling books was, I don't know if it still is, a cookbook, Love Through the Stomach.

Anyway, at this point the question arises, where does the Holy Scripture have a place in our lives. Do we even know where we have it in the house? Is it in a visible place? Is it among other books, or even worse, somewhere in the attic, where it collects dust? You could say that the Holy Scripture is the book of all books, it is HOLY, because the author of this book is not a man, but GOD, who used 40 authors to write all the books of the New and Old Testaments over a period of 1300 years. This is how God inspired the biblical authors.

We can say that the Bible is truly a book that is alive, that speaks to man today. It is not just a historical book as many people think, saying that it is the book of a certain people (i.e. the Burmese), but it is actually a book that speaks today, that speaks to you today, that wants to communicate something to you today.

As I was reading the Bible one morning, I noticed the words in the book of Jeremiah: "Today I release you from the chains that are on your hands." In an instant, I knew that the Lord was telling me that He was freeing me to complete a demanding writing project, for which I had been praying earnestly. Obviously, I had understood this sentence completely outside the original context of the Bible, but it was also obvious that the Lord was using this verse to speak to me. In the following days, I began to experience a new freedom in my writing. So we see how GOD speaks TODAY, He wants to speak to you too, so He INVITES you to put the Bible in a prominent place in your family, and to take a few minutes every day and listen to what He wants to tell you about your life. Today, when there seem to be an abundance of quick answers in spirituality, Christians testify that we have found the answers to fundamental questions in the Risen Christ!!!

It is interesting that experts in the Bible found the following: the central chapter of the Bible is Psalm 118, and the central line of the Bible is Psalm 118,8. There are 594 chapters before this chapter and 594 after this chapter, a total of 1188, which exactly corresponds to Psalm 118,8. But isn't it amazing how things are connected to each other, how harmoniously the Bible works, a person simply cannot comprehend how it is possible that the Lord, so fantastically put together the Bible through people.

What does this central verse of the Holy Scripture say? "It is better to trust in the Lord than to trust in man." Yes, we see, the emphasis is on the LORD, to trust in Him, to surrender to Him, to surrender. It is interesting that Jesus' fundamental message to Saint Faustina Kowalska is precisely that it is necessary to trust in Him, that even when things are breaking down for us, when things are difficult, bad for us, Lord I TRUST in you. I also know for myself how many times I wanted to build on myself, to come out of myself, and how many times I was disappointed. It was only when I laid the foundation on Him, when I began to trust in Him, that things

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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:
$1,371.00
Budget Deficit:
$3,379.00

Current as of June 30, 2025.

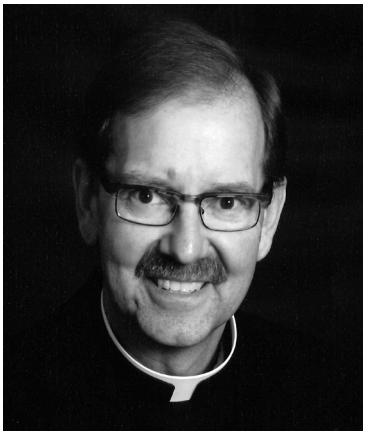
After a hiatus of six years or so, I was elected back on the Fraternity Board of Directors and will be serving as chairman this year. I am grateful for the confidence that my brother priests have accorded me. I ask the prayers of all who read this newsletter, and not only for me. I ask you to pray for all the priests you know and for all in Fraternity of Priests.

Every generation faces its only set of challenges. In our relatively prosperous times, we face a unique set of problems. We live in a time that values efficient production. We want to make more stuff in less time with less cost. That may be suitable for some workplaces; however, it is not a good model for priestly ministry.

Yet, this is what many priests feel like they need to do. We need to do more with less. Our ranks are thinner. Our buildings are aging. In many parts of the world, our congregations and budgets are shrinking. (Thank God for Africa, where the Church is young and growing!)

My own Diocese of Cleveland mirrors these trends. When I was ordained a priest, there were a couple of pastors who had a "mission" parish. Now 30 of us are pastoring multiple parishes. (After 40 years of priesthood, I was given a second parish. Thank God it is geographically close and the natives are friendly.)

My tendency is to try to do more with less. Yes, I am delegating more. Yes, I am trying not to worry about loose ends. And yes, I am probably working harder. Amid the tensions of pastoring multiple parishes, I often reflect on this maxim: *If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.* (The origin of this saying is unclear.)



There are times when it is needful to go fast. I find myself rushing through administrative paperwork, mail and other activities, however, I really want to go far. I do not want to simply go through the motions or become a sacrament machine. With all the faithful, I want to live my vocation in a full and holy manner. I need a "together" component in my life.

This is where Fraternity of Priests comes in. I meet with my brother priests and pray with them. I learn with my brother priests as we study together. I open my heart to my brother priests, who come to understand me and give me good counsel. I can do the same for them. Together, we become better equipped to meet the unique challenges of our times. We can help each other stay rooted in Jesus Christ and serve our people in the power of the Holy Spirit. Being accountable to each other keeps us on track for the ultimate goal, "the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:14b)

Thank you for your prayers and financial support of Fraternity of Priests. Together we can go far.

