



FROM OUR NATIONAL RESPONSIBLE

Dear Brothers,

As I write you I have completed my sabbatical at the Vatican II Institute in Menlo Park, California. I am in transition back into parish life after 5 years of having been Servant Minister to Priests in my diocese. Before I began my sabbatical I was able to be with Dan Danielson and 25 brother priests from northern California for a regional gathering at Los Gatos. What a great gift it was to be with these brothers for their days together. It was also great that Joe Greeley who is on my council was also able to be at the gathering. Dan has written up an article about the event that is included in this newsletter. I would certainly encourage priests in different parts of the country to organize such gatherings. If you have had or will be having gatherings in your areas would you also consider writing up the events and sharing them with us in this newsletter? We are all strengthened when we hear from each other.

The Jesus Caritas National Office is now set up in Chicago. Besides helping with office details, materials and communications, the office will also be handling the printing and mailing of our national newsletter. I certainly want to thank Dan Butler for his help with the printing and mailing of our national newsletter, previously. I think he said he helped put out a baker's dozen! Thanks, Dan for your service to the Fraternity.

Plans are moving ahead for the Month of Nazareth, the Retreat, and the Triennial Assembly all to be held in Spokane. Take time to fill out the registration form included in this newsletter as soon as possible so that preparations can continue.

I received a letter from Bishop Skylstad in response to our letter of concern on behalf of priests during this time of the Charter and Norms that affects us as priests. He heard our concern and will forward the letter to the committee that is looking at possible modifications to be considered at the June meeting of the Bishops.

Mariano Puga, our international responsible, has asked all fraternities to share on questions in preparation for the international assembly. A list of the questions are included in this newsletter. I would appreciate any summaries you or your fraternities could forward to me so that I can put them together in a synthesis report for a continental meeting to be held in Paris this August.

The beatification of Brother Charles originally to have been May 15 has been postponed due to the death of Pope John Paul II. Stay connected to Catholic news services to get word when Pope Benedict XVI will be rescheduling this event. I received word that John Coffield a long time member of Jesus Caritas has died. His involvement in pastoring the social justice aspects of the Gospel in southern California left an impact on many. And a final word of congratulations to Des Dillon on his 90th birthday! Thanks so much for your many years of life in support and advancement of the Fraternity.

Your brother,

Richard



TRIENNIAL ASSEMBLY

Dan Danielson will be the presenter at the upcoming Triennial Assembly to be held August 1-5, 2005 in Spokane. Dan will speak on Tuesday and brings with him much experience with the Fraternity. He is the 'Johnny Appleseed' of Fraternity in our country.

There will be time at the assembly on Wednesday for regions to gather to discuss ways to support priests in Fraternity in their respective areas and to select regional and/or diocesan responsables to help strengthen the work of the national Fraternity.

Thursday will be a Desert Day and will conclude with the election of a new national responsible. Friday will conclude the assembly with sharing from a Little Sister of Jesus, news of the international Fraternity, and words from the new national responsible.

Make plans to attend now by sending in the enclosed registration form found in this newsletter.

FRATERNITY RETREAT

The Fraternity Retreat for participants of the Month of Nazareth and other priests in Fraternity will be held July 25-29, 2005 in Spokane. Fr. Paul Bernier, s.s.s Paul is presently editor of *Emmanuel* magazine, a journal of Eucharistic theology. He has authored several books and has given approximately 100 retreats to priests and bishops and led numerous conferences. He has ten years of missionary experience in the Philippines and has been active in his order's administration. Plan to attend this retreat by sending in the registration form in this newsletter.

MONTH OF NAZARETH

Fr. Don Dunn will be the director for the Month of Nazareth to be held July 4-July 29 in Spokane. Don has coordinated the Month several times. He brings with him an appreciation of the charisms of the Fraternity and the blessed gift of time to be with brothers who are searching to deepen their commitment to the Lord and to the priesthood. Several places are still open. Don can be reached at 411 Lakewood Circle, A-807, Colorado Springs, CO 80910, phone 719.473.8575, email donaldf@msn.com or ddunn@stmaryscathedral.org.

REPORT ON THE JESUS CARITAS FRATERNITY GATHERING OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA HELD AT LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA, JANUARY 17 – 19, 2005

Submitted by Dan Danielson, Northern California Convener

This is the second regional gathering (Northern California) of Jesus Caritas that we have had in the last two years. These were the first regional gatherings that we have held since the early 1970's. It's about time! We have not always had Diocesan Responsibles during most of that time, though there were always people to help new groups get started.

