

The Widow's Mite

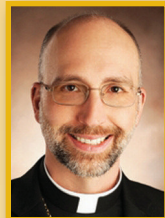


In This Issue

WIDOWS OF PRAYER Issue No. 22

Spring/Summer 2014

- Bishop John F. Doerfler
by Carlotta Stricker wp
- Reconciliation:
A Sacrament of
"Forgiveness and of
Healing" (Part 1)
by Fr. Tom Farrell
- Making Promises
— Franklin/Milwaukee, WI
- 2013 Widows of
Prayer Retreat
- Ordinations
*— Archdiocese of Milwaukee
— Diocese of Green Bay
— Archdiocese of Fort Wayne-
South Bend, IN*
- Stretching Toward
The Future
by Fr. John Guimond
- 2014 Widows of
Prayer Retreat
- In Memory
- Board of Directors
- Widows of Prayer
Contact Numbers
- Donation Form



Bishop John F. Doerfler Ordained for the Marquette Diocese



We have a bishop! We are claiming him as one of our own for the Widows of Prayer. Rightfully so since his mother, Germaine Doerfler is one of us, a Widow of Prayer. Not only has Germaine been the right hand "man" through the years helping Mary Reardon, Foundress of the Widows of Prayer with development of the Statutes and Bylaws for our apostolate, but she was also the Formation Director for the Appleton Community. We were fortunate to have Fr. John/Bishop Doerfler as our Spiritual Director for several years. Many of the talks the former, Fr. John gave to the Widows of Prayer are part of our formation/studies for our candidates in discernment. His mellow voice resonates with thought provoking words and a clear understanding on how we can become more spiritual in our daily lives. These words become even more profound knowing that this was his insight to his own spiritual growth!

After receiving the call from her son about his appointment to bishop, Germaine immediately informed us of this tremendous news. A parent always dreams and hopes for the best for their children, and when it comes to fruition, words cannot explain the joy. The wonderful news spread quickly through our vocational communities. Each Widow of Prayer was just as excited as if she were the mother of the soon to be bishop! One of the joyous experiences our

apostolate has is to attend the ordination of the seminarians that they have corresponded with through their journey to the priesthood. Now we were going to experience the ordination to bishop.

The day of the ordination was viewed by those of us that have computers with access to the Internet. It allowed us to go to the Diocese of Marquette website to watch the ceremony. For those Widows of Prayer who do not, they were hoping to watch it on EWTN. But there was a change in EWTN's programming. This caused frustration for those wanting to view this special event, but they were able to see it at a later date.

You can imagine our joy and delight to see each of the symbols of his pastoral office being given to him, the Episcopal ring, signifying his fidelity to the church, the Bride

of Christ; the miter, a liturgical headdress, traditionally signifying the bishop's reception of wisdom and the crosier, a pastoral staff that reflect his role as one who gathers and shepherds the People of God.

The camera panned over to Germaine when her son was invited to sit in the bishop's chair, he was now the Bishop of the Diocese of Marquette (Michigan). She was very pensive. As I watched, I thought to myself, "what is she thinking?" But I knew, she had said, "John always loved teaching, that is his passion." Just imagine the potential he has for teaching us now!

**MAY GOD CONTINUE TO
BLESS YOU ABUNDANTLY
BISHOP DOERFLER!**

— by Carlotta Stricker wp



Our Mission

To serve Christ through His Church by praying for priests and others in Church leadership, to be devoted to the Blessed Sacrament and to promote Adoration of Christ in the Eucharist.

Due to the length of this commentary – this article will be in two segments)

Reconciliation: A Sacrament of “Forgiveness and of Healing” (Part 1)



How much do we really understand about the sacrament of reconciliation? I just recently read Vinny Flynn's Book: "Seven Secrets of Confession," and as a confessor I am very grateful for his insights into this powerful sacrament. He conveys that to really understand confession we need to understand sin and that we often limit our understanding of sin to one's behavior. He tells us that it isn't just about our behavior but it about our relationship with God stated in his first concept

#1 Sin never changes God's love for us

He conveys that: we exist because God thought of us and loves us and that his love for each of us is personal and forever and that his focus is not on - our behavior but on - our relationship with Him."

