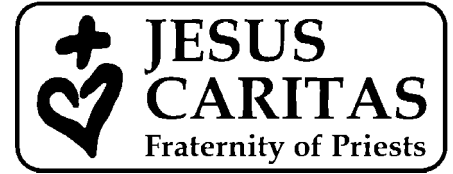




BECOMING BROTHERS

SUMMER 2005



FROM OUR NATIONAL RESPONSIBLE

Dear Brothers,

I have received word that Joe Kelbel, who has been the editor of the international newsletter, Be Brothers, has a fatal liver disease and will be entering hospice in mid-July. Let us keep Joe in our prayers as he prepares for death. Joe also shared his terminal situation with us in the most recent issue of Be Brothers where he mentions gratitude for his 25 years of priesthood and quotes from Brother Charles: "The more we lack in this world, the more surely we discover the best thing the earth has to offer us: The Cross."

Thank you, Joe for your life, priesthood, and brotherhood.

You have no doubt already heard that the recent meeting of Bishops in Chicago chose to leave the charter and norms for the protection of children as they had been adopted in Dallas with only minor changes. This is disappointing to many of our brothers since we realize that some priests are being treated unjustly and not given due process when accusations are made. Cardinal George stated that the policy needs to be left as is so that the credibility of the bishops be strengthened. It does seem that in this credibility strategy set up by the charter and the norms the rights of priests are vulnerable. It is hopeful and encouraging to hear how priests are being supportive of accused priests during this time. Many fraternities keep their groups open and welcoming to priests who have been put on administrative leave. Others make efforts to also visit brother priests who are in jail because of convictions. These are the true brotherly responses to brother priests in need that are at the core of our Fraternity of priests.

A recent communication from Mariano Puga, our international responsible, mentions that a continental meeting to be held in preparation for the 2006 international assembly will now occur in November (instead of August) to coincide with the beatification of Brother Charles. It also mentioned that the international assembly is now being planned in Brazil in November of 2006 rather than in the Philippines as previously planned.

I am looking forward to meeting the brothers who are completing the Month of Nazareth when I attend the Jesus Caritas retreat and the upcoming assembly in Spokane. Keep those brothers completing the Month, those participating on the retreat, and those attending the assembly in your prayers.

Peace,

Richard



LETTER CONCERNING THE BEATIFICATION OF BROTHER CHARLES

Dear Amis,

A message from the Chancery of State has just made me know that the Holy Father decided that the ceremony of Beatification of Charles de Foucauld will take place in Rome, in the basilica Saint-Peter, Sunday, November 13th. He will be beatified with two brothers who belong to an Italian congregation. I ask you to be so kind as to note this date and to make it known with the people whom you consider eager to take part in this beatification.

Precise details will be given to you later on about the preparation and the organization of this ceremony. By transmitting this good news to you, I invite you to thank the Lord who will make us live this event on Sunday, November 13th, when the liturgy invites the Christians to carry their glances towards the return of the Lord. I assure you of my quiet fraternal feelings.

Msgr. Maurice Herdsman
Postulator Causes Canonization of Charles de Foucauld

QUOTE FROM FATHER PAUL BERNIER, S.S.S.

Our hands are not meant to be out so much to receive as to give. Whatever we receive from Christ is not meant primarily for ourselves. It is meant to be given to our sisters and brothers in the Lord. Christ depends on us to become channels of his grace and love to others. We are the means he uses to extend his reconciliation and forgiveness to the world. Our participation in each Eucharistic celebration joins us in solidarity with Christ in his redemptive mission. Unless we bind ourselves to Jesus in this way, Christ's people will go hungry. And it will be our fault. (Father Bernier will be the retreat director July 25 – 29 in Spokane.)

JESUS CARITAS RETREAT TO BE HELD IN NORTH DAKOTA

A Jesus Caritas Retreat will take place at Sacred Heart Monastery at Richardton, North Dakota, August 7th – 9th. It will begin at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, August 7th and conclude at 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 9th. Cost is \$75.00. The monastery will consider whatever offering you can afford if the \$75.00 presents a hardship. If you wish to arrive for supper on Sunday, August 7th, they would like you to call ahead to inform them of this (701.974.2121). The retreat will consist of presentations from the Directory for Jesus Caritas, a daily Holy Hour, Mass, Divine Office and time for faith sharing. Presentations will be done by local priests. Mark your calendars. For questions or to register call Father Bruce Krebs (701.255.4878) or email: bkrebs806@yahoo.com.

ANYONE INTERESTED IN HELPING LEAD A JESUS CARITAS RETREAT?

A recent email from Fr. John Jaquel from Erie, PA reported that their priests had a recent diocesan gathering of five fraternities. It was an overnight and well attended. He is looking for a fraternity priest to help their diocese with retreats for priests in his diocese. If you or someone you know might be interested please contact John at ololake@velocity.net

FRATERNITY ENCOURAGES PRIESTLY FORMATION

By Pat Hennessy
(From The Fairfield County Catholic, March 2005)

"Every day we're called to be ministers to God's people, but we need to be ministered to also," says Father Lawrence Carroll, pastor of Saint Pius X Paris in Fairfield. "The deepest understanding of what you do and what you go through comes from another priest who's gone through the same journey."

Priestly Support

The Diocese of Bridgeport provides support for its priests in a variety of ways. The convocation planned for this October will bring all the priests of the dioceses together for a time of fraternal renewal, and priest study days are scheduled throughout the year. In addition, a number of small groups throughout the diocese give priests this chance to pray together, share the burdens of their lives, and enjoy company and camaraderie together.

