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The Visitation

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Jesus Hung Out with Sinners for a Reason

By Fr. Robert J. Carr

Jesus hung out with sinners. Many times others remind us of that simple fact. Often the message is tied to the idea that we too may hang out with sinners. Maybe there is also another part of the story.

It is easy to become isolated in the priesthood, which is one of the reasons why Fraternity exists. Priests minister to each other and build a community of support. We must be careful of becoming isolated from the community around us including those who are not part of our Catholic life because then we cannot relate to the issues our neighbors deal with daily.

Jesus hung out with sinners, so when he taught, he could address his audience on the realities they struggled with daily. The Pharisees did not, in fact, they avoided those who were sinners. The result was their message was irrelevant to the non-pharisees.

Let us look at Jesus healing the man with a withered hand on the sabbath. A pharisee scolds him for violating the letter of the law. Jesus explains that if a farmer had an animal suffering an injury, he could tend to it. Our Lord explains that the legalistic pharisees say he could not offer the same care to another human being. The angry pharisee lived isolated from the world around him. Jesus lived in the world.

Jesus could sympathize with the suffering of the men and women he healed; the pharisee could not. Jesus associated with sinners, the pharisees surrounded themselves with other pharisees. There is a warning there. It is easy for a priest to be isolated. He can remain in his room except when he has to celebrate the sacraments or receive a parishioner in his office. If he isolates himself, he may be unable to relate to others.

This plays itself out in how he ministers to others. This is why it is important for us to not isolate ourselves, to work with others but also to go out into the society and work with people who are not part of what some people call "The Catholic Bubble". If you do not do that, you will be unable to relate to others who are not in your “bubble”..

Let me give you an example: recently, a homeless man told me the story of a group of young men, maybe teenagers or young adults, who had a hamburger. They saw another homeless man who was obviously hungry and asked him if he wanted it. He said yes. They, then, in his full view, took the hamburger and threw it in the trash.

Wouldn't it be safe to say that what those young men committed a mortal sin. It was grave matter. This would cast those men into Hell if they died at that moment, according to traditional Catholic teaching.

Now, recently, some Catholic influencers in the Catholic bubble talked about not hearing homilies about Hell or sexual sins. I can say one reason they never heard such homilies is they never attended Mass where I was the celebrant. I am sure other priests can say the same thing. It is true, I do not preach on those topics regularly. However, if we are unaware that such cruelty exists we see above then we cannot discuss it in the real world. We may even resort to preaching on topics that may be irrelevant to our people because we do not know their story.

I hear from members of the Catholic same-sex attracted community of talk of horrible homilies condemning them which drives members of that community who seek to live Church teaching out of the Church. I have to ask how many same-sex attracted people does a priest think is in his congregation? Probably none or few; so why is he preaching that homily to a general congregation?

I do not preach such homilies because I am preaching to who want

...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:
$1,123.00
Budget Deficit:
$3,627.00

Current as of May 31, 2026.

One of the commitments a member of the Fraternity of Priests makes is to tithe. This means giving ten percent of their income away, usually five percent to the Fraternity and five percent to charity. Though the New Testament does not mandate tithing (in fact Jesus took the scribes and Pharisees to task because they tithed for show), Jesus praises sacrificial giving (like the widow's mite; see Luke 21:1-4). St. Paul addresses the heart of giving by teaching, *God loves a cheerful giver*. (2 Corinthians 9:7b).

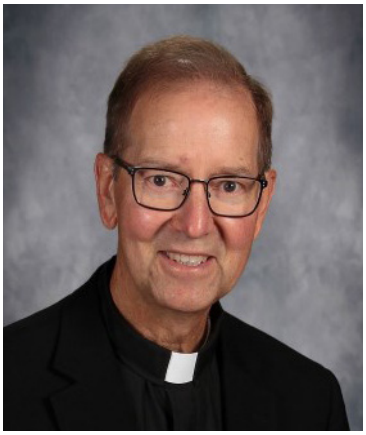
At times in the history of the Church, various councils reaffirmed the Old Testament practice of tithing (Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 and the Council of Trent (1545-1563 AD). Though these council prescriptions have not been reaffirmed, support of the work of the Church is mandated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church in CCC #2043. This paragraph covers the fifth precept of the Church, "You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church." This "means that the faithful are obliged to assist with the material needs of the Church, each according to is own ability."

Priests are not exempt from supporting the Church. Even the Old Testament Levites supported the work of the Temple. Numbers 18:26 says, *"Speak to the Levites and say to them: When you take from the Israelites the tithes I have assigned you from them as your heritage, you are to make a contribution from them to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe…"*

The two paragraphs in the Code of Canon Law #282 address clerical lifestyle and the use of material goods:

§1 Clerics are to cultivate a simple style of life and are to avoid whatever has a semblance of vanity.

§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 an superfluous goods for the good of the Church and works of charity.



Members of the Fraternity tithe as a way of reaffirming the Lordship of Jesus Christ over their lives. He is to rule our time, talent and treasure. Many priests can go beyond tithing and still enjoy a good standard of living. As St. Paul said, we are to give cheerfully. We are to embrace charitable giving with faith. Jesus said,

Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you. (Luke 6:38 NABRE)

We cannot out give God.

