



BECOMING BROTHERS

Summer 2014

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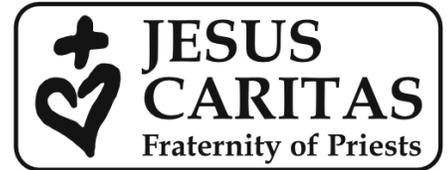
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FROM OUR NATIONAL RESPONSIBLE



Fr. Mark Mertes

Dear Brothers,

This will be the last newsletter that I will prepare as your National Responsible. It has been a great privilege, and quite a bit of fun, to serve in this role for the past 6 years. As I prepare to hand on the position to a new National Responsible this coming August 1, I'd like to share a few insights and observations from the past 6 years.

- Probably the first thing I've learned is that there is no wasted time in fraternity. It is all good! One might even say that fraternity is an absolute good. Any time spent driving to a fraternity day, or flying to a national meeting, or checking in on a brother, or sharing a meal at someone's rectory is sacred time. God works within human time and its limits to create liminal space, sacred space, so we can cross over into his life of resurrection.

- My favorite part of fraternity gatherings is... the hour of adoration. I certainly love the camaraderie, the meals, the shared passion for justice, but the time that moves me the most is when we sit, all of us just as we are, before the Eucharistic Lord and let ourselves be loved. I love that part!
- While the general population of priests in fraternity is getting older, there still is an active interest in Jesus Caritas Fraternity of Priests among young priests. Motivation for joining a Fraternity is different now than it was in the 1970's and 1980's. Where once our participation might have been guided by our desire to reform the church, or take a strong stand on issues of justice, I would observe that now brothers seek out fraternity to grow in their priesthood, or perhaps to just survive! The need for a shared common life for diocesan priests has never been higher and Jesus Caritas Fraternity of Priests is an excellent path to wholeness.
- Internationally, fraternities in Europe and North America are getting older while fraternities are significantly younger in Africa, Asia and South America. The numbers of brothers might be smaller in Asia, Africa and South America, but the desire to support one another and live simply with God's little ones, the *anawim* is great. Our current international Responsible, Aurelia Sanz Baeza is doing a wonderful job encouraging communication and sharing between our brothers around the world.
- I encourage us to keep inviting new priests to join our long standing Fraternities. A wonderful model is when a newly or recently ordained priest accepts an invitation from our more "mature" priests to be a part of their fraternity. I have observed this in several cases in my archdiocese and it is a great testimony to the authenticity of our call to be universal brothers. Sometimes a priest may say no the first time he is asked, and then in a few years seek out a group as he lives the challenge of the priesthood.

I'm more convinced than ever that Jesus Caritas Fraternity of Priests is the cure for what ails us: **Adoration** to slow us down so we can take a long loving look at the real, **Brotherhood** so we can set aside our tendency to go it alone and reach out to our brothers, and Charles' example of **Simple Living** which calls us to an ongoing examination of how we share the gifts we have received. May Christ be revealed ever more deeply to us in the simple... the hidden.. the ordinary, in Nazareth.

Peace!

Fr. Mark Mertes

Mark Mertes

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

2014 National Assembly
July 28 - August 1, 2014
Colorado Springs, CO



Visit our Facebook Page dedicated to the life and spirituality of Charles de Foucauld:

www.facebook.com/groups/62852414530/

We're online!!!

Visit us at:

www.jesus Caritas usa.org



DEATH OF MSGR. DES DILLON

We have received news that our dear brother in fraternity, Msgr. Des Dillon died on Friday, May 9, at the age of 99. Ron Belisle of our National Council was in attendance at Des' funeral which was attended by over 1500 people. Our prayers and heartfelt support go out to all members of his family, to St. Joseph Parish, and to all the presbyterate in the Yakima diocese. Des was ever young at heart, ever the apostle for Jesus Caritas, and always a man of prayer. No doubt Des will be forming fraternities upon his arrival at the pearly gates!



Monsignor Desmond Dillon of St. Josephs Catholic Church | TRI-CITY HERALD FILE

TOP 10 REASONS TO ATTEND THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WILL BE HELD FROM JULY 28 TO AUGUST 1, 2014 AT THE FRANCISCAN RETREAT CENTER
7740 DEER HILL GROVE, COLORADO SPRINGS, CO 80919 | [P] 719-955-7025

1. Daily prayer and adoration and repasts with like-minded brothers.
2. Nestled in the foothills of the Rockies just north of Colorado Springs, the Franciscan Retreat Center provides panoramic views of the Rampart Range, Mount Cedar, and Mount St. Francis.
3. Insights and inspiration offered by Bp. Felipe Estevez of St. Augustine
4. Go have a beverage at the famous Broadmoor Hotel
5. Pikes Peak and the Garden of the Gods!
6. Offer your input and discernment for the new National Responsible
7. Home of the US Air Force Academy
8. Colorado weather... average daily high on July 30 is 84° degrees, average low is 57° (This is not Kansas City in August!)
9. Cheyenne Mountain Zoo
10. Manitou Springs

If you haven't yet register for the National Assembly in Colorado Spring, please fill out the form below and send it to our National Office, along with your check payable to: **Jesus Caritas | PO BOX 763 | Franklin Park, IL 60131**

I will attend the National Assembly in July 2014, **enclosed is a check for \$380.**

I can't attend, but I would like to make a donation.