One such group has just observed its 25th anniversary. Since the fall of 1979 a small group of priests has met once a month for Eucharistic prayer, review of life and social time together. Called the International Fraternity of Jesus Caritas, it is part of an international organization of diocesan priests inspired by the life and witness of Charles de Foucauld. It calls priests to develop a close relationship with the Blessed Sacrament, a simpler material life-style, and an active concern for the poor.

Father Gerald Devore, parochial vicar of Saint Francis of Assisi Parish in Weston, brought the International Fraternity of Jesus Caritas to this diocese after an academic sabbatical at the University of Notre Dame in 1978. "I was impressed by the support dimension," he says. "It can combat the sense of isolation priests experience." Priests are not very good at self-care he adds. "Our focus is on taking care of other people."

Priests take turns hosting the monthly meetings. After a friendly lunch together they center on a Holy Hour with the Blessed Sacrament. The hour begins with lectionary readings for the coming weekend, followed by a time of silent reflection.

"The praying together and the relationship to the Blessed Sacrament are essential," Father Devore stresses. "Otherwise it's just a counseling session. This is about our relationship with the Lord."



Desert Day

After the Holy Hour each priest takes a turn reviewing his life for the past month. This is central to the spirituality of the Jesus Caritas fraternity. "Each month we commit ourselves to a Desert Day before the meeting, to spend time reflecting on the past month, whether it be ministries, family, health – the whole gamut," explains Father Carroll. "It's all that's affecting us, whatever is on our minds and hearts."

The reflection may take in high points of the past month, or ongoing concerns. His brother priests respond with encouragement and suggestions. "Everybody has good days and bad", says Father Devore. "I'd like to tell you how the grace of God is working in my life, and ask how you can help me to change, to add, to grow."

Never Alone

The evening concludes with Vespers and dinner. Although they may face challenges in the coming months, the men know that they are never really alone. "Priests know that their brothers in Fraternity of Jesus Caritas always have them in prayer, and are only a phone call away at any time," says Msgr. Stanley Rousseau, diocesan director of the Society of the Propagation of the Faith.

In the course of the 25 years since Father Devore introduced Caritas to this diocese, 17 priests have participated in the fraternal group. The fraternity now includes Father Carroll; Father Devore; Msgr. Rousseau; Father Barry Furey, pastor of Saint Thomas More Parish in Darien; Father John Gilmartin, pastor of Our Lady of Peach Parish in Stratford; Father Thomas Lynch, pastor of Saint James Parish in Stratford; and Father John Baran, pastor of Saint Anthony Parish in Fairfield.

For all of those years, the monthly Jesus Caritas meetings have been a powerful blessing in their daily lives. "It has encouraged us as men, as priests, and as Christians," says Father Devore.

[Editor's note: This article appeared in the Bridgeport, CT diocesan newspaper. It is reprinted to encourage other fraternity groups to share their experiences with others in and out of fraternity.]

WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT

The office was forwarded several articles from newspapers in southern California which paid tribute to Msgr. John Coffield who died in February. He had been a member of Jesus Caritas Fraternity of Priests for many years and delighted many brothers with his presence at various fraternity gatherings. His vigil was held at San Felipe de Jesus and his funeral was held at the Mission Basilica San Juan Capistrano. Following is an excerpt from one of the articles that was in the Los Angeles Times.

Retired Msgr. John V. Coffield, who devoted his more than six decades as a priest to social activism on behalf of the poor and disenfranchised, even at the cost of alienating church superiors in the 1960s, has died. He was 91.

Coffield's activism began in the 1940s, when the Spanish-speaking parish priest affectionately known as "Juanote" (Big John) led residents in helping improve living conditions in the El Monte barrio called Hicks Camp. In the '60s, he marched with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma, AL, and supported Cesar Chavez's drive to unionize migrant farm workers in California.

Over the decades, Coffield led residents of Los Angeles and Orange counties' barrios to fight city and county officials for better schools, housing, parks and trash collection. His outspoken positions on racial and other civil rights matters led to frequent reprimands from the church in the 1960s.

In 1964, he clashed with Cardinal James Francis McIntyre, then head of the Los Angeles Archdiocese, over Coffield's campaign against Proposition 14, a ballot measure to repeal the Rumford Fair Housing Act, which banned discrimination in the sale or rental of most housing. The measure passed, and Coffield went into self-imposed exile from the diocese as a protest for being, as he put it in a Times interview, "ordered to maintain silence on racism." He spent the next four years in parish and social work in the Archdiocese of Chicago and in Oklahoma, where he ministered to migrant farm workers.

Returning to California in 1968 after Proposition 14 was declared unconstitutional by the California and U.S. supreme courts, Coffield vowed to once more become involved in civil rights causes and to support "Cesar Chavez and his grape pickers in their struggle for dignity and justice."

"In those days," Chavez recalled in a 1991 interview with The Times, Coffield "was miles ahead of the church hierarchy in terms of human rights and labor rights, the things we take for granted today. He is a great advocate, truly living the Gospel."

Assigned to be pastor at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church-Delhi in Santa Ana in 1969, Coffield continued working with the poor and helped found the Santa Ana Organizing Committee, which lobbied the city for better services for its Latino community. Amin David, former chairman of the committee and president of Los Amigos of Orange County, a social issues advocacy group, once called Coffield "the closest thing Orange County has to angels or Mahatma Gandhi or Cesar Chavez." [Dennis McLellan, LA Times Staff Writer]



Jesus Caritas Fraternity

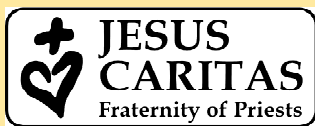
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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.rc.net/org/jesucaritas



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GENERAL INFORMATION

Deadline for next newsletter: September 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 is:
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