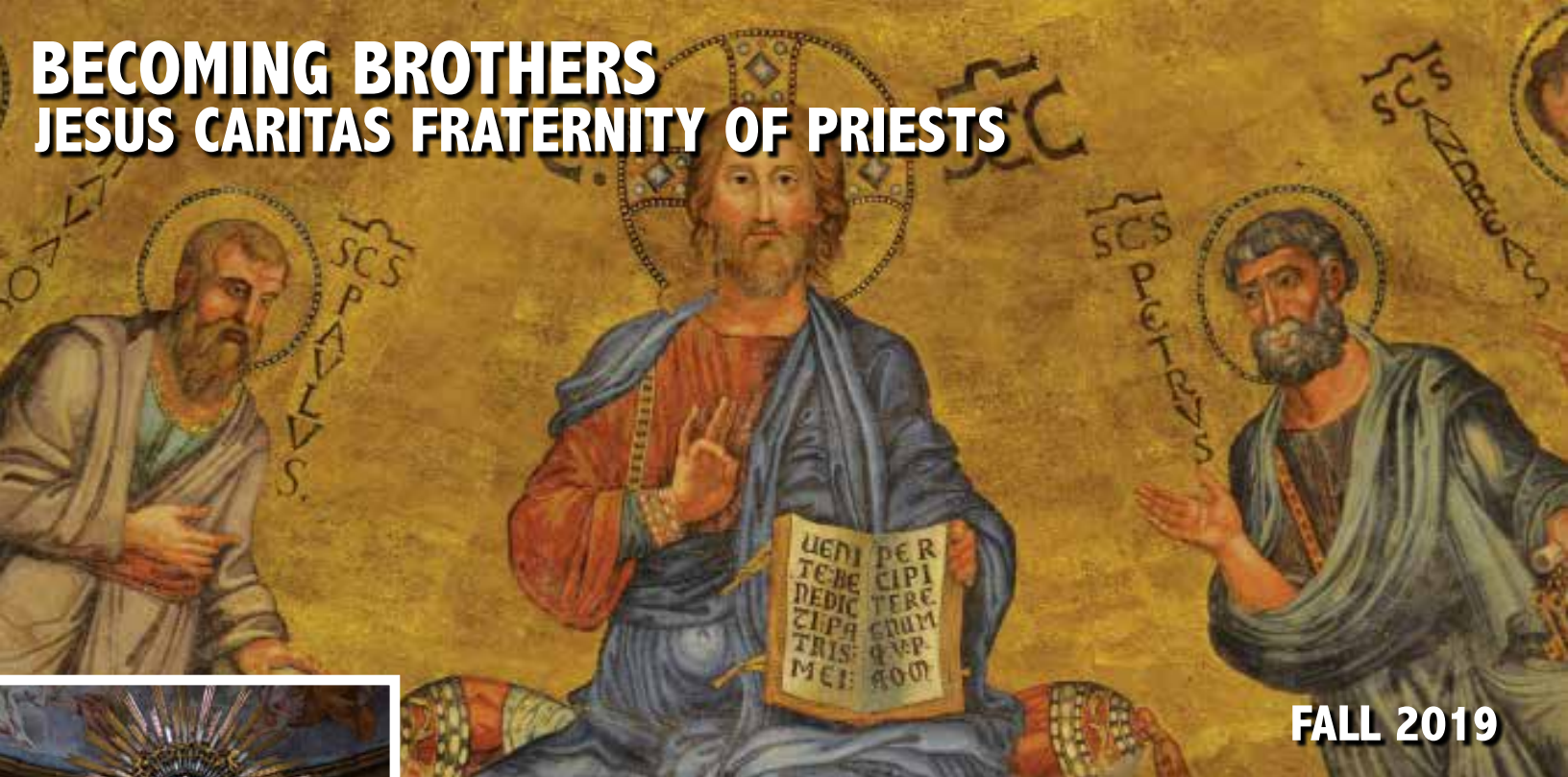


BECOMING BROTHERS JESUS CARITAS FRATERNITY OF PRIESTS



FALL 2019



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From the Responsible

Dear Brothers and Friends of the Fraternity,

Most Southern Baptist men have a wonderful aptitude to offer a prayer of blessing before a meal. Having ministered in the South for over a quarter century, I've learned from them. I begin by rejoicing in the joys of the day: the beauty of creation and the good weather, the reason for the gathering, the generosity of our host, etc. I conclude with our traditional Catholic grace with all the Catholics present proudly chiming in. It has worked well over the years. As we all do well in the month of November to meditate on the many reasons we have to give thanks.

G.K. Chesterton once said: "When it comes to life the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude." Gratitude opens our hearts to God and to others. Gratitude makes us more fully human. Gratitude sets our minds on eternity. When we walk through life with a grateful heart, it draws us deeper into the Mystery of God's love.

The Ragan family has some decades old traditions in celebrating Thanksgiving. I rejoice in being able to make the annual pilgrimage home to celebrate the love and support of my family. I rejoice that one of my



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Universal Brother AWARD

The Universal Brother Award is presented by the Jesus Caritas Fraternity USA at its annual gathering to a Diocesan priest who exemplifies the spirituality of Blessed Charles de Foucauld and has discovered through his message a way of living the Gospel more fully to the ends of the earth, in fraternal sharing with his brother priests, in caring for the least among us, and in silent adoration of our Eucharistic Lord. We were happy to announce on October 15th during the National Retreat that this year's recipient is Fr. Jim O'Donnell. Unfortunately, on his way to the National Retreat, Jim fell ill, so John Jacquel delivered the award to Jim on his way home from the Retreat.

Fr. Jim O'Donnell was ordained a priest in 1956 for the Diocese of Cleveland. His spiritual journey has led him through parish work and youth ministry. He served as the director of CYO for several years. For six weeks in 1974 he worked in India with Mother Teresa. Jim also spent time with Jean Vanier, the founder of l'Arche communities, and through that friendship was instrumental in establishing the l'Arche homes in Cleveland. Jim also was inspired by another Canadian, Fr. Jacques LeClerc who brought the fraternities of Brother Charles to the American continent by way of Montreal. Jim in turn established both lay and priest fraternities in Cleveland. For many years he has been the responsible for the October Jesus Caritas Retreat for Northeast Ohio.

Until recently, for 32 years, Jim lived and worked in the inner-city Central neighborhood in Cleveland, He, along with little sister Maggie Walsh-Conrad, formed the Community of the Little Brothers and Sisters of the Eucharist, to provide a ministry of presence to the poor of the neighborhood. The Community was instrumental in bringing Habitat for Humanity to the Central neighborhood which sparked a transformation of the area to include nearly 600 new homes. During these years, Fr. Jim also served as the Catholic Chaplain to the Northeast Prerelease Prison for Women.



Fr. Jim will often refer fondly to "his children", which is usually and understandably a surprise to people that don't know him – but as the years have gone by, Jim often forgets this and casually speaks of the foster children he has helped raise as if they were his own blood. The idea for a foster program started about 40 years ago. Little sister Maggie asked Fr. Jim if he would be open to taking in some foster children. He recalls, "there were too many of

these kids being hurt, and perhaps we can help them in some way. So that's how it began." Through the years and his work at Little Brothers and Sisters of the