



Fraternity of Fatherhood

A Spiritual Fraternity for All Men

Volume 3

Issue 4

Dec 10, 2014

The Gift of One Act of Obedience

By: **Mike Allison**



On December 16, it will be three years since the Lord called Father Santan Pinto home to his heavenly reward. Father Pinto is the founder of the Disciples of Jesus and Mary formation program and of the Apostolate of the Fraternity of Fatherhood.

I often reflect on the many lessons the Lord has taught us through Father. It was by his willingness, humility and obedience to how the Lord directed him that so many blessings have been shared with us. One thing Father taught that always left an impression on me was what he called "obedience to relationships".

Father Pinto once wrote in a letter to those in discipleship Formation - *"Obedience to relationships within the laity is to be considered a means of doing what the Lord is asking in all things. Sometimes a person is asked to do something contrary to what one wants to do. This is always difficult, yet many times it is to develop character and trust in the Lord."*

(continued on page 8)

Allow God to surprise you this Christmas. On your part you must have great expectations. In your heart you must believe that God is truly your Father and there is none to compare when it comes to giving gifts ...

... God's gifts are countless and beyond our imagination. None can put a price to God's gifts and can anyone value it. In order to value something you must compare this gift with something. The gift is eternal and so must your gratitude be.

Fr. Santan Pinto 2000

The Advent Wreath

by **Brendan McVicker**

One of the greatest memories as a child for me was the Advent Wreath that filled the center of our dinner table. I remember my oldest sister, Maureen and my Mom, cutting the greens with the garden shears and the smell of evergreen branches filling the room. They had a knack for placing just the right clipping in the right spot on the wreath. Soon we had a beautiful Advent Wreath and we could hardly wait until dinner so us kids could fight over who gets to light the first candle...all great memories that I hold to this day. I always loved the Advent Wreath because it was always the first sign of Christmas in the house. It was a sign of anticipation, hope, wonder and joy and together all those things began to swirl around in my little head. Each week at Sunday night dinner when another candle was lit, anticipation for the big Christmas celebration grew stronger and stronger.

Well, I am not a child anymore but even now as a father of five, I feel the exact same feelings in my heart as we place the Advent Wreath on our table. And just as with me, my kids hearts grow with anticipation as each week passes, we light the next candle and recite the Advent prayer for the new week.

I know that with the Advent Wreath the kids anticipate the coming of Christ in the manger at Bethlehem, and so do I. But, as I have grown in my understanding, I also look to its greater significance. I also look to the future when Christ will come again. There is great hope. I ponder both Christ in the manger and Christ to come again. If we do this, then we can't help but think of the meaning of our



life. What is the purpose that Christ has for me in my life? What is His plan for me? Am I fulfilling His plan for me? I began to realize that everyday is an Advent. Everyday there is hope, wonder. Christ is accessible to me. The same Christ that was accessible to the shepherds in the manger 2000 years ago is accessible to us now. He really is! He is accessible to us. He wants to talk to us. Will you allow yourself to believe that? Just as the angel said, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy...You will find Him wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger". If we quiet ourselves, humble ourselves. If we approach with humility we will find Him. That is how the Shepherds approached. They quieted themselves, they humbled themselves, they approached with humility and they found Him. And the shepherds were amazed. And the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen. And the exact same gift is there for us today. The Lord is accessible to us and we can also return amazed and glorifying and praising God for all the things we hear and see.

You will return amazed! Just as Fr. Pinto says on the first page of this newsletter, "Allow God to surprise you this Christmas. On your part you must have great expectations". The greatest gift I ever received in my entire life was when I took Fr. Pinto up on his words. I allowed my heart to really believe that my God is there for me now, today. Just like for the shepherds, my Lord is accessible. I began to ponder Father's teachings on what purpose the Lord has for me in my life. What is His plan for me? Oh my gosh, I had no clue. The hope, wonder, the excitement over came me. I needed to find out. I began Fr. Pinto's formation program to begin to grow my spirituality. I first began learning how to pray and how to learn what plan the Lord has for me. What plan of life does He have just for me ...very exciting. The next steps in the formation journey were Discernment—which is to do everything according to the will of God and then the final step in formation is Discipleship, the guidance of following Jesus and Mary on a lifelong journey. This formation has made me

The Advent Wreath continued....

by **Brendan McVicker**

a better husband, better father, better brother, better friend and a better child of God. To this day, I continue to be formed in prayer, discernment and discipleship. I grow, and the Lord prunes. The Lord then helps me to grow more. Really it is a daily Advent for me now. It is daily hope, wonder and I know that my Lord is accessible to me. And I return amazed for all the things I have seen and heard.