"I will be a father to you and you will be a son or daughter to me" (2 Cor. 6)

Scott Hahn states: The essence of sin is our refusal of divine sonship." Though this refusal results in various behaviors we call sin. Flynn states these behaviors or sins are symptoms of the real problem being in our hearts or - in our refusal to respond to the Fathers love. Our refusal never changes the Fathers love for us - as he loves unconditionally but it separates us from the father by turning our face from Him.

When we separate ourselves from God - it is not God who changes but we change.

"Sin sets itself against Gods love for us and turns our hearts away from Gods love" (#1885)

#2 Reconciliation is not only about forgiveness

When asked what one word people use most often to describe this Sacrament, the answer is forgiveness, but the author emphasizes the importance of this sacrament is to also be known as a sacrament of healing. When asked why most people often

come back confessing the same sins over and over, he conveys that there are lots of reasons, human weakness, or ones inclination to sin, but he also conveys that we only come back seeking to have our sins forgiven, not realizing that Our lord also wants us to come back seeking to be healed; to be healed of all the disordered desires and attitudes and to become free of all the wounds causing us to keep committing these sins. It is also a Sacrament that gives grace and Grace also heals.

Grace is referred to in the Catechism as the "free and undeserved help God gives us." The reason he gives it - is so we may become children of God. So Grace isn't just a help for us - it is a new way of life for us. Grace is "God's eternal life poured into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it." (1999)

The author summarizes his thoughts by conveying: the purpose of every sacrament is - to give grace and the purpose of grace is - to heal and sanctify - the ultimate goal of each sacrament is to heal us and make us holy - so we can become "like" God.

The image of Christ is not to be seen as a harsh judge but is to be seen as the great physician - who has the authority and power to heal both our bodies and our souls.

"He has come to heal the whole man, soul and body." (#1502, 1503)

#3 Your sin is different from my sin

We need to acknowledge our sinfulness - and not deny that we do sin and to know, "To whom much is given much is required." If we know we are sinners - we are half way there. St Paul tells us, "When we know our weakness then we become strong."

In the Gospel of John we read:

"To receive his mercy - we must admit our faults. If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1st Jn: 1-8)

Flynn tells us that, "One of the things that keep us from acknowledging our sins is our failure to acknowledge our God." He states, "The problem is not that people don't believe in God, it's - that many *religious practicing Christians* - are simply ignoring God."

Blessed Pope John Paul II writes:

"To sin is not merely to deny God. To sin is also to live as if He did not exist, it is to *eliminate Him* from one's daily life." (Reconciliation #18)

By depersonalizing our relationship with God, we end up losing the awareness of personal responsibility for our actions. Sin is real. We all do it. It happens when we turn our backs on God or live as if His existence has "no bearing" on our lives.

The church presents classification of sin (venial or mortal) as a guide, especially in forming our consciences, and learning what is right and wrong. The author also emphasizes that an action doesn't become a mortal or venial sin because of what it is - but rather because of what it does. God has poured his love into our hearts and we are called to live in that love and to express it through our actions and through charity. The Church teaches us that each venial sin wounds or weakens the charity inside us, but mortal sin doesn't merely wound charity, it destroys it. Did you ever notice that when you fall into serious sin, you become more impatient more unloving, more judgmental or more apathetic. This is because the charity in your heart has been destroyed. Fr Knight states: "Sin is failure to respond as we should."

#4 Confession is never really private

When you approach the sacrament - know that "I myself" am waiting for you. (Words of Jesus to St. Faustina - taken from her Diary 1602)

Though most of us are aware of the confidentiality of the sacrament and understand the importance of: "the Seal" of confession, it is also important for us to know the priest is not acting on his own in the sacrament, but rather he is acting in "Persona Christi" (in the person of Christ) Archbishop Jose' Gomez in his pastoral letter: "The tender mercy of our God, by his Ordination, the priest is granted Sacred Power to share in the Priesthood of Jesus Christ ... he is given a new and special character that enables him to act in "Persona Christi."

