



The Franciscan Legionnaire

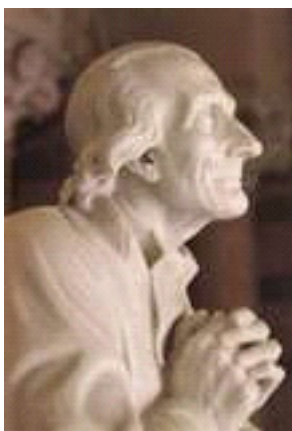
Newsletter of the Friars Legion of St. Peter's Church in the Loop
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May the Lord give you Peace!

By Fr Chuck Faso, OFM (www.frchuckofm.org)

When you receive this August Legionnaire, I will be traveling with a group to Oberammergau, Germany, where the famous 1640 Passion Play is being performed six times a week, May through September. The twenty of us from Chicago will be traveling by bus from Munich, Germany through Switzerland, northern Italy, Austria and finally to the Oberammergau. Before the Passion Play trip, I will be in Paris, France for a wedding of my friends' older son. Then I will drive six hours to Ars, France – the little village made famous by the Cure of Ars, St John Vianney.

Pope John Paul II asked for a seminary to be built in Ars because St John Vianney is the patron of diocesan priests. Also built was the Foyer Sacerdotal, a hotel for priests visiting Ars. I will be in Ars for the August 4th feast of the Cure of Ars. Thousands of people and many priests come to Ars for the feast. A few nights ago, I was with a friend at a restaurant. At a nearby table was one of the auxiliary bishops of Chicago enjoying dinner with six priests. I told them that I would be praying in Ars for the priests of Chicago. God bless the presbyterate of Chicago. And I will pray for all the priests who have influenced my life, who taught me, who edified me by their faithfulness and holiness, who showed me how to be human and down to earth as well as to search for the wisdom of the ages and learn always. It is a good thing to pray for those who have loved us into life and journeyed with us through the challenges of life.



Eucharistic Prayer

At the heart of our Catholic Prayer is the Eucharist Prayer at Mass. The priest at the altar leads us through the prayer. We make it our own with our acclamations of “Holy Holy Holy”, “Christ has died –is risen –will come again” and the Great Amen. The Eucharistic Prayer is the prayer of the whole Church, priest and people of God. So what makes this prayer Eucharistic? What is the purpose of this prayer? Let's begin our reflections on this prayer with ten **“Did you know....?”** questions:

Did you know that we in the USA have 13 official Eucharistic Prayers?

Did you know that the oldest Eucharistic Prayer is the also the shortest – number II (from the year 215 AD by Hippolytus of Rome).

Did you know that the first time the priest raised up the Bread and Wine after the consecration for all present to see them was in the year 1200 in Paris? (What did the priest do with the Bread and Wine after the two consecrations during the previous centuries?)

Did you know that in every Eucharistic Prayer the gathered Church petitions God the Father two times to send down the Holy Spirit, first on the bread and wine and later on us? (Why?)

Did you know that Eucharistic Prayers 2 to 13 follow the basic plan the four elements of the Jewish Berakah blessing prayer? (Praise/Thanks, Motive, Petition, Praise/Thanks)

Did you know that the final Doxology “Through him, With him, In him” means Through, In, and With Christ – the him is Christ?

Did you know that the Eucharistic Prayer is our first and basic Creed, our statement of faith?

Did you know that seven of our Eucharistic Prayers have sung acclamations that can be sung all through the prayer?

Did you know that we do the same four actions at Mass that Jesus did at the Last Supper and that the Eucharistic Prayer is only one of those four actions?

Did you know that during the Eucharistic Prayer not only are bread and wine changed into the Body and Blood of Christ, but we too are changed into the one Body of Christ?

Let's reflect on some of these questions and answers.

Jesus and Food



Each time the Gospel tells a story of Jesus with food, we read of his four actions:

Jesus 1) Took, 2) Said the blessing, 3) Broke, and 4) Gave. At each mass, we do the same four actions: We take the bread

and wine at the Preparation of the Gifts. We say the blessing - the entire Eucharistic Prayer. We break the bread during Fraction Rite as we pray the litany of the Lamb of God. We give the Bread and Wine - the action of receiving communion, the action of eating and drinking.

Opening Dialog

The priest dialogs with the congregation:

1. "The Lord be with you" – a blessing and a greeting – and we all respond with this blessing/greeting. "And also with you" Do these words sound like or feel like a blessing/greeting given and received?
2. "Lift up your hearts!" This is an exhortation to do something. Lift up, surrender to the Lord all your joys and sorrows, your hopes and fears, your questions and answers, your loves and hatreds. Lift all to the Lord. Surrender to the Lord. Remember the Latin: Sursum corda! Upwards hearts! And all respond with an energetic "We lift them up to the

Lord." We do! We do surrender all to the Lord. What a joy and a relief that is, if we truly lift up and surrender.

