



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

# THE VISITATION

A monthly publication of the Fraternity of Priests, Inc.

## Keep it Simple, Fathers!

By Fr. John Kiley

As members of the Fraternity of Priests we are familiar with what we call the Kingdom Disciplines. They are the commitments we make when we join the Fraternity. With the help and prayerful support of our brothers we strive to be faithful to them in order to grow closer to Jesus and to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit. What are they? Let's review them:

- To pray at least an hour a day.
- To attend Fraternity meetings faithfully and not to be absent without reason and notice.
- To read Scripture daily and keep a prayer journal.
- To tithe ten percent of our income.
- To fast weekly.
- To accept leadership and teaching from the Fraternity.
- To receive discernment and spiritual direction from the Fraternity.
- To be zealous for personal committed relationships with the Lord Jesus and brother priests.
- To proclaim the Visitation Message.
- To empower God's people in the Holy Spirit.

Without minimizing these disciplines, there is also another

theme that the Church has been reemphasizing as essential for the life of the priest, namely "simplicity of life" and "voluntary poverty". I find we priests do not speak about or discuss this very often. The Vatican II "Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests", however, is very explicit. Number 17 reads in part: "priests and bishops should devote primarily to their decent livelihood and to the fulfillment of the duties of their proper state the benefits which they receive when they exercise some church office. What remains beyond that they should devote to the good of the Church or to works of charity. . . . Indeed, they (*bishops and diocesan priests*) are invited to embrace voluntary poverty. By it they will be more clearly likened to Christ and will become more devoted to the sacred ministry." The "Constitution on the Church in the Modern World" is also emphatic and extends a similar call to all the faithful. In numbers 69 and 88 the faithful are encouraged to give to the poor from their "substance" and not just from their superfluity. Pope John Paul eloquently reiterated this call in his homily at Yankee Stadium on October 2, 1979: "The poor of the United States and of the world are your brothers and sisters in Christ. You must never be content to leave them just the crumbs from the feast.

You must take of your substance, and not just of your abundance, in order to help them. And you must treat them like guests at your family table." John Paul again spoke of this in "Pastores Dabo Vobis" number 30. "In reality, only the person who contemplates and lives the mystery of God as the one and supreme good, as the true and definitive treasure, can understand and practice poverty, which is certainly not a matter of despising or rejecting material goods but of a loving and responsible use of these goods and at the same time an ability to renounce them with great interior freedom - that is, with reference to God and his plan." He continues, "Nor should the prophetic significance of priestly poverty be forgotten, so urgently needed in affluent and consumeristic societies: 'A truly poor priest is indeed a specific sign of separation from, disavowal of and non-submission to the tyranny of a contemporary world which puts all its trust in money and in material security.' " Along with priestly celibacy a simple lifestyle is a powerful witness that happiness does not consist in material possessions, but in a living relationship with God.

An excellent and very challenging book on this subject is "Happy Are You Poor" by Father

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# Dear Friends of the Priesthood

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It was Winston Churchill (probably paraphrasing George Satayana) who said, “Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it.” This rather dark thought seems to indicate that we are slow learners. The history of the world is rather cyclic. The rising and falling of empires gives proof that we repeat our mistakes.

At the end of July, the Fraternity of Priests held its annual international meeting in Columbus, Ohio. Thirty two priests from six countries gathered to reflect on the theme “We Share with One Another the Distress, the Kingdom and the Endurance” we have in Jesus (Revelation 1:9). In a sense, we too gathered to look at history: our personal histories, the recent history of the Church and the history of God’s intervention in the world as revealed in Sacred Scripture and the Tradition of the Church. What we discovered as we gathered, prayed, listened and shared was that the Lord really is the Lord! The history we looked at might be better spelled in a hyphenated manner: His-Story.

When we begin to see the hand of God in our lives and in the life of the Church, we are encouraged. We do not feel “doomed to repeat” the mistakes of the past. We know that God makes all things new in Christ (Revelation 21:5). As we cling to Christ we are able to slough off the scars of the past and live in new and wonderful ways.

The Church experienced persecution during its first few hundred years. For the most part, early persecutions were sporadic and localized. However, in 303 AD, the Emperor Diocletian called for an empire wide obliteration of Christianity. No class of people or area of the empire was exempted. Needless to say, it was a very trying time for Christians.

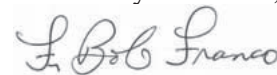
After the death of Diocletian, Constantine became emperor. After a key sign from God (a luminous cross in the sky), Constantine won a key battle that solidified his rule. In 314 he issued the Edict of Milan which ushered in an era of tolerance for Christians. Soon, tolerance became the

religion of the Empire. In a matter of a few years, Christians went from the worst of times to the best of times.

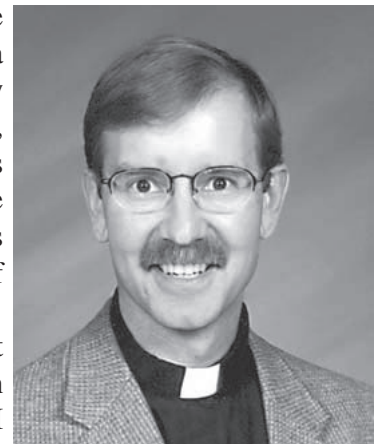
I pray that we may learn from history. I write this not only wanting to avoid repeating its mistakes. I write this so that we may be encouraged by God’s intervention in our histories, personal and global. Perhaps we will see God’s triumph in some manifest way in our day. However, even if we do not see God’s intervention in a historically manifest manner, we already share in the Triumph of the Cross (September 14).

Finally, I want to thank you who support Fraternity of Priests. Your prayers and donations make our meeting both possible and successful. Please be assured of our prayers for your intentions.

