A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

The Visitation

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Would You Jump In?

By Fr. Damjan Mlinarič,

Blondin was a famous tightrope walker and acrobat in the 19th century. Huge crowds came to watch him, especially when he crossed Niagara Falls. His performance would begin with a relatively simple crossing, using a balancing pole. Then he would throw the pole away and begin astonishing the audience.

On one occasion in 1860, members of the British royal society came to watch his performance. He walked across the rope on stilts, then blindfolded himself; halfway across he stopped to cook and eat an omelet. Then, to the cheers of the crowd, he pushed a wheelbarrow from one side to the other. He placed a sack of potatoes into the wheelbarrow and carried it across. The crowd cheered even louder.

Then he approached the Duke of Newcastle and asked, "Do you believe that I could carry a person across the rope in this wheelbarrow?"

"I believe it," replied the Duke.

"Then jump in!" Blondin answered.

The crowd fell silent, but the Duke of Newcastle did not accept the challenge. No one was willing to volunteer. Finally, an elderly woman stepped out of the crowd and climbed into the wheelbarrow. Blondin carried her all the way across and back again.

The elderly woman was Blondin's mother — the only person willing to place her life completely into his hands.

Faith, in this sense, means "jumping in." It is not merely an intellectual exercise; it involves taking an active step and placing our trust in Jesus, who is both God and man. We stake everything on Him. Our faith is, therefore, not believing in ourselves, but believing and trusting in GOD. I believe that He is faithful to His promises. I believe in His wisdom, I believe in His power, and I believe in His goodness.

Whatever God has promised in Sacred Scripture, He also fulfills. He is faithful to it (my faith also rests in the fact that our God is faithful and keeps His promises!). This means that, in His faithfulness to His promises, He hears us and answers our prayers — whether I see the result of my prayer or not.

My faith is also in the fact that God is WISE (in His wisdom). Because His wisdom surpasses mine, I trust that He understands me even when I do not understand. He understands every motive and every circumstance present when I pray for a very specific person. Because of my limited understanding, I sometimes pray for the wrong things or in the wrong way, so the results of my prayer are not always what I think they should be. But God's answer to my prayer will be what, in His wisdom, He sees as best.

My faith is also in HIS POWER. I believe that everything is possible with God. Nothing is impossible in the prayer of a Christian — even the raising of the dead is possible!

My faith is in His GOODNESS. Because I believe in God's goodness, I try to see everything as a reflection of His love. Whatever ultimately happens, the most loving thing will happen in response to my prayer.

And Jesus speaks about needing only faith the size of a mustard seed… nothing more. Can you imagine how small a mustard seed is? I was once in Jerusalem and bought a mustard seed there… it is one of the smallest seeds in the world. And Jesus says that if we had such faith, that faith could uproot a tree and literally plant it into the sea. So if we truly had authentic faith in God, wonderful things would happen.

If we are convinced that we possess such living faith, then we can bear witness — we can simply speak about what Jesus is doing in our lives. Where can this be seen? But if we have nothing to say, then the question arises whether our faith is truly alive, or whether it perhaps needs to be challenged — whether we should ask the Lord to increase our faith and help

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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:
$1,273.00
Budget Deficit:
$3,477.00

Current as of April 30, 2026.

Earlier in June members of the Fraternity of Priests met for our annual meeting in conjunction with the Priests, Deacons and Seminarians Retreat at Franciscan University of Steubenville. The beautiful presentations, prayer experiences and vibrant priestly fellowship were paired with three short Fraternity meetings during the afternoon hours of the retreat days.St. Elena Guerra (+1914) was an Italian.

