



THE CLARION

St. Conrad Fraternity, Order of Franciscans Secular
St. Margaret of Cortona Region
Hanover, Pennsylvania

July / August 2018

Pax et Bonum

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Minister's Message

Summer is here. Sometimes we may drive to a vacation destination to which we've never been before. You'd certainly want to have a map, GPS or Smartphone handy since the roads are unfamiliar to you. With accurate directions, however, you can feel confident that you'll arrive at your destination. You know which roads to take.

Our Lord tells us, "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many. How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few." (Mt. 7:13-14) If your destination lies at the end of the narrow road, why would you not take that route?

Our directions are found in the Mass, the sacraments and the Bible. If we're not attending Mass or the sacraments or reading our bibles, we are hoping that without a map we will still arrive at our destination. Yet many are doing just that. Data from CARA (Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate) for 2016 shows that overall only 22% attend Mass at least once a week; a percentage that only gets worse if you look at younger age groups. While the Catholic population in the U.S. is going up (from 51 million in 1970 to 74.3 million in 2017), baptisms, confirmations and marriages fell dramatically during that period. For example, there were over 426,000 marriages in 1970 while there were just over 144,000 in 2017.

What do many Catholics think about church teaching? According to the Pew Research Center, roughly half or more of U.S. Catholics say that using contraceptives, living with a romantic partner outside of marriage and remarrying after a divorce without an annulment are *not* sins. And about four-in-ten (39%) say homosexual behavior is not a sin. So what do you think? Without good directions, are Catholics finding the narrow road?

So what does the narrow road look like; how do we recognize it? St. Francis of Assisi wanted more than anything to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. To follow the footsteps of Christ is to take the narrow road. This means that one lives according to the gospel. When our Lord was asked which commandment in the law is the greatest he said, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Mt. 22:36-39) I don't believe this means you go to Mass when you feel like it, ignore the sacraments, turn a blind eye to the teachings of the Church, or treat your neighbor as he treats you.

Many take the broad road because it is easy to find, requires no effort, and makes no demands; but is it going to take you to the destination you want? As you enjoy this summer, please pay attention to your directions so that you are on the right road. Read your bibles and good religious books; attend Mass and the sacraments often; and live the gospel. Remember to go from gospel to life and from life to gospel. Living the gospel demands commitment and action, but the destination is worth it.

Pax et bonum,
Jeff Topper

Note: There will be no message from our Spiritual Assistant, Sister Cecilia Reilly, OSF, in this *Clarion* as she is attending a Retreat. Please pray that it is productive and restful for her.

Holy Father's Prayer Intentions

July

Evangelization: **Priests and their Pastoral Ministry**

That priests, who experience fatigue and loneliness in their pastoral work, may find help and comfort in their intimacy with the Lord and in their friendship with their brother priests.

August

Universal: **The Treasure of Families**

That any far-reaching decisions of economists and politicians may protect the family as one of the treasures of humanity.

July Birthdays

Mary Barrick..... 7/26

July Profession Anniversaries

Chester Barrick.....7/13/2003

Catherine Livelsberger7/24/1988

Judy Topper.....7/13/2003

Jeff Topper.....7/13/2003

July Necrology

Genevieve Lickliden.....7/27/1986

Maurice Malone..... 7/1/1996

A. Louis Ratti7/30/1981

Shirley Redding.....7/19/1991

Eleanor Tevington7/11/1997

August Birthdays

Dick Bonini..... 8/16

Jackie Redding..... 8/9

August Profession Anniversaries

Sister Cecilia Reilly 8/22

August Necrology

Gerard Cohee 8/7/2007

Lawrence Eckenrode.....8/22/1981

Joseph McCormick.....8/22/1997

John Pickell8/29/1968

Important Dates in July

July 3 - Feast of St. Thomas, Apostle

July 4 - St. Elizabeth of Portugal

July 15 - St. Bonaventure

July 17 - St. Francis Solano

July 25 - Feast of St. James, Apostle

July 26 - Sts. Joachim and Anne,
Parents of the BVM

July 30 - Blessed Solanus Casey

Important Dates in AugustAugust 2 - Our Lady of the Angels of
Portiuncula

August 4 - St. John Vianney, Cure of Ars

August 6 - Transfiguration of the Lord

August 11 - St. Clare of Assisi

August 14 - St. Maximilian Kolbe

August 15 - Assumption of the BVM

August 21 - St. Pius X, pope, 3rd Order

August 25 - St. Louis IX, king, 3rd Order

August 27 - The Seven Joys of Our Lady

Fraternity Prayer Vine

Please continue to pray for the health and the intentions of:

- José Barata
- Chet Barrick
- Mary Barrick
- Pat Bilz
- Fr. Richard Forcier, ORM Conv
- Mary Lou Gennaula
- Concetta Glorioso
- Sherlynn Holland
- Mary Minor
- Jackie Redding
- Sr. Cecilia Reilly

Just a reminder: if you want your prayer need(s) added to the prayer vine, or if you wish to have your name removed, please let your editor know.

Prayer for Vocations

Heavenly Father, we beg you to send us many holy vocations, and to help those given such callings to respond freely, generously and faithfully. May their self-offerings and consecrations offer you fitting praise. Amen.

Prayer at Gatherings

For July and August we will pray the Liturgy of the Hours. Please bring your breviaries.

Attendance at the Gathering

All active members should make the Gathering a priority. If you are unable to attend, please contact one of the council members. We are a family and, naturally, become concerned when we don't hear from one of our brothers or sisters.

Final Thought

After the Baptism of his baby brother in church, little Johnny sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "That priest said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, but I want to stay with you guys."