Sincerely in Christ,



Father Bob Franco



### Editor’s Box:

Please send articles, comments, and photos to the FOP Newsletter editor, Fr. Michael Roy via e-mail at [editor@fraternityofpriests.org](mailto: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!

### 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: **\$2,765.00**

Budget Surplus (shortage): **(\$1,985.00)**

*Current as of July 31, 2010.*

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Thomas Dubay. In a chapter on clerical poverty he mentions priest and bishop saints who observed simplicity in an outstanding way, men like St. John Vianney, St. Claude de la Colombiere, St. Robert Bellarmine, St. Thomas of Villanova, St. Antoninus, St. Charles Borromeo, St. Pius X, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Francis de Sales among others. It would be helpful and inspiring to become familiar with their lives.

This call to “simplicity of life” and to “voluntary poverty” takes us far beyond our Fraternity discipline to tithing 10% of our income. There are priests in many parts of the world and in some Fraternities who live out the reality of material poverty each day because they live and minister in poor and destitute countries. Even though materially poor these brothers are challenged to cultivate a spirit of detachment. They deserve our prayers and material assistance. Many of us still live in a materially prosperous culture. We need to respond to this call of the Lord. Regular teaching on this topic and appropriation should take place in our groups. Are we committed to helping each other respond to and live out this call in our dining, clothing, purchases, hi tech items, recreation, vacations etc.? Do we eagerly and joyfully help a brother in material need? How generous are we to the poor throughout the world and to those who come to our door? Do we try to distinguish seriously between our wants and our legitimate needs? These considerations are especially important today when some of our

parishioners have lost jobs and even homes due to the faltering economy and are struggling financially.

This call to simplicity of life and to voluntary poverty was not emphasized in my seminary formation for the diocesan priesthood. However, there was an innate sense among many of us that it was important. If we witnessed or knew of a priest who was living a rather extravagant lifestyle, we frequently resorted to criticism with the phrase: “Well, after all, Father deserves the best”. In our idealism little did we realize that this attitude of “Father deserves the best” which we were criticizing in a brother could easily creep into the hearts of any one of us, if we were not constantly vigilant. Since we had given up marriage and were committed to celibacy, didn’t we deserve the best of material things? How far we can drift from Jesus who emptied Himself and became poor for our sake!

Archbishop Timothy Dolan wrote an excellent chapter on “simplicity of life” in his book *Priests for the Third Millennium*. In a very down-to-earth and realistic way he uncovers some of the pitfalls that we priests can succumb to if we neglect to examine our lifestyles with the help of God’s grace and the support of brothers. He writes: “priests and future priests are impelled to the simple life not just because the Master requires it, not just because it makes it easier to reach God, not just because it promotes a more just society, not just because it reminds us that only God can ultimately satisfy us, not only because it prompts trust in

Providence, but because it gives good example, and because not to do it gives grave scandal.” Archbishop Dolan also shares a powerful personal story. When he was a graduate student he would occasionally stop by at a Dominican House for an overnight on his way home from the university. He became friends with a wise and elderly Dominican. On one visit noticing how plain and simple the priest’s room was, he asked him where he kept the rest of his stuff. He was told “this is it”. The Dominican said, “if I go down to your room all you have is your suitcase.” Dolan said, “but after all I’m only passing through”. The wise Dominican responded, “Aren’t we all?”. Keep it simple, Fathers, we’re only passing through!

*Fr. John Kiley is a member of the Boston Fraternity and has just celebrated his 30th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood in May, 2010.*

Please join us in praying for a successful event this month on campus at Franciscan University.

The University and ICCRS are sponsoring a “Leadership Training Course” - designed for those who want to use their gifts to help lead within the Charismatic Renewal movement.

Please pray with us that those in attendance would be inspired to hear and answer God’s call in their lives of service to the renewal, and that He would bless this gathering abundantly!

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

# THANK YOU FOR PRAYING FOR A PRIEST EACH DAY!

October 2010						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					Rev. Matthew Jones Cardiff, UK 1	<b>Pope Benedict XVI</b> 2
Rev. John Fahy Cardiff, UK 3	Most Rev. Peter Smith Cardiff, UK 4	Rev. Donal Gillespie Cardiff, UK 5	Rev. Barry English Cardiff, UK 6	Rev. Paschal Petcavage, OSB Cleveland, OH 7	Rt Rev. Dr. Bryan Eyman Cleveland, OH 8	Rev. Robert Franco Cleveland, OH 9
Rev. James Mazanec Cleveland, OH 10	Msgr. James Nugent Columbus, OH 11	Msgr. Michael Nugent Columbus, OH 12	Rev. Justin Reis Columbus, OH 13	Rev. Joseph Losh Columbus, OH 14	Rev. Homer Blubaugh Columbus, OH 15	Rev. James Kelly Columbus, OH 16
Rev. Richard Engle Columbus, OH 17	Rev. Peter Gregor Honduras 18	Rev. Claude Seeberger, OSB Fargo, ND 19	Very Rev. Dale Kinzler Fargo, ND 20	Rev. Msgr. Robert Laliberte Fargo, ND 21	Rev. Donald Leiphon Fargo, ND 22	Rev. John Oderman, OSB Fargo, ND 23
Rev. Mathew Lanz Fargo, ND 24	Rev. Duaine Cote Fargo, ND 25	Rev. Robert Stackey Ghana 26	Rev. Thomas Hack Grand Rapids, MI 27	Rev. Charles Antekeier Grand Rapids, MI 28	Rev. Mark Mitchell Grand Rapids, MI 29	Rev. Michael Shea, CM Grand Rapids, MI 30
Rev. James Bozung Grand Rapids, MI 31						

## 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.

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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.**

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