Start your Advent Today! Merry Christmas.

Fr. Pinto's exact same formation that I completed is available for you also.

DJM means Disciples of Jesus and Mary

The purpose of DJM formation is to offer all people an on-going training program. This program enables all to grow spiritually and to work effectively in the world. It draws material from the Gospels, the teachings of the Church, and spiritual authors.

*The DJM program consists of two phases. The first is "**Beginning Formation**", and the second is "**On-going Formation**".*

DJM's beginning formation consists of three parts each with it's own book and guidance for you.

Prayer In Your Life (Usually 6 months) In "Prayer", you discover your plan of life and how to live it.

Discernment In Your Life (Usually 6 months) "Discernment" guides you with the tools to recognize God's will and shows you how to fulfill it

Discipleship Your Way Of Life (Usually one year) "Discipleship" guides you on a lifelong journey. This journey consists of following Jesus, together with Mary, and leads to union with the Blessed Trinity.

For more information: www.disciplesofjesusandmary.org or ask me directly via mcvickerfamily@comcast.net

- 1st CANDLE** – (purple) **THE PROPHECY CANDLE or CANDLE OF HOPE** – We can have hope because God is faithful and will keep the promises made to us. Our hope comes from God. (Romans 15:12-13)
- 2nd CANDLE** – (purple) **THE BETHLEHEM CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF PREPARATION** – God kept his promise of a Savior who would be born in Bethlehem. Preparation means to "get ready". Help us to be ready to welcome YOU, O GOD! (Luke 3:4-6)
- 3rd CANDLE** – (pink) **THE SHEPHERD CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF JOY** – The angels sang a message of JOY! (Luke 2:7-15)
- 4th CANDLE** – (purple) **THE ANGEL CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF LOVE** – The angles announced the good news of a Savior. God sent his only Son to earth to save us, because he loves us! (John 3:16-17)
- 5th CANDLE** – (white) **"CHRIST CANDLE"** – The white candle reminds us that Jesus is the spotless lamb of God, sent to wash away our sins! His birth was for his death, his death was for our birth! (John 1:29)





Portland, Oregon Men

....Our Fraternity meets every second Saturday of the month at St. Mary's Cathedral for 7:30AM Mass followed by our breakfast meeting at the Kingston Grill. We conclude at 9:30AM.

Our group consists of single and married men. Right now we are studying the "Carry Your Family In Your Heart" Fatherhood Guidelines. Contact Brendan 503-358-4963.

Come join us!

A Fraternity for All Men

The Fraternity of Fatherhood is for men of all ages. Our desire is to serve the Lord in all areas of our lives and to especially model our gift and responsibilities as fathers after the example of God the Father and His goodness. We support men; meeting them where they are. We engage in one-on-one friendships and provide opportunities for group activity, support and formation.

We entrust the Fatherhood Fraternity to the patronage of Saint Joseph.

Our Mission

To serve as men dedicated to the Lord in all aspects of our lives. To encourage and support men / fathers throughout the world in their gift and responsibilities as fathers. To encourage and support fathers "to respond" to their vocation, to protect and remain strong carrying their families in their hearts. Our desire is to be united to The Lord and fulfill our holy mission as fathers.

What is it we hope to do?

Bring men / fathers, closer to God by inviting them to learn their faith, challenging them to live their faith and encouraging them to love and share their faith. In addition, we invite those not married as this is a time to discern their vocation and calling in the Church.

As Fraternity of Fatherhood members, we are committed to grow and be formed spirituality, to support each other, to be active and supportive in our parishes. We are committed to learn who we are as Catholic men, to be discovered through our life experiences, prayer, studying Scripture and the documents of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, obedience to the Holy Roman Pontiff, our Roman Catholic Bishops and our parish Pastors. The formation of "Fatherhood" takes place in our hearts. Being a father means understanding that it is a call. When Fatherhood is received as a gift, it is accepted in humility and gratitude. Humility comes from the fact that we are weak. The pressures of the world are strong and flesh seems to have its way. Gratitude comes from the fact that the Lord is our Shepherd and He is with us always. With Him all things are possible.

