

Quester's Corner

Please Help

Br. Leonard, Br. Patrick, Br. John Paul, and Br. Paschal have started a new year back to seminary. We are humbly appealing to the generosity and kindness that so many of you have shown us over the past several years in response to our requests for assistance with the costs of the education and training of our future priests. If there is any way that you can help us with part or all of the cost of seminary tuition, we would be very grateful and would certainly love to hear from you.

Tuition Cost per Semestrian - \$5230 x 4
Total - \$20920

Donations to our community may be sent via check
(made payable to "The Franciscan Missionaries") or online at:
www.FranciscanMissionaries.com

"May it please Thee O Lord to reward with eternal life, all those who do good to us for the sake of Thy Holy Name"



MFVA
Franciscan Missionaries of the Eternal Word

Checkout our new and improved MFVA Website at:
www.FranciscanMissionaries.com

About the MFV.A.'s, "Missionarii Franciscani Verbi Aeterni"

As Franciscan Missionaries of the Eternal Word, we are a religious order of Priests and Brothers, founded by Mother Mary Angelina, B.C.P.A., in 1887, who are seeking to live an authentic renewal of consecrated life in the Franciscan tradition. Living in obedience, without anything of our own and in charity, we share a common life of prayer before the exposed Blessed Sacrament and in Total Consecration to the Mother of God according to St. Louis Marie de Montfort. As consecrated lives, we bear our name in religion of various Saints or Blessed as well as Our Blessed Mother's. We are dedicated to the work of evangelization - preaching and teaching the Catholic Faith as well as seek out the lost and make known to all men the love and salvation of Jesus Christ. "The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back." - Ezekiel 34:6

Contact Information

For more information write to:

**Franciscan Missionaries
of the Eternal Word**

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www.FranciscanMissionaries.com



Fishers Of Men

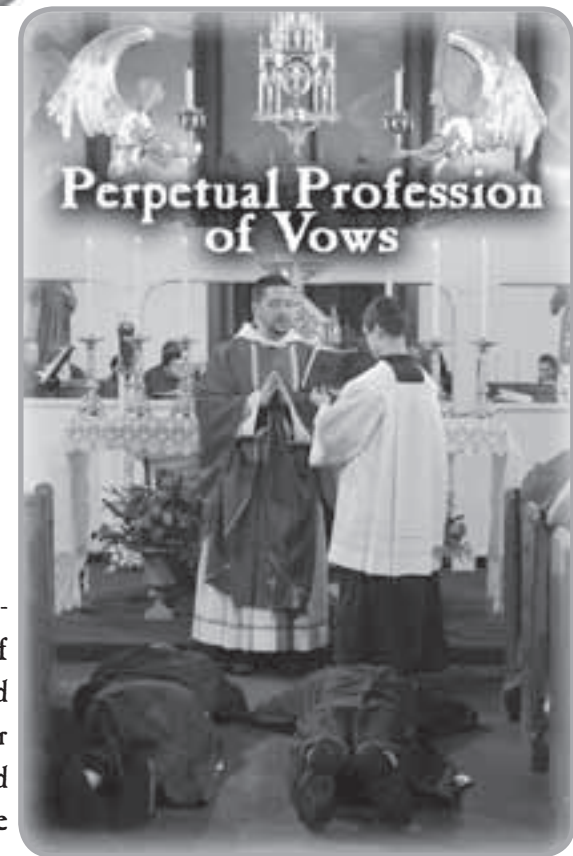
The Newsletter of the Franciscan
Missionaries of the Eternal Word



Celibacy

Peter began to say to him, "We have given up everything and followed you." Jesus said, "Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not receive a hundred times more now in this present age: houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions, and eternal life in the age to come." -Mark 10:28-31

Everything? You want everything, Lord? Yes. The creator of the universe, the one who created our souls upon our conception in our mother's womb, the one who died and rose again for us, wants us to be exclusively His. The life of celibacy is a call and it is a gift bestowed upon the Church by our Lord. There are some He has called to live a life that is totally dedicated to Him in a very real and concrete way. These few are called to walk away from everything else without regret, without turning to look back, and embrace our Lord and His Church in a radical way. This life is not sterile, but a fruitful one for the kingdom of heaven-- a king-



dom that begins here on earth but is only fully realized in heaven. Celibacy is an eschatological sign of the fullness of the kingdom in heaven. Jesus tells us in the Gospel that there is no giving and taking in marriage in heaven. Our common experience tells us this because we know that when a spouse dies the surviving spouse is free to marry. The vows do not last into the next life. Marriage is

an earthly reality. Some have called it the greatest earthly good. Volumes of great literature have been written about what men and women have given up for love. These sacrifices do not seem ridiculous or pathetic to us because we know that our lives take on meaning when we are in love, when we experience love, and make it our own as our Holy Father has beautifully written. Celibacy gives witness to the life of heaven. It attempts to live the resurrected life, in the flesh in the here and now. The life of heaven is the living out of the eschatological marriage of Christ and His Church. The celibate is taken up into this eschatological marriage by giving Himself to the Church "in the hope that Christ may give Himself to the Church in the full truth of eternal life." (*Familiaris Consortio* #16)