The first difficult task was to find out where the Jesus Caritas groups were and who was a member of them. By a lot of phone calls and one person leading to another, I found thirteen priest groups and one bishops group that call themselves Jesus Caritas. There are many kinds of support groups around so the designation is not always too clear, particularly when the priests have only a passing acquaintance with Charles de Foucauld and his spirituality.

There were 21 priests who attended the first regional meeting [in 2004]. It began with dinner, Monday, President's Day (to make traveling easier) and lasted until after lunch on Wednesday. We spend most of our time sharing about our experiences. We delved into how we do the Review of Life, how our meeting day is structured, what the Fraternity has meant in our lives. At the end of that first gathering, we decided to meet in the following year (2005), but also to invite priests who might be interested in Jesus Caritas but who were not presently in a Fraternity to attend if they wished.



That is the regional meeting we have just concluded. At this meeting we took a somewhat different focus. We spent the time looking into and experiencing some of the main aspects of the spirituality of Brother Charles. We talked about and experienced in small groups, "standing under" the Scriptures. We talked about and experienced an afternoon in the desert. We fortunately had our National Responsible and our Regional Responsible with us for most of the meeting and they shared the experience of Jesus Caritas around the country and the world, as well as something of the other family members of Brothers Charles. There was a display of books and articles available to everyone and a chance for priests interested in the fraternity to talk about how they might go about getting a fraternity started. This meeting lasted from lunch on Monday (again a holiday - Martin Luther King, Jr.) to make driving easier and lasted until after lunch on Wednesday. There were 19 priests of the Fraternity present and six priests not presently in a fraternity.

It was decided that I would seek out Diocesan Responsibles in each diocese now and to have another Regional Gathering in two years, again inviting all priests to attend who might be interested in the Fraternity. To prepare for this 2005 gathering, I sent letters to each Bishop of the Region asking them to send the letter I enclosed to each priest of their diocese. Some of the bishops, almost all of whom are in a bishop's fraternity themselves, did so. That is how the word got out to priests not presently in Fraternity.

One of the great benefits of having such a gathering as this is just to spend time with other priests dedicated to their ministry, to their on-going search for a more authentic life as a priest. It is inspiring to spend the Hour of Adoration together, to support one another in a Day in the Desert (sometimes the first experience of a priest in Fraternity). It was a great encouragement for some to consider the Month of Nazareth and a yet deeper experience of the brotherhood and of the spiritual insights of Brother Charles. It is challenging for us to not become too complacent with our habitual way of conducting our Day of Review, but to hear and to consider some other experiences, often in deeper ways.

I think all of us came away spiritually renewed, encouraged and somewhat challenged. (If you would like to have a copy of the schedule outline used for this event to assist in planning a similar event contact the national office.)

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Your Help Requested In the Planning for the 2006 International Assembly

Mariano Puga, our International Responsible, and his international council has asked that fraternities throughout the world respond to the following questions to provide input for the international assembly, which will be held in the Philippines in 2006.

1. How does our life in Fraternity help us to live poorly, "for the sake of Jesus and the Gospel", close to the poor and to embrace the cause of the poor?
2. What experience of enculturation of the Gospel, in the Spirit of Nazareth, can we share at political, religious, ecumenical, and pastoral levels?
3. How can we transform our Fraternities into real schools of Universal Brotherhood?
4. Faced with a certain aging in some of our Fraternities what suggestions can we humbly dare to offer?
5. What suggestions do we have to make our Fraternities into real "Schools of Prayer"? (Contemplation, Gospel meditation, Eucharistic adoration, Desert spirituality, Spiritual discernment)
6. What can we do to turn "life evaluation" into the "Sacrament" of our Fraternity?
7. Do our retreats and meetings enrich our brotherhood? What initiatives do we take with regards to brothers who are more isolated and with members who have left? What are our personal and Fraternity relationships with brothers and sisters of the "Spiritual Family of Brother Charles de Foucauld"?
8. What subject does your Fraternity propose to our International Assembly in 2006?

Summations of your discussions are to be sent to the national office and they will be used for a synthesis report that is to be given at a continental meeting in Paris this August.



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We're on the Web!

See us at:

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Deadline for next newsletter: June 1, 2005. Consider sending along a digital photo to make your article more interesting. Email your articles and / or pictures for the newsletter to bojovic@nfpc.org.

The International Service Team's website is: <http://jesuscaritas.org/english.html>

Effective July 1, 2005

The new home office for Jesus Caritas / National Federation of Priests' Councils will be:
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