3. "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God" the priest says. This is the great invitation of the mass – to give thanks. But is that all – only giving thanks for the many gifts and blessings God has freely and generously lavished on us. Listen to your response: "It is right to give God thanks and praise." And praise? So at every mass you the congregation correct the priest. You are not satisfied in giving only Thanks. You want to, need to Praise God. To stand before goodness of God, the greatness of God and shout out our WOW's. Praise you – you are the greatest. To allow ourselves to be overwhelmed by the good greatness and great goodness of God. "You are the greatest!"

First Word of the Eucharistic Prayers

What is the very first word of the first nine Eucharistic Prayers? The first word the priest says? Think for a moment? What did you hear? If the word that came to mind and heart was **Father**, then you are correct. We the church are giving God the Father thanks and praise.



Where is Jesus during all of this thanking and praising? Jesus the Christ is in our hearts, in the gathered community, in the ministers, in the Scriptures that brings us to the Tables of the Word and of the Bread and Wine.

Names for God

Father is one of the many names for God. We know that God is neither male nor female. God is much bigger than any and all of our names and attributes of God. We need many names for God also. The Muslims have ninety-nine names/attributes of God. St Francis listed forty-three names for God. How many different names do we have for God? Does the title Father serve us well in naming God? Of course it does. But Father cannot be the only name for God because God is much bigger than Father. A book we read in first year Theology in 1964 was entitled: "Is your God too small?" Great question. We need to let God be God in all of the majesty and infinite ways God is God for us.

God asks: Yes?...Why?

Immediately after we address God with the title Father, I pause, because I hear God say “Yes?” We are all talking with God, not to God or worse, we are not reading a text in front of God. To make sure that we are talking with the true God, we add: “all-powerful and ever-living God.” And then I pause again, because I hear God say, “Well, yes?” We continue with the words “we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks and praise.” Again, I hear God speak: “Why? Why today do you want to give me thanks and praise? I am happy that you noticed me blessing you with many gifts, but today, why do you want to offer thanks and praise today?” The next part of the prayer states our reasons why we are giving thanks and praise. In 1960 we had about ten Prefaces, the first part of the prayer that lists why we are giving thanks. Now you can find in the sacramentary at least 150 Prefaces. We always thank and praise God for creation, for life, for holiness and goodness, of Jesus and the saints. When we cannot contain ourselves any more, we join the angels and saints (imagine, standing with the angels and saints in the presence of God the Holy One) and shout out/sing forth: Holy Holy Holy. (Check Isaiah 6) (Reflection on Eucharistic Prayer: To be continued next month)

That little word “Maybe”

In 1967, a week before the twelve of us were ordained priests on a hot June 13th in Teutopolis IL, we were on retreat in Indianapolis. Of the many talks the preacher offered for our reflection, I remember one word from one talk. For an hour the preacher talk about the importance of the word **MAYBE**. He urged us to keep that word in the middle of our minds – not too far forward, and not too far back. Maybe you know everything about a topic, but maybe you do not.

I once read a Buddhist story about **Maybe**. Once there was a farmer who wakes up to find that his horse has run off. The neighbors come by and say, “Too bad. Such awful luck.” The farmer says, “Maybe.” The next day, the horse returns with a few other horses. The neighbors congratulate the farmer on his reversal of fortune. “Maybe,” The farmer says. When his son tries to ride one of the new horses, he breaks his leg and the neighbors offer condolences. “Maybe,” the farmer says. And the next day, when army officials come to draft the son and don’t take him because of

his broken leg – everyone is happy. “Maybe,” the farmer says.

I have heard stories like this before. They are beautiful in their simplicity and surrender to the universe. I wonder if I could be attached to something so detached. I don’t know. *Maybe*. Try a few more Maybe’s in your life. Does that help?

What books are you reading these days?

In response to the questions I posed in last month’s Legionnaire, I received this email from Marian Shaw of Chicago, a frequent participant at St Peter’s prayer and programs for many years. The first question was: *What books are you reading these days?* Marian writes:

“There is no substitute for the actual thing, and in this instance, I mean a book. It makes you use your imagination, in a way that television often cannot. TV has supplied the picture, readymade I still remember a time when books were read over the radio, and I listened while doing ironing and other mundane tasks.

After finishing Cardinal George's book, *The Difference God Makes*, and returning same to the public library, I turned to my own "still not reads" on the pantry shelves, and picked out - Wau-Bun, or *The Early Day in the Northwest*, by Juliette Kinzie. This book, as her recollections of her early married life, considered to be one of the finest journals on the early "Northwest" or the Michigan-Wisconsin-Chicago area.. Mrs. Kinzie accompanied her trader husband, John Kinzie (the younger) on their travels through this area. The mind's eye can see the boatloads of the Indians coming up to greet their "father" (Kinzie). A devout woman herself, Mrs Kinzie describes the Christian (Catholic) Indian or Indian-Canadian women she met and the schools they helped establish. However, she correctly predicts that in a few years the Native Americans would be driven off their land, confirming the ominous prediction of Lewis and Clark that the "noble tribes" in a few generations hence, would be decimated and living in squalor.

A parallel theme runs through the early part of the history of Holy Name Cathedral. I found the first book, issued on the 100th anniversary, 1849-1949, and now up at discounted sale, along with its 1999 150-year companion, a more engaging "read" than the latter, certainly as far as local color was concerned..

