



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

THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

Slovenia, 2011

By Fr. Mike Roy

Words are one thing, the experience of them can be something quite different. The unforgettable experience that forty-one priests from around the world had this past summer in Slovenia has powerfully brought to life the true meaning of the word Fraternity. Coming together at the retreat house called "The House of Bread" operated by the Ursuline nuns were priests from a wide variety of backgrounds but these words from First Peter were most appropriate "Cast your worries upon the Lord because he cares for you. Resist the devil who is like a prowling lion. Be steadfast in the faith, knowing that your fellow believers throughout the world undergo the same sufferings. Jesus Christ will himself restore, confirm and strengthen you." We came away from these grace filled days refreshed in the Spirit by our sharing together in prayer and reviewing the fundamentals of the original charisms that initiated our Fraternity.

The priests in the Fraternity in Slovenia under the steady, strong but gentle leadership of Fr. Vlado Bizjak could not have been more welcoming and hospitable. Despite the challenge that was presented by the language difference there was

established from the beginning a real solidarity. Hopefully this month's newsletter will provide you with a glimpse of how this week unfolded, how the Lord spoke to us and something of the effects that are being felt in our local churches. It will consist of a composition from a number of sources.

Fr. Anton Marinko a priest living in the capital city of Ljubljana is very honest and humble in sharing these reflections "When I was asked to be the translator for my Slovene brothers during this conference I started to remember how it was in the year 2002 when the Fraternity was first introduced to us in Celje. How sure I was then in that chapel that God wanted me to do something about the ten 'promises' (the Kingdom Disciplines). Tithing, fasting, praying for one hour every day those come to mind for me easily. I must admit that I had become unfaithful to the meetings every other week. Thinking it was too far having to drive nearly two hours and it took too much time away from my parish. I was very interested in getting together with other priests more locally, but there were not even three or four

who could do it faithfully. It is one of the most important points. (It is how we practice our love for one another). I was greatly encouraged by those who have been doing this for 15 to 20 years. They inspired me to be committed. What else but this Fraternity accomplishes our good intentions.

One night at supper one of the brothers witnessed how the Fraternity has helped him to pray for those who are very sick and to have the ability to speak to them about death. It was a very important moment for me to hear how prayer has so much improved his ministry.

Our planet is so small. I hope we can all meet each other once again. We are more sure now that we truly are One in Christ."

Fr. Joe Muldoon from the Archdiocese of Ottawa, Canada shares these reflections. "I was initially reluctant to attend the Conference giving myself some excuses like, unknown territory, outside my comfort zone, too long a trip, possible heat wave. However, with God's grace I was able to respond to His call.

As I listened to the presentations on the first day I began to sense an

...continued on page 3

Dear Friends of the Priesthood

EPISCOPAL ADVISORS

Donald Cardinal Wuerl
Washington, DC

Archbishop
Franc Kromberger
Maribor, Slovenia

Archbishop John Myers
Newark, NJ

Bishop Sam Jacobs
Houma-Thibodaux, LA

Bishop Paul Bemile
Wa, Ghana

DIRECTORS

Fr. Bob Franco
Cleveland, OH
Chairman

Fr. John Kiley
Boston, MA

Fr. Bill Cosgrove
New York, NY

Fr. Francis Dabre
India

Fr. John Sweeney
Pittsburgh, PA

Editor's Box:

Please send articles,
comments, and
photos to the
FOP Newsletter editor,
Fr. Michael Roy via
e-mail at

editor@fraternityofpriests.org
or fax to
508-943-2213.

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

One definition of the word oxymoron reads, "a figure of speech in which incongruous or contradictory terms appear side by side." (from about.com) The word comes from two Greek words, "oxy" and "moron" literally translated "sharp dull". In English we have many examples, such as "jumbo shrimp" and "pre-school graduation".

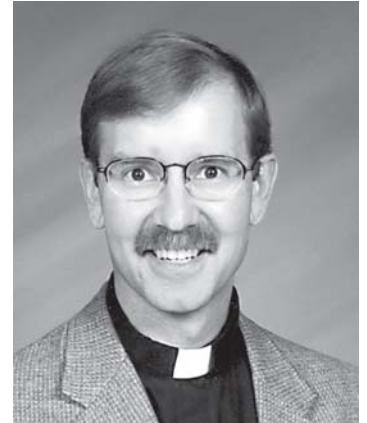
One oxymoron in our liturgical calendar is the Triumph of the Cross, September 14. Because of our familiarity with the cross and crucifix we tend to minimize the fact that it was a means of shaming, torturing and executing criminals. Perhaps if substituted some of the other historical means of execution the "oxymoron" of this feast would stand out in sharper contrast: the triumph of the guillotine...the triumph of the lynch hanging...the triumph of the firing squad. It can make one sort of queasy.

Yet we know that the Triumph of the Cross is real victory not because of the *how* the execution took place. The triumph lies in *who* was executed. The Father's love for enslaved humanity impelled him to give his own Son, in sacrifice for our sins. Death seemed to swallow up life. Hatred seemed to have conquered love. The pragmatic wisdom of the moment seemed to have eclipsed the plan of God, blotting it right out of the picture.