What we hear in confession then “are Christ’s own words of healing and pardon” John Paul II explained: “In the Sacrament of reconciliation we are invited to meet Christ personally.” He emphasizes that:

“Individual Confession is so necessary because it provides each of us with the opportunity - for a more personal encounter - with the crucified forgiving Christ with Christ saying through the minister of the sacrament ... your sins are forgiven; go and do not sin again.”

Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa challenges us: not to live confession as a “rite” a habit or a canonical obligation, but as a personal encounter with the risen one, who allows us like “Thomas” to touch his wounds , to feel in ourselves the healing force of his blood and taste the joy of being saved. Jesus said to St. Faustina, “Never analyze what sort of priest it is I am making use of, open your soul in the confessional as you would to me and I will fill it with my light.” (Diary 1725)

She continues, “When I left the confessional God’s presence penetrated me and I...discerned the Three Divine persons dwelling in me.” (Diary 175)

The author also challenges us not to say I want to go to communion – so I have to go to confession. He emphasizes, you don’t have to go, you Get to go. He calls it a “Gift, an incredible Gift – and if I am open to receive it – it will fill me with new joy, new hope, new life, new purpose new awareness of how loved I am by God.

The sacramental formula: I absolve you, the imposition of hands and the Sign of the Cross made over the penitent show that at this moment the contrite and penitent sinner comes into contact with the power and mercy of God. It is the moment that in response to the penitent, the Trinity becomes present to blot out sin and restore innocence. (31) *That they may be one Father as you and I are one.*

Fr. Tom Farrell
General Spiritual Advisor,
Widows of Prayer, Appleton, WI

**See the Fall / Winter 2014 issue
of the Widow’s Mite for
Part 2 of this commentary**

Making Promises



Franklin / Milwaukee area

June 4, 2014 – From left to right: Jan Gilberto wp (First Promise), Helen Krueger wp, Servant Leader, Joyce Eesley wp (Second Promise), and Fr. Aaron Eisch (Spiritual Advisor).



Franklin / Milwaukee area

July 9, 2014 – From left to right: Helen Krueger wp, Servant Leader, Carol Hopkins wp (Final Promise), and Fr. Aaron Eisch (Spiritual Advisor).

2013 Widow of Prayer Retreat Monte Alverno Retreat and Spirituality Center

The annual Chapter Meeting and Retreat for the Widows of Prayer was filled with many “bitter/sweet” moments this past year. The three-day event began with the election of officers for our apostolate. This was the first time in 19 years that Mary Reardon, Foundress of the Widows of Prayer would not be at the “helm.” She had said that it was time for a change. But it’s hard to fill her role as General Servant Leader. How does one fill the shoes of the person who founded a religious apostolate, developed it, implemented the creation of a perpetual adoration chapel, and worked to have Divine Mercy Sunday become one of the largest attended feasts at St. Pius X in the Appleton, WI area! The answer, you can’t. You do the best you can and pray a lot!

The three positions to be filled were for General Servant Leader, Assistant General Servant Leader and General Secretary/Treasurer. The members voted in Carlotta Stricker as General Servant Leader to take over for Mary Reardon; Catherine Fitzgerald was re-elected to her current role as Assistant General Servant Leader and Mary Reardon was elected General Secretary/Treasurer to replace Ann Ehnerd who held this position for two terms.

The 2013 retreat saw its highest number of attendees. This was due to Fr. Tom Farrell being the Facilitator. The theme for this retreat was “The Year of Faith.” A memorial service at the end of the annual chapter meeting was held to remember the 31 deceased Widows of Prayer. A blue tipped carnation for each of the deceased was placed in the chapel.

This was to be the final time we would gather as a group at Monte Alverno, due to its closing at the end of 2013. It has held many wonderful memories for us and will always hold a special place in our heart.

Archdiocese of Milwaukee (Milwaukee, WI)



Newly Ordained – May 17, 2014

Fr. John Gibson (back row), Fr. Nathan Miniatt (front row), Fr. Justin Lopina (back row), Archbishop Jerome Listeki (front row), Fr. Peter Patrick Kimori (front row), Fr. Jose Mario Nieto Restrepo (back row) and Fr. Gideon Buya.