All of us by our baptism are placed in this spousal covenant with Christ. We are all going to live out our baptismal grace and relationship with God in different ways. But the common denominator is that we are made through love, and at the same time for love. (*FC* #11) It cannot be in any other way because we are made

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Celibacy Continued ...

in His image and likeness. God is three persons in one nature. He is a communion of persons, a communion of life and love. We see that in the beginning man and woman are created together, as a couple. "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." (Gen 1:27) Man is made in the image of God on an individual level, and taken together as male and female, a communion of persons. By our interpersonal relationships (by loving and knowing) we image God as well as in our persons with a body and a soul.

The beauty of the sacrament of marriage is that the natural institution of marriage (seen in Genesis) is taken up into the spousal love of Christ for His Church. The sacrament of marriage is a symbol of this love to the world, and it is a real participation in the reality of Christ's love for His Church. Christ is present in a marriage precisely because it is a sacrament. So, the couple experiences the very love of Christ in their love for one another. The sacrament takes up all of the natural elements of conjugal love, and seals them into a one flesh unity that symbolizes Christ's permanent and faithful love for the Church.

So the priest or religious who takes the vow of celibacy is giving up the great good of marriage. It is a tremendous renunciation for the kingdom of heaven. Why would God call a young man or woman to do this? Pope John Paul II said that, "Virginity or celibacy, by liberating the human heart in a unique way, "so as to make it burn with greater love for God and all humanity," bears witness that the Kingdom of God and His justice is that pearl of great price which is preferred to every other value no matter how great, and hence must be sought as the only definitive value." (FC #16) In other words, celibacy fosters a greater love for God. It opens our hearts to love everyone in a universal way, and frees us to be at work for the Kingdom. The Church requires the discipline of celibacy for her priests in order to foster holiness in them. We make a permanent vow because it is not easy. Like marriage, a vow keeps us sailing through

the difficult and rough moments. Few of us are so constant in our wills not to be helped by the vows in religious life.

The celibate does not "walk" away from love. He embraces it in all of its fullness. In giving himself to no one human person exclusively, he opens himself to love all inclusively. It is not that he lives without a significant other, but that Christ alone is taken up in his heart. Fr. Gerald M.C. Fitzgerald writes in the following passage about the priest's love for the Blessed Sacrament.

"As a matter of fact, here is heaven, a veiled heaven, here is the actuality of a Divine Lover. Now our hearts are built to love, and one of the faithful causes of defection in the priesthood, is the failure to fill up the vacuum that is created by the vow of chastity with another love. A man is bound to love something, he may deny it, but ordinarily that type of man who denies the necessity of love in his life, will seek the most terrible and ugly of all loves which is the love of his own ego, the love of self. A man loves something, and where we have pledged ourselves not to give our hearts to creatures, at least in that most intimate and strong love that the chords of Adam draws towards, that is, the marriage union, we must sublimate our hearts into a love, a love that is offered us, a legitimate love for the priest's heart in the Blessed Sacrament, Our Lord. (Conference to Servants of the Paraclete, September 16, 1954)

This is the great witness of love that the world needs so desperately today. A celibate love that points to the true sign and purpose of marital love. A love that is not enslaved by the senses, but points to the purpose and goal of the conjugal life— to be a community of life and love. The world reduces sex to a sensual experience of pleasure, but a sacramental marriage forms a union between a man and a woman that involves a total gift of self to another that involves every aspect of their lives including their sexuality.

Fr. Mark Mary, MFVA

The Perpetual Profession



of Br. John Paul Mary
& Br. Pio Mary



Br. John Paul & his family



Br. Pio & his family

On August 14th, 2010, Brs. Pio and John Paul professed Perpetual Vows at Our Lady of the Angels Chapel at EWTN. Bishop Robert Baker of the diocese of Birmingham, Alabama was the celebrant. Br. Pio will be a permanent brother while Br. John Paul is studying to be a priest.

Fr. CAM
REC

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