

# THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

February 2009						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Rev. Thomas Oedy <i>Toledo, OH</i>	Rev. Gerald Knueven <i>Toledo, OH</i>	Rev. Norbert Howe <i>Toledo, OH</i>	Rev. Edward Littelmann <i>Toledo, OH</i>	Rev. James Brown <i>Toledo, OH</i>	Rev. Jerome Nowakowski <i>Toledo, OH</i>	Pope Benedict XVI
Rev. Nicholas Weibl <i>Toledo, OH</i>	Rev. Timothy Ekaitis <i>Upper Peninsula, MI</i>	Rev. Daniel Moll <i>Upper Peninsula, MI</i>	Rev. Richard Mroz <i>Upper Peninsula, MI</i>	Rev. Norm Clisch <i>Upper Peninsula, MI</i>	Rev. Darryl Pepin <i>Upper Peninsula, MI</i>	Rev. Raymond Zeugner <i>Upper Peninsula, MI</i>
Rev. Raymond Hoefgen <i>Upper Peninsula, MI</i>	Rev. Michael Steber <i>Upper Peninsula, MI</i>	Rev. Christopher Gardiner <i>Upper Peninsula, MI</i>	Rev. Larry Van Damme <i>Upper Peninsula, MI</i>	Rev. Ernest Kamath <i>Winnipeg, Canada</i>	Msgr. Stan Jaworski <i>Winnipeg, Canada</i>	Rev. Francois Paradis OMI <i>Winnipeg, Canada</i>
Rev. Rheal Forest <i>Winnipeg, Canada</i>	Rev. Maurice Jeanneau <i>Winnipeg, Canada</i>	Rev. Michael Nault <i>Winnipeg, Canada</i>	Rev. Stephen Johnson <i>Worcester, MA</i>	Rev. Michael Roy <i>Worcester, MA</i>	Rev. George Dunkley <i>Worcester, MA</i>	Rev. Jean-Paul Gagnon <i>Worcester, MA</i>

## 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.*

### Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

Franciscan University  
Steubenville, OH 43952-9671

Phone: (740) 283-4400

Fax: (740) 283-3622

Email: contact@fraternityofpriests.org

http://www.fraternityofpriests.org



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**Do you know anyone who would like to receive our Newsletter? (Please print legibly)**

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**Dear Father Bill Cosgrove,**  
This donation is to help the Fraternity of Priests in continuing their work of ministering to priests.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Other  \$100  \$50  \$25  \$10

**gift carefully and wisely, and not to ask for money that is not needed.**

*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*



"To gather priests to Christ and to one another to proclaim..."

# THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

## Faith Moves Discipline Beyond Routine

by Fr. Bob Franco

As members of the Fraternity of Priests, we make certain commitments which assist us in becoming holy and devout priests. These disciplines are to foster our relationship with the Lord, our brother priests and the people we serve.

However, it is possible for these commitments to slip into routine practices that degenerate into ruts. Habits without faith can become lifeless, outward practices that a person fulfills, only to get on with the rest of life. On the other hand, our holy habits, when infused with faith, become life transforming disciples that connect us more deeply with Jesus Christ, our brother priests and our mission.

As we begin the New Year in the Lord, here are some ways that may help us keep our holy habits from becoming lifeless routines.

**Think before you pray:** It is not without reason that the Liturgy of the Hours always begins by asking God's help. Prayer, whether formal or spontaneous, can become mere words without the help of the Holy Spirit. Even before an opening invocation asking God's help, I find it helpful to pause and recall whom I am speaking with. By calling to mind

that I am addressing the God who spoke the universe into existence, the God who sent his Son as a man to die for me when I deserved death, and that this God is loving me right now: I am more able to pray and not just say words.

**Thank before you give:** I have recently begun to do much of my monthly donating through electronic banking. It makes donating consistent and easy. However, donating can slip into mere record keeping. So I try to remember to thank God as I update my checkbook. I can thank the Lord for the good works that these organizations do, for my ability to be able to give and support them, and that God has provided for me on my earthly journey.