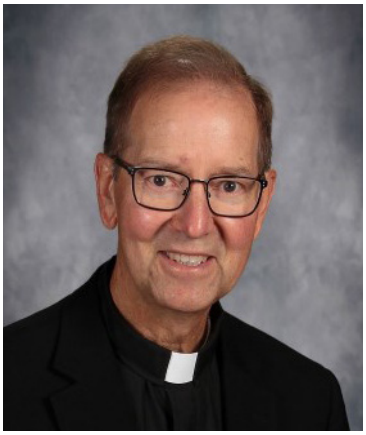
The theme of the retreat was based on Luke 3:22b, *You are my beloved son*. Two of our presenters, Jake and Heather Khym, spoke on the power of our memories. Heather led us in a prayer exercise that helped us remember God's interventions in our lives. This was a powerful exercise. When we remember how God has heard our prayers and providentially guided and blessed us, we are able to meet the challenges of each day with faith that the Lord is with us.

As priests, we need to do this often. Remembering our story, the day of our ordination, the God-incidents that revealed his presence-these events give us bolster our confidence that the same God is with us today, equipping us to navigate the today's challenges.

Jake Khym led participants at the PDS retreat in an exercise to come to know God the Father more deeply. Quoting in part the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which reads:

The *purification* of our hearts has to do with paternal or maternal images, stemming from our personal and cultural history, and influencing our relationship with God. God our Father transcends the categories of the created world. To impose our own ideas in this area "upon him" would be to fabricate idols to adore or pull down. To pray to the Father is to enter into this mystery as he is and as the Son has revealed him to us. (from #2779)

Jake Khym helped us encountered the Fatherhood of God that Jesus revealed through the parable of the prodigal son.



Fr. Louis Merosne, rector of the Cathedral of St. Anne in Diocese of Anse-à-Veau and Miragoâne, Haiti, after powerfully sharing his vocation story, led the priests in the renewal of the promises we made on the day of our ordination.

Members of the Fraternity met three afternoons during the retreat. Among other things, we elected members to the Board of Directors. Our current board members are: Fr. Joe Meagher (Newark), Fr. Daniel Zinger (Boston), Fr. Tom Sparacino (Pittsburgh), Fr. Dwight Merrick (Port-au-Prince, Trinadad and Tobago), Fr. Matthew Tuurosong (Wa, Ghana) and Fr. Damjan Mlinaric (Maribor, Slovenia). I am the seventh board member. We thank Fr. Bob Carr (Boston) for serving two full terms (six years) on the board. He has graciously agreed to continue to edit our newsletter. We also thank Fr. Sylvester Nankpi (Wa, Ghana) who has served on the board for five years. He had to step back for health reasons. His joyful service and love of the priesthood will be missed. Please keep Fr. Sylvester in your prayers as he recovers from surgery.

And please pray that Fraternity of Priests continue to strengthen priestly vocations. We want to be fruitful laborers, helping to reap the Lord's great harvest. (Matthew 9:36).

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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our unbelief!

We could make a kind of test, just as Blondin did (though I do not recommend becoming tightrope walkers). But are we prepared to place our troubles, problems, and relationships into GOD's hands? Are we capable of it?

It is interesting that Jesus most often rebuked His disciples for their lack of faith. For Him, this was truly something essential and fundamental for every Christian.

I remember one broken relationship for which I prayed with fervent and expectant faith… and the Lord gave me the strength to restore that relationship.

And before I entered the seminary, a priest once told me that faith is like jumping from a cloud… and then believing, trusting, that you will land safely and that everything will ultimately be alright. In a certain sense, faith is also a risk — but it is a healthy risk — because you are willing to build the foundation of your life upon Jesus, our GOD!

That is what I did as well. I took the risk and entered the seminary. And this year marks already 16 years since I became a priest.

LORD Jesus, I ask You sincerely and from the bottom of my heart: give me strong faith. Help me truly surrender all my problems and difficulties to You. Help me place You first in my life above everything else. Lord God, grant that I may especially grow in love for the Rosary, that I may discover the power of this precious prayer, which has protected so many souls from the greatest dangers. Jesus, my Lord and my God, help my unbelief!

Have Faith You Are Doing God's Work

In both of our articles, this month, we see a theme of faith. Fr. Bob Franco discusses a retreat that focuses on trusting God and Fr. Damjan Mlinarič asks us about how strong our faith is?