However, death could not hold the Son of God bound. Hatred could not conquer the indomitable love of God. And the wisdom of this world rightly appears to be foolishness in the light of Jesus Christ, raised from the dead. In the light of Triumph of the Cross, the Lord has the last laugh. He wins!!!

The really good news is that He shares with us his victory. We revel in this victory. We sing about it, praise it, and celebrate it in word and sacrament. However, all of our reveling in the Triumph of the Cross would be meaningless unless we apply it to our own lives. Does the Cross triumph when we are faced with disappointments, trials, temptation and discouragement?

It has been ten years since the Sept. 11th terrorist attacks on the USA. One of the enduring images of that fateful day was the Cross that was lifted out



of the rubble. It became known as the *Ground Zero Cross*. It was and is a symbol that even in the darkest of moments Jesus Christ does not abandon us.

Priests, like every Christian, are not exempt from the cross. In fact we pledge to model our lives on the cross of Jesus Christ. Please pray for all priests and, in particular, the members of the Fraternity of Priests. By our prayer, mutual support and encouragement, and vision for the renewal of the Church, Fraternity members desire to embrace the Cross of Christ and manifest its life giving qualities in the power of the Holy Spirit. Pray that we be faithful to our mission!

Fr. Bob Franco

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**

Actual Donations: **\$5,144**

Budget Surplus (shortage): **\$394**

Current as of July 31, 2011.

...continued from page 1

agitation and anxiety in my spirit. I did not understand what this was all about. In my small group I shared this and that the Lord wanted to speak a word to us as a body. I sensed it would be a challenging word and so prayed 'Lord give it to someone else, not me'. The more I prayed the stronger I felt that the Lord was speaking it to me. And so on Thursday morning after our time of prayer and praise that word began to flow. He had used the previous days to prepare the soil of my heart to receive Him and gave me the courage to respond.

I spoke these words with a spirit of boldness and zeal. Once delivered, I experienced a relief; the burden had been lifted from my shoulders. I put my trust in Him. He would do whatever else was needed to bring it to life in the hearers.

I returned home with a deeper awareness of the unity of the Priesthood and with my Fraternity brothers especially our Slovenian confreres who showered us with hospitality and generosity. The bonds of our love in the Lord were made strong through our prayer and fellowship. Praise God for His mighty works!"

Here follows the substance of that Word given to Fr. Muldoon that he shared at the Conference on July 28.

My sons in the Priesthood of My Holy One, see before your eyes the Kingship of Him who died. See, His Glory now rises over you for

you are Mine and I choose you anew to walk in the integrity of My Word these days. I choose you to manifest in your lives the Cross and the Glory of My Son.

Your faith, though often weak and listless, has been buoyed up this week. So My sons, listen attentively and with great care to My Words, for soon you shall undergo great testing in your service to Me. Will you remain faithful unto Me? Will you stand as noble sons to My Only Son?

So My sons, deepen your friendship with Me. Each day come to encounter Me in My Word and the Elements you break and share with My People. Learn perseverance; learn gratitude for all My works in you. You do not act alone; I am ever at work in you. My Spirit has enriched you more fully this week. Now you are ready to proclaim Me with fresh vigor in your souls. Come, sons of Mine, to the Wellspring of Life and drink first from Me, so that you may offer Me to all my little ones.

Go rejoicing in My Power at work in you. Go and seek out those who are lost and forlorn. Seek them in the cities and towns. Yes, seek them in all the earth. Some of you shall indeed travel to the ends of the earth to proclaim Me. Will you stand in Me, My sons, as bold witnesses of joy? Will you commit your life anew to Me? I have consecrated you in My Spirit. See the harvest is before you. Reap all that is seen.

Believe in Me, for among you are some who have lost hope in My

Wonders and My Power. A new day has dawned. My Holy Church awaits the message that you will bring. Each one here has been formed anew in My Word of Truth. You have become brothers in unity and in spirit to one another. Now I send you as ambassadors of Hope. Refresh their longing hearts for My Love and My Joy. To the young teach My Love and My burning desire for them to know Me. To all spread the news that I am the Shepherd and I have never left My Flock unattended.

Let My Glory shine forth from your lives. Let My People see the holiness of their God. With glad songs sing a new hymn of praise to Me. I will shoulder every burden you carry. I will set your hearts free to serve Me everywhere. Prepare them, O sons, to walk afresh in My Spirit. To sing and leap for joy in My Presence, for lo I am a mighty God and Holy is My Name for all ages. Go then, O sons, and never let discouragement take you away from Me. Let no one separate you from Me for My Spirit ever rests upon you.

Matthew 6:19
Lay up treasures in heaven

John 11:25
I am the Resurrection and Life

Proverbs 4:1-7
Security in Wisdom

Please send us your prayer intentions: _____

THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

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>



Please cut and return this form with your donation.

City, State and Zip

Street

Name

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

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.**

Dear Father Bob Franco,
This donation is to help the Fraternity of Priests in continuing their work of ministering to priests.
 \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other \$ _____