In Christ,

Fr. Bob Franco

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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began to fall into place, because when God is in the first place, everything else falls into place.

One person says this: “When I prayed, I asked the Lord first of all to always use me, to always be able to answer Him and hear His call. That this is what I want most right now, wherever He needs me, to give me the strength to be able to respond. So that I could hear even those small things, insignificant to me and that's how I ended up. Today, when I was just leaving for church, someone waved at me and I thought to myself: oh God, please no, just so that I wouldn't have to read God's word. That's exactly what he invited me to read. At first I was angry, disappointed, and then during the mass, the sun suddenly shines, and it hits me: God has taken me at his word and is using me as his tool. Today, to read GOD'S WORD!!! such a small, insignificant thing, but apparently so big for him. Something so rushed through my body, and just like that I heard confirmation of it and such happiness overwhelmed me that I had a smile on my face the whole time. That's it. Nothing big, nothing like that, no miracle. To be able to hear His call is priceless to me, amen."

Yes, it's incredible, isn't it? You saw how deeply this person absorbed the word of God, just being able to read was invaluable to her, that she basically said yes to the Lord. The word of God really allows us to be in a living relationship with Him, because God speaks to us through IT, over and over again. Many times we don't want to hear it, or we say, ugh, too hard, I don't understand, but in the Old Testament they contradict themselves, and it's so strange. Look, just as it is necessary to read the instructions for the machine you buy, so it is with the Holy Scriptures; it is necessary to read the instructions first.

Take your time, because when you read the Holy Scriptures, you get to know the CHARACTER of GOD. And so prayer time can become an adventure, especially if we develop the habit of simple, spontaneous dialogue with God. And when, say, you accidentally open the Holy Scriptures, simply look at the word that catches your attention and say: "Lord, speak to me today according to your word. Simply look at the word that catches your attention and say: "Lord, speak to me today according to your word. For example, when the word "hope" catches your attention, think about what it means to you. Ask the Lord why this word caught your attention? And so I will close with one more concrete example.

Like many in the Western world, Darja grew up as a Christian. She did everything traditionally required to be a good Christian. She says: "What do you have to do for God, that's what hindered me the most, that it was too difficult? When I tried to keep all the commandments, I was afraid that God would punish me. When I read the Bible, I really felt some relief."

Daria read that the God of the Bible is loving and gracious. How He loves us, how He wants to meet us, not because we do everything right, because He simply loves us, even that His love is unconditional, that He did all the work, we can only rejoice and live with Him in a relationship. That the emphasis is not on me, but on God, who did everything, then these fears began to disappear before God and also before people.

Perfect love drives away fear. And that God is with me and protects me!!! The word of God helped Darja grow!!! This is truly a living word, that God speaks to me personally, it was strange. It was written 2000 years ago. How can He speak to me?!?!? What surprised me most was how the Old Testament and the New Testament complement each other, how everything was predicted, so that I could understand why Jesus had to die and rise. Jesus did not stay on the cross. The emphasis is on the fact that Jesus is risen, Easter, there is JOY in that. It seems important to me that my spiritual life is not only on Sundays, that God is really with me, that He gives me wisdom, that He teaches me, that He helps me to grow through all situations, that they truly want God and that is why it is most important that we get to know the LIVING GOD!!! They find the living God, that He is really ALIVE and that He did not die and leave us alone, but He is really with US...!!

Please send us your prayer intentions:_____

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THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

September 2025						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Rev. John Dreher *Providence*	2 Rev. Robert Giardina *Providence*	3 Rev. Michael Kelley *Providence*	4 **For the souls of our deceased FOP members**	5 **For prayer requests received**	6 **For our Holy Father, Pope Francis**
7 Rev. Gerry Sabourin *Providence*	8 Rev. Terry Brenon *San Angelo*	9 Rev. Robert Bush *San Angelo*	10 Rev. Bernard Gully *San Angelo*	11 Rev. Santiago Udayar *San Angelo*	12 Rev. William McCarthy *Sioux City*	13 Rev. John Helmueller *Sioux Falls*
14 Rev. Joseph Vogel *Sioux Falls*	15 Rev. Richard Baumberger *Sioux Falls*	16 Rev. Rodney Farke *Sioux Falls*	17 Rev. Edward Pierce *Sioux Falls*	18 Rev. John Rasmussen *Sioux Falls*	19 Rev. Joseph Short *Sioux Falls*	20 Rev. Gregory Frankman *Sioux Falls*
21 Rev. Randy Phillips *Sioux Falls*	22 Rev. Jerome Ranek *Sioux Falls*	23 Rev. Mark Innocenti *St. Cloud*	24 Rev. Peter Kirchner *St. Cloud*	25 Rev. Gerald Mischke *St. Cloud*	26 Rev. Gregory Paffel *St. Cloud*	27 Rev. Todd Schneider *St. Cloud*
28 Rev. Mark Stang *St. Cloud*	29 Rev. James Dyer *St. Louis*	30 Rev. Msgr. Edmund Griesedieck *St. Louis*				

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A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS

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.

Do you know anyone who would like to receive our Newsletter?
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