**Strive...to be open:** These words of St. Angela Merici challenge me in two ways with regard to Fraternity meetings. First, they challenge me to be open with my brothers in sharing my life on a personal level. Again, there are times when this takes preparation. For me to share with my brothers what is going on in my life, I need to consider in the light of Christ where I am at. When I prayerfully examine my life I am better able to see what the Lord is doing. I can share with my brothers the ways I

have been responding to the Lord and the ways I have been resisting the Lord.

Secondly, as a leader of a local Fraternity, these words challenge me to vary the format of our meetings. To encourage sharing, I recently gave the brothers specific questions to reflect on and share about. For example, "What do you like about your prayer life? If there was one thing you could change regarding your prayer life, what would it be?" Doing something different helps everyone in the group approach the meeting with greater attentiveness.

**Feed the mind:** One classic anti-drug commercial focused on an egg. The narrator picked up the egg and said, "This is your brain." He cracked the egg open and put it into a skillet and said, "This is your brain on drugs. Got it?" The statement couldn't be clearer: a brain on drugs got fried. However, just as an egg without heat never cooks, so a brain without stimulation remains static. Good reading keeps the mind limber and agile. Fresh thoughts help ward off fears.

I received two suggestions for reading from last year's Annual Fraternity Meeting. One was the book The Examen Prayer by Fr. Timothy Gallagher OVM. The book outlines

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# Dear Friends of the Priesthood

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### Editor's Box:

Please send articles,  
comments, and  
photos to the  
FOP Newsletter editor,

Fr. Bob Franco via  
e-mail at

[editor@fraternityofpriests.org](mailto:editor@fraternityofpriests.org)

or fax to

440-934-4500

Newsletter material from all  
Fraternity members is  
gratefully accepted. Any  
submissions will help  
make each issue better!

Six months ago the Archbishop of New York asked if I would take a new assignment as pastor. I had a sense that I needed to prepare for a new assignment months earlier so the Archbishop's request was not a total surprise. What surprised me was where he asked me to go. He asked me to return to a parish I had served at earlier as parochial vicar. After a fifteen year hiatus I would be returning to St. Augustine Parish in New York City at its pastor.

As we begin a New Year I cannot help but meditate on the significance of that word "new". The scriptures tell us that God makes "all things new." (Revelation 21:5). I have been challenged to ask myself this question: Do I really believe that? Can God bring me back to an old assignment and make both me and the parish new again?

It may be a temptation to cynicism. We hear a similar buzz surrounding the inauguration of a new president. Will there be anything new? Or are we captive to the slogans "same old, same old" and "the more things seem to change, the more they stay the same"?

The truth is this: no matter how old the Church is, the Holy Spirit makes it ever new. The very nature of the Spirit is to make all things new. The Holy Spirit empowers us to see the new things that are breaking forth as a result of God's working in our midst.

We can resist if we want. There are some people who have a natural aversion to things that are new. They do not want to move out of their "comfort zone". They will embrace change reluctantly, under duress.

The Lord desires us to be open to his making all things new in Jesus Christ. God does not desire to impose his will upon us. He wants us to embrace his will and plan. Even as I re-

turn to an "old assignment" I can see much newness in it. I am a different person (hopefully "newer" in Christ) than I was fifteen years ago. I am in a new role at the parish. And though there are many of the same parishioners yet at St. Augustine's, there are new faces and activities.

As we move into a New Year, let us embrace it with the desire of being part of God's plan to make all things new. God is yet at work in us and in our world. "His mercies are new every morning, so great is his faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:23). Let us pray that the Lord make us his "new creatures in Christ" (II Corinthians 5:17). Let us pray for the priesthood, that continually renewed in Christ, we holy men might be agents of authentic renewal in a world made weary by false promises of newness.