In my prayer, I learned to ask the Lord for what it appears I need and trust in his response for what I actually need. This means asking and not looking for the prayer to be answered but expecting an answer that may be beyond my expectations. This does not mean it will be spectacular but it may be different than what I expected.

Billy Graham used to preach, to pray for something and to thank God for it even before it happened because this was faith that the prayer would be answered. I see this in my own work as a hospital chaplain. People may want me to pray for healing but that may not be the Lord's intention. However, Fr. Rick Visbisky a hospital chaplain for over thirty years in Brockton, Massachusetts explains that the ultimate form of healing is unity with Christ. That is the point of the sacraments.

I had to minister to a patient in tears recently. While she was in the hospital, she learned her mother died. The mother was on hospice but it was still so painful for the daughter who was in the hospital and unable to be with her mother when she died. She said to me that she knew she was going to Heaven because she had the sacraments before she died.

Isn't that what we truly want? We want to be united with Christ to be like Him in eternal life. However, Christ wants that for us too. He does all He can that we can be saved, that after all is what the cross is. Part of our ministry is teaching that to our parishioners. God is working in their lives more powerfully than they can imagine and our job is showing this to them. They may be looking for the big signs but the true signs might be the smaller ones that they may miss.

God is active in our lives and active in our ministry as we try to bring his grace to so many. We must only have faith and trust that this is happening.

I am fascinated by how many times I walk into a patient's room, I offer them prayer and the sacraments. We pray and then I get ready to go to the next room and they tell me how much my visit changed them or brought up their spirits or took away their sadness. I acknowledge this for them, but I felt nothing at all. It is then I know that God is doing great things in spite of me and that is the point. We supply the physical reality of the sacraments and God enacts his work through them. They do powerful things but we may never experience what powerful things are happening. We only have to have faith and believe that something is happening. God does the rest.

This is the point of faith. We give our best or at least the best we can and God does so much through us and in this we have to have faith.

The priesthood can at times be discouraging or we may get frustrated with our ministry at times. We have to realize why we are here. Jesus called us to serve Him in ways that we may not fully understand until we are with him. He does great things through us, but we may not see anything. We only just have to have faith. —ed.

Please send us your prayer intentions:_____

_____

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THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

July 2026						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Most Rev. Sam Jacobs D.D. *Episcopal Advisor*	2 **For the souls of our deceased FOP members**	3 **For prayer requests received**	4 **For our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV**
5 Most Rev. Mark O'Connell *Episcopal Advisor*	6 Rev. Richard Goellen *Fargo*	7 Rev. Dale Kinzler *Fargo*	8 Rev. Donald Leiphon *Fargo*	9 Rev. Gary Luiten *Fargo*	10 Rev. Steven Meyer *Fargo*	11 Rev. Bernard Schneider *Fargo*
12 Rev. Msgr. Dennis Skonseng *Fargo*	13 Rev. Peter Pienaa Donzing *Ghana*	14 Rev. Robert Sackey *Ghana*	15 Rev. Donald Lomasiewicz *Grand Rapids*	16 Rev. Mark Mitchell *Grand Rapids*	17 Rev. Ayub Nasar *Grand Rapids*	18 Rev. Michael Shea CM *Grand Rapids*
19 Msgr. Cyril Lamontagne VG *Grenada*	20 Rev. Robert Grant *Hartford*	21 Rev. Paul Halovatch *Hartford*	22 Rev. Joseph Looney *Hartford*	23 Rev. Will-Roger Malave *Hartford*	24 Rev. Robert Rousseau *Hartford*	25 Rt. Rev. Dr. Bryan Eyman *Indianapolis*
26 Rev. George Joseph Nangachiveettill *Indianapolis*	27 Rev. Thomas Cawley C.M. *Kansas City*	28 Rev. Roderic Giller *Kansas City*	29 Rev. Timothy Ekaitis *Marquette*	30 Rev. Ryan Ford *Marquette*	31 Rev. Christopher Gardiner *Marquette*	

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Email: contact@fraternityofpriests.org
http://www.fraternityofpriests.org

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. 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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