Fraternity of Fatherhood—Group locations & Area Coordinators

Fr. Pinto has encouraged us to grow and expand the Fraternity of Fatherhood all over the world. He has granted us his permission, his blessing and he guides us spiritually. It is with this confidence that we now move forward with humility, obedience and docile hearts. If you are interested in joining a Fraternity of Fatherhood group or if you would like to start a group in your city contact Ray Emnace, Mike Allison, Stacey Hill or Brendan McVicker.

Arkansas

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Oregon

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Fraternity of Fatherhood—Sacramento

By David Allison

Although I've only been able to attend a handful of the Fraternity of Fatherhood monthly gatherings here in Sacramento, they have been well worth it. This month we read and discussed some of what it means to examine your conscience, not just moments before confession, but to make it a daily exercise of examining each area of your day to bring to light your temptations and ongoing struggles. Over time one can see things that need improving or the areas of growth in their life, instead of just, "what did I do wrong since my last confession?"

The discussions in our group have always left me with a desire to follow God more closely and I often see things in a way I hadn't. It's very encouraging to hear insight from, and to talk to men who are trying for holiness.

I hope to see you all at the next one!

Fraternity Sacramento Men ...

Meet every third Wednesday of the month.

We meet at Denny's in Orangevale at 7:30 pm.

Please contact Mike Allison with any questions at email address... (meallison5@gmail.com)

Hope you can join!



CARRY YOUR FAMILY IN YOUR HEART - A CALL TO HOLINESS

A husband/father's guide to his vocation and spiritual direction. Each Newsletter focuses on one of the Guidelines or Areas of Growth from the "Carry Your Family In Your Heart" book. These guidelines to our Fatherhood Vocation & Spiritual Formation have been formatted based on the Fatherhood Retreat Guideline Teachings & under Spiritual Direction of Fr. Santan Pinto, S.O.L.T.

MAN OF THE CHURCH

When we talk of church we mean our family. Not only the physical institution, but also the spiritual Church as well, all the angels, saints and souls in purgatory.

As a Man of the Church we are also members of a much larger spiritual family; a Church that extends from our immediate family to our parishes, to the saints, angels and souls in purgatory. Our spiritual family is there to pray for us, support us, and intercede for us. Ask for their help.

Remember you are "of the Father". When you are "of" something then being in harmony with that someone is your greatest joy; your greatest comfort. That's where true happiness is; in the Family of Our Father. You are part of this great family. So often we look to so many other places to find happiness, strength, hope when in fact all we have to do is learn and respond to the knock of the Spirit on our hearts. We need to learn to be silent and listen and the Spirit is there ready to direct you, teach you.

Prayer is the food for our spirituality. Through prayer and the sacraments we receive grace and we open our hearts to the work of the Holy Spirit. When we grow our spirituality, we begin to see the vastness and greatness of the Church family in which we belong. It is a treasure chest. We begin to see and recognize the power of intercession through the saints and the beauty of learning about their lives. We see that we are never really separated from our brothers and sisters in heaven and that we should ask for their prayers. We begin to see the many gifts in our Church on earth, the power and greatness of the papacy, and the scriptures are opened to our hearts and minds like never before.

Through prayer and growing our spirituality we become a "man of the Church" and we find ourselves clearly understanding Peter when Jesus said, "Do you also want to leave?" and Peter said, "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." God does not want his people to be fatherless. If the Church is to be called the Family of God would He expect it to get along without father figures. Jesus gave Peter the keys to the Kingdom. In the Catholic Church, God's family is maintained by the Popes – Holy Fathers – in unbroken succession going all the way back to St. Peter. Individual parishes have their priest fathers.