Transitional Diaconate – April 26, 2014



From left to right: Deacon Dennis Saran, M.D., Bishop Emeritus Richard Sklba, and Deacon Maurio Fernandez Boscon.



The Joy of Being a Widow of Prayer

I am the Servant Leader for the Franklin-Milwaukee community of Widows of Prayer. I didn't think that I could be a leader, but with the help of God and other members, we have a joyful and prayerful group of widows.

We try to attend the ordination of our seminarians to the priesthood and sometimes are also able to attend their first Mass. This year seemed exceptional. Six of us representing the Widows of Prayer attended both the ordination and first Mass. Following the ordination, our group went to receive the blessing from the newly ordained priests. We introduced ourselves and they stated how grateful they were for all our prayers.

We were on our way to attend the first Mass for Fr. Peter Patrick Kimani from Kenya and got lost. But we managed to find the church in time and enjoyed the beautiful Mass and reception that followed. We met many wonderful people, including nuns from Kenya, Africa. The entire day was awesome and we didn't want it to end. As you can see, being a Widow of Prayer can be very rewarding

Helen Krueger, wp

Retreat for Widows • August 11-13, 2014

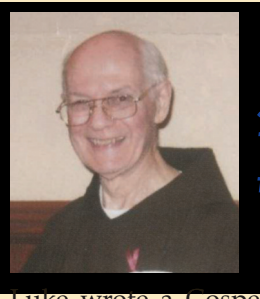
Capuchin Retreat & Spirituality Center – Washington, MI

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Includes: Conferences, daily mass, Healing Service, opportunity for confession and time for reflection and prayer.
Includes private room/bathroom and all meals.

Suggested Offering: \$160.00 per person

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Stretching Toward the Future

Luke wrote a Gospel for Theophilus (Lover of God)

Paul writes to the Romans to introduce himself. He is still introducing himself to us and therefore, also Jesus. St. Francis started a movement to heal the problems of his society (wars, wide gaps between rich and poor.) All three are still an inspiration to us this day. When we set out to solve a problem through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we may well be building something that will still inspire people a thousand years from now.

Speaking to the Widows of Prayer, and anyone who wants to be part of a spiritual movement, stretch out your arms as a blessing to the future! A new "spiritual movement," especially must be aware that it is a gift being offered to the Church and to the Lord. Make sure it is a worthwhile gift and that it will instruct the people of God for generations in the future. If your spiritual movement is worthy, it will continue to be worthy in the future. It may be applied differently in the future, but it will be so with thought and reference to those who began it.

Why does the Church canonizes founders/foundresses; they want to legitimize their dream so that others will take on that movement with confidence. So how are you intending on gracing the future (here I speak directly to the Widows of Prayer?)

For one thing, keep a journal of the activities of your members and yourself. The "people of the future" will want/need to know about you, especially if your movement is passed on to them. Keep a necrology of all your members who have died, listing their accomplishments and their virtues. Write down your thoughts and dreams about your order, this will be vital if your want your movement to survive. Be clear about your ideals and goals, this may become a sacred document for the Widows of Prayer who follow you. Outline your ministry

interests and how it is meant to solve some of the problems of your world.

In solving the problems of the present, we also build something for the future. The world will change, but a "spirit inspired" movement will be able to solve the problems for the future. The Holy Spirit is on your insignia; let him also be in your prayer. Select a few prayers to the Holy Spirit that all of you will pray together. Many voices speak louder than one voice. Agree to what will be the central focus of your prayers. You Insignia also invites you to pray to the Eucharistic Lord. You have made a special promise to Him. He will listen to you, count on it!

Before you make any serious decision, make a novena to the Holy Spirit, to Jesus and to Our Lady, or any saint you feel may be interested to hear your need. Remember, you are Widows of Prayer for all eternity! Build a prayer relationship with one of the deceased Widows of Prayer you feel was especially holy.