Please provide the following information:

Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone No.

Email:

Airline:

Arrival Date & Time:

Flight #:



JESUS CARITAS: REFLECTION

This is a reflection from a fraternity brother on possible ways to introduce Jesus Caritas Fraternity of Priests to others:



For some time our fraternity had talked about how we might introduce more priests to the Jesus Caritas experience. As the fraternity has been so important in my own life, I finally took the initiative. I put some thoughts on paper, and shared them with the group for feedback. We alerted the Vicar for Clergy who put it in the monthly newsletter and came to the gathering.

For starters, I extended an invitation to the priests during our biennial convocation. We had prepared sheets for each table with the date, time and other details. We sent a letter to each priest ordained in the past 10 years inviting them to come. We promised that they'd be in and out in two hours.

We divided the afternoon into a brief orientation and description of our group's experience, a sort of testimony from one member about how we began. We described what happens at our monthly meeting (adoration, preparing the review, breaking open the Word, sharing review, closing with the Prayer of Abandonment). We talked a little bit about the national and international elements of the fraternity.

We then gave them questions to help each participant prepare a review. Those we used originated with Martin Drinan, a Kilkenny priest of the fraternity:

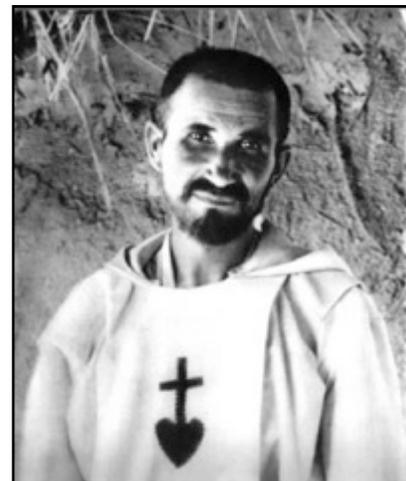
1. What is the principal "fact" in my life since we last met?
2. How does this move me to thanksgiving to God?
3. How does it move me to follow more closely in Jesus' footsteps?
4. What role does the fraternity play in any of this?
5. What questions remain for the future?

Participants then went and spent 30 minutes before the Blessed Sacrament. During this time, they prepared their review. At the end of the half hour we returned to the original meeting room which was large enough to break into groups of about five. Each table had a fraternity member who would go first, sharing his review. Others could then do the same. We had emphasized the importance of respecting confidentiality, and how we understand that. We asked participants to commit themselves to that confidentiality for that conversation. We had 40 minutes for the shared reviews.

At the end of the sharing period, we came back together to answer questions. We said that we would be happy to come to a first meeting to help get started. We shared e-mail addresses so they could contact one another about getting together. We encouraged them to be inclusive. We stressed that they could invite others who had not been present for this introductory experience. We closed with the Prayer of Abandonment. We gave them a couple of articles about the Review of Life, and copies of the Prayer of Abandonment as they left.

In full disclosure, we had about 15 men present. While we might wish the crowd had been greater, we're grateful for those who came. Two were foreign-born who had some experience of fraternity in their native country. Two were religious, working in parishes. A few who had signed up but couldn't come, asked for contact information. We're glad we did it. That we gave the brothers an experience of a fraternity meeting seemed helpful (rather than simply describing the elements). We offered to present something similar to seminarians, but have not organized anything like that yet.

As I mentioned at the Convocation when I first extended the invitation, I am a happy priest in large measure because I have been a member of the Jesus Caritas fraternity since shortly after I was ordained. I daresay I'm still a priest because of that relationship. So, my experience teaches me that, in these times when brothers are more isolated, and facing greater demands, Bl. Charles' spirit has much to offer them.



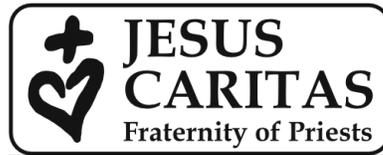
Bro. Charles de Foucauld



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JESUS CARITAS 2014 DUES - \$50

If you haven't already sent in your dues, please fill out this form and send it to our National Office: PO BOX 763 | Franklin Park, IL 60131

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

NO CHANGES

NEW MEMBER TO JC

➤ Please make checks payable to 'Jesus Caritas'

➤ Please fill out and return this form with any corrected changes. **(Please print)**

Name: _____

(Arch)Diocese: _____

Mailing Address 1: _____

Mailing Address 2: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip code: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____