"For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven." (2 Cor 5:1)

Grandfathers

Wise Grandfathers Teach Others About Jesus Christ

"A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, And the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous." (Proverbs 13:22)

"But you must speak what is consistent with sound teaching. Older men are to be self-controlled, worthy of respect, sensible, and sound in faith, love, and endurance." (Titus 2:1-2)

"The father of one who is right with God will have much joy. He who has a wise son will be glad in him." (Proverbs 23:24)

Scripture Readings

Scripture Reading 1Cor 15:54-58

Victory over death comes through Jesus Christ. We must be firm then in our commitment and faith to Jesus Christ. Stay firm in following Jesus Christ our entire life. If we are devoted and steadfast our work is not in vain because Jesus did not die on the cross in vain. Stay the course of Jesus Christ.

Scripture Reading 2Cor 4:13-5:1

As believers we know that the One who raised Jesus Christ will raise us also with Jesus and we will be with Him forever. We understand that our bodies that can be seen may fail but with our faith, as men of the Church, who strive daily to grow in Jesus Christ, our inner self, our spirituality, which cannot be seen grows on. Our dwelling on earth may be destroyed but our dwelling with God in heaven is eternal.

Scripture Reading Phil 1:27-30

Paul tells us to stay steadfast in our faith. Do not waver. Conduct yourselves in ways worthy of the Gospel whether in public or private. Be an example to unbelievers. As believers we must also be ready to carry our cross and suffer for Jesus Christ.

Scripture Reading Mark 6:19-21

Herod feared John the Baptist because he knew he was righteous and holy. Even though Herod got angry when John spoke, Herod continued to listen. This was because John spoke truth. Herod knew John spoke the truth. As men of the Church we speak truth and although it seems many do not want to hear it just as Herod....their heart longs for it.

Scripture Reading Rom 8:14-17

As men of the Church we are led by the Spirit of God and are Children of God. We should have no fear but should cry "Father". As Children of God we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. If we suffer with Christ we shall also share in His glory.



The Gift of One Act of Obedience (continued from page 1...)

I'd like to share a personal story of such obedience that I learned about my own grandfather. His name is Ralph Allison. He is my dad's dad. He passed away when I was only five years old. Yet, I still have memories of him sitting in his arm chair usually reading and smoking his pipe. I would usually be found sitting at his feet.

Grandpa and grandma lived in Cincinnati Ohio. They raised five boys in a small house on Rutledge Street near St. Williams Catholic Church; the local neighborhood parish. My dad would tell me how parish life was so important to the Allison family. So many activities centered around the Church. Dad said my grandparents often had the parish priests over for dinner and all the boys were present. Dad and his brothers participated in sports, school activities, plays and altar servers. They also caused their fair share of trouble.

So, here's where the one act of obedience comes into play. This story was shared with me by my uncle and confirmed by my cousin on the trip I made to Ohio about a year ago. As I mentioned, the five Allison boys grew up in a very small house. Somehow grandpa had managed to save enough money for a down payment on a bigger house but in an area of town that would have moved the family outside of the parish boundaries of St. Williams parish.

My grandpa put the money down on the home and made all the arrangements to move. He then went to Father Reardon, the pastor of St. Williams to let him know that the family would soon be moving. Father Reardon's response was, to grandpas' surprise, "no". In obedience to the priest, my grandpa's response was, "yes Father". I was told that Father sat my grandpa down and showed him a city map. He drew a large circle defining the boundaries of St. Williams parish. He told Ralph the family could move anywhere inside the circle but not outside of the circle. Grandpa went to the realtor and explained that he had changed his mind and was not moving. The realtor was kind and gave him his money back.

This may sound dramatic but I attribute the blessing of my own life, my own family and the path of my own spirituality to this one act of obedience. Why? Because of the fruits. You see it was later at the Grotto at St. Williams Church where my dad proposed marriage to my mom. One of my dad's brothers became a priest and the chain of blessings has been endless. Had grandpa moved I would've never been given my life and would have never met my beautiful loving wife who helped straighten the path to God for me and my own family of three beautiful children and a grand daughter. I am forever grateful to her and to my grandfather.

Grandpas' "yes" to the Priest on that day over 70 years ago, just may have been the fulfillment of his life's mission in service of God.

Never underestimate obedience!



Illustration of Grandpa Allison by Alice Allison



POSTAGE

Fraternity of Fatherhood

**We entrust the Fatherhood Fraternity to the patronage
of St. Joseph.**



St. Joseph ...Pray For Us.



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To submit feedback and/or suggestions for future article topics, please email the editors,

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