Don't make special decisions without some special help from heaven. That is what the Communion of Saints is all about. Your work MUST survive for the future. Be an inspiration to the future as the Order of Widows of the early Church has been an inspiration to you. The Order of Widows faded out after some five hundred years. I bet the last of those widows thought that their ideal was over and here it has survived! Good ideas die-hard and have a way of being resurrected when needed. The Order of Widows gave place to "cloistered orders" for women. That new style remained in effect for a thousand years.

As women were allowed to become more active in ministry, widows began to found religious orders or imbue the existing orders with a new spirit of ministry. Widows have been ministers to their families. They know how to be active in ministry to the Church.

But things change, and yesterday's orders may not fit tomorrow's needs, so new orders must rise to replace them. Remember, the "spirit of ministry" will always be there.

You are offering a new manner of ministry for a new Church and world need. The broader your focus, the longer you will survive. All orders are built around a need in society and the

Church. What are some of the "new needs," a truly holy clergy, more vocations, a movement that will fit well for all-of-the world? Every country on earth has holy widows. What you are building will fit all of them in some way. There is a need for bishops and priests to find support for their ministry. With the shortage of religious sisters, parishes need other dedicated helpers. You are called to be a "new" Ann Bat Phaniel who was in the temple day and night, being at the service of the parish and in prayer at all times.

You are called to support the clergy and challenge it to holiness. As Our Lady, the greatest widow of all, became the protector of the Church, so must you; her spiritual daughters do the same. Some bishops have already looked toward you for support. They need solid vocations. How might you help achieve that? Prayer, very serious prayers! Inspire the young, point to them and say, "You would make a great priest, religious!"

Consider a part in youth retreats. You have heard of godmothers, become a god-grandmother. It's important that you choose a ministry that fits properly for you. Don't feel obliged to serve, serve only as you are inspired. St. Paul claimed he was "all things to all men", but I suspect he was rather fooling himself. Broaden your perspective. If you pray that a young man will be a priest, you may inspire him to become the father of a priest instead. That works too!

This is not just for the Widows of Prayer, but also for everyone. Think of how you may answer the call to ministry. The future is yours. Build it up wisely! Save even just one-person from/for the world and you will have won your halo. Imagine entering heaven with a group of priests and religious that you helped win for the Lord! Then you will not be coming to the Lord empty-handed and you can bet He won't be empty-handed in welcoming you either.

Don't be afraid to become a saint! You can do it! Yes, YOU! Reach for the stars. That's the way to really becoming a "star" in this world. Not to mention what it will win you in the next!

Fr. John Guimond

***"He may have left us,
but his words remain..."***

Pray for Your Priest . . . All Priests!

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF

FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND



Diocese of
Green Bay



Ordained June 25, 2014

Archbishop Kevin C. Rhoades, ordained Fr. Zachary Barry



Ordained May 31, 2014

Left to right: Fr. Ryan Starks, Bishop David L. Ricken, Fr. Brian Wideman and Dcn. Edward Looney.

~ In Memory ~



Felice Alvarez wp
Fort Wayne, IN

To learn more about the Widows of Prayer, call:

Appleton, WI area — 920-733-2652
Franklin & Milwaukee, WI area — 414-858-9811
Madison, WI area — 608-845-9386
Huntington, IN area — 260-356-0919
Fort Wayne, IN area — 260-749-2726
Macomb, MI area — Kathleen Hurley — 586-949-1995
Utica, MI area — RoseMarie Miller — 586-799-4332

or website www.widowsofprayer.org

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Will You Help the Widows of Prayer?

The Widows of Prayer are growing in number with satellite communities in neighboring states and diocese. Our financial needs are growing as well.

Are you willing to support a new movement in the Church with your financial help? The Widows of Prayer is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Tax Deductible Charity. Cut off the bottom of this sheet, fill out and send along with your check to: Widows of Prayer, Inc., 1021 W. Windtree Dr., Appleton, WI 54914

Widows of Prayer Donation

Name: _____ Address: _____

I am willing to give: \$100 - \$75 - \$50 - \$25 - \$20 - \$10 - Other \$ _____

Any amount given will be greatly appreciated. Remember the Widows of Prayer in your will.