Mindful of the needs of the Church and of the poor, let us recall *the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that for your sake he became poor although he was rich, so that by his poverty you might become rich…Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!* (2 Corinthians 8:9, 9:15 NABRE)

In Christ,

Fr. Bob Franco

Fr. Bob Franco
Board Chair, Cleveland

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

to hear how to be good Catholics regardless of their histories or struggles. This is why my parishioners hear more on prayer from me than anything else.

Do people know what the homeless in their city suffer? It is relevant for them to know so that they can put their faith into action.

In my ministry as a hospital chaplain, I minister to patients who tell me they have not been to Mass in a long time. One way I respond is simply in humor. "I have never heard that before." This is all part of the real world.

It is important to associate with those in the real world to fully minister to real people. One thing I preach is we minister to people while looking into their eyes. Otherwise, we can pontificate and make statements that are irrelevant in the lives of our parishioners. Jesus never did that because he ministered to real people. He understood the intricacies of their lives. If we are really going to minister to his people, we can do the same.

Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Christian Life

By Fr. Joseph Meagher, New Jersey Collaborative

We just had a Eucharistic Conference in our Parish, sponsored by one of the prayer groups. The young people did a presentation highlighting some of the Eucharistic Saints who they admired most. Among them was St Carlo Acutis and St Tarsisius - Both of whom were young lay people who gave heroic witness to Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

I think that the loving witness of the lay faithful - to the real presence of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament can be an effective witness to Our Eucharistic Lord.

I would like to repeat a story that I heard given by a deacon who was speaking at one of the Franciscan University conferences. It was an account of what happened when he was distributing Holy Communion at his home parish.

A man came up in his communion line, and when he received the host he immediately spit upon our Lord and began cursing at Him. Then he threw the host on the ground and stepped on it, grinding it into the ground under his shoe, while cursing and saying all kinds of vile things. Then he proceeded out of the church cursing as he went.

Immediately behind him was a pious elderly woman who regularly attended daily Mass. She was a survivor of the extremely oppressive Nazi and Communist governments. She had witnessed her parish priest and numerous members of her family being taken away into prison camps, never to be seen again. She saw her church being closed and desecrated, making it impossible for her family to attend Mass or receive the Sacraments, except very rarely and at great risk of their lives.

When she witnessed what had taken place, she immediately fell to her knees and began to weep before her Eucharistic King having been desecrated right before her eyes. She stayed there, weeping & weeping before Our Lord. Then she put her head down towards the host now smashed onto the ground, and she put her tongue out and picked up the host with her tongue. After a brief time, she slowly rose to her feet and proceeded back to her pew where she knelt and continued to weep.

Her witness was more powerful and effective than even the most eloquent homily could've been.

We may not have such a drastic opportunity to give witness to our love for our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament. But perhaps we can be more courageous in giving humble witness in the small ways to our love for Jesus, by making the sign of the cross as we pass a Catholic Church or remembering to reverently genuflect whenever we enter or leave our pew in church, or inviting a non-practicing Catholic or a non-believer to come with you to church and taking the time to gently explain why at that moment, they would not be able to receive holy Communion but could receive a grace of a spiritual communion if they came with faith and love, gently telling them about what we believe or rather who we believe is there before us and what is needed for receiving Him.

Yes, it is true that if we reverently celebrate the Eucharist with love this will inspire faith among our people, but it is also very important for us to witness the love that our parishioners have for our Eucharistic Lord.

Please remember your priests when you make a Holy Hour and then let them know that you are doing so. You'll never know the impact it'll have on their lives.

Please send us your prayer intentions:_____

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THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

August 2026						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Rev. 30 Stan Gregorek *Pittsburgh*	Rev. 31 Thomas Kredel *Pittsburgh*					1 **For our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV**
Rev. 2 Benjamin Hasse *Marquette*	Rev. 3 Jeff Johnson *Marquette*	Rev. 4 Dustin Larson *Marquette*	Rev. 5 Thomas Merkel *Marquette*	Rev. 6 **For the souls of our deceased FOP members**	7 **For prayer requests received**	Rev. 8 Brandon Oman *Marquette*
Rev. 9 Vinoy Panthilapadam *Marquette*	Rev. 10 Darryl Pepin *Marquette*	Msgr. 11 Michael Steber *Marquette*	Rev. 12 Larry Van Damme *Marquette*	Rev. 13 Michael Woempner *Marquette*	Rev. 14 Anthony Bekpare *Nasaalbeteryeb*	Rev. 15 Nicodemus Unezumeh *Nasaalbeteryeb*
Rev. 16 Eugene Bettinger O. Carm. *New Jersey*	Rev. 17 Paul Cannariato *New Jersey*	Rev. 18 John Gordon *New Jersey*	Rev. 19 Joseph Meagher *New Jersey*	Rev. 20 Brendan Murray *New Jersey*	Rev. 21 Lewis Papera *New Jersey*	Rev. 22 John Primich *New Jersey*
Rev. 23 Ernest Rush *New Jersey*	Rev. 24 John Wassell *New Jersey*	Rev. 25 Ben Williams *New Jersey*	Rev. 26 William Cosgrove *New York*	Rev. 27 Tom Devery *New York*	Rev. 28 Joseph Muldoon *Ottawa*	Rev. 29 John Brennan *Pittsburgh*

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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.

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Dear Fr. Bob Franco,
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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