Fraternally,

Father Bill

### Fraternity Financial Report

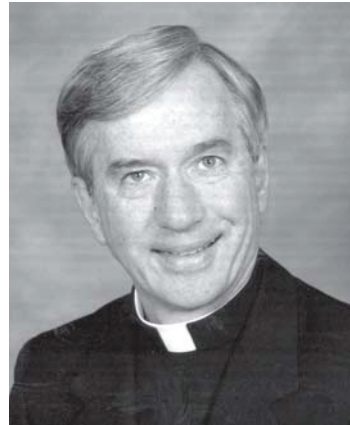
One of the objectives for the Fraternity of Priests is to inform our donors about the ongoing financial health and details of the organization. We're providing this information to help communicate our specific need and to thank those many faithful benefactors who help make our service possible. Thank you!

Monthly Donation Budget: **\$4,750.00**

Actual Donations: **\$5,126.00**

Budget Surplus (shortage): **\$ 376.00**

*Current as of November 30, 2008.*



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the Ignatian practice of looking at one's life in the light of Jesus Christ. The book not only fed the mind. It enhanced my personal prayer. The other suggestion was an encouragement from brother priest to subscribe to the magazine **First Things**. I have found the articles in this magazine to be good brain food.

**"Ephphatha!" Be open to God-incidents:** After a fairly full weekend of ministry, I found myself going to a hospital on a Sunday afternoon. As I pulled into the parking lot I decided to rest my eyes. After a two minute power nap I entered the hospital, checked in at the information desk and found the stairwell that led up to the third floor. I met a couple coming down the steps that used to belong to my parish. And though I do not know why they left the parish, always felt that there were unresolved issues when they left. We had a short but pleasant meeting in the stairwell that afternoon. It turned out that the woman's mother was in the hospital. I was able to visit her and give her the sacraments of the anointing of the sick and Holy Communion. (I had an extra consecrated host with me because one of the other people I sought to visit was not home.)

Coincidence? I don't think so. This was a God-incident. Praying and being open to these opportunities keep one's faith fresh and vibrant. God is a work in the world. If we are open and attentive, we can be brought into situations that he has ripened with his grace long before the event was on the horizon of our consciousness.

**Vision and Dreams:** If we are sincerely praying, God will stir up in us a desire to see our people alive and renewed. If we prayerfully seek ways to implement these "visions and dreams" our ministry will stay fresh in the Lord. If we do not seek to incarnate these words from the Lord, we will become stale and perhaps frustrated. Proverbs 13:12 reads, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desired fulfilled is a tree of life."

**Persevere in Faith:** Sometimes we are doing everything right in the Lord and yet seem to be in a rut. We need to remember: the dark night of the senses and soul is a part of the Christian life. If we are free from the attachment

of sin and are not physically ill, and yet sense God at a distance, we must persevere in faith. Our faithfulness in prayer and service of God's people will be rewarded. We need to make "acts of faith" believing the Lord to grace us as we serve his people in the name of Jesus.

Priests are men seeking to answer a call, not merely do a profession. Faith that is informed and intentional will keep us from the pitfall of empty routines. It will keep us open to the voice of the Lord. Jesus said, "But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8). May our prayer be that Jesus will find that faith in us.

## Get Out Your 2009 Calendar

### Fraternity of Priests Conference --April 26-29, 2009

The local Fraternity of Priests in the Archdiocese of Hartford is sponsoring a Fraternity Conference at St. Edmund's Retreat Center on Ender's Island in Mystic, Connecticut. This is conference will cover the basic spirituality, history and vision of Fraternity of Priests. The conference is especially geared to priests who are interested in Fraternity of Priests, have recently begun attending a local Fraternity or would like to start a new Fraternity in their diocese. For more information, please contact Fr. Joe Looney at 203-266-5211.

### Annual Fraternity Meeting -- August 2-7, 2009

This year's annual conference will be at the Notre Dame Mission Center in Ipswich, Massachusetts. This international gathering of priests is open to any member of the Fraternity of Priests. This unique gathering of priests does three things:

- + provides a retreat like atmosphere of prayer punctuated with inspiring talks
- + affords the Fraternity time to elect board members and carry out other business of the Fraternity
- + has a built in fellowship day for participants to see the Boston area and enjoy each other's company

Please mark your calendars now for the powerful, Spirit-filled week. More information will be forthcoming.

Please send us your prayer intentions: \_\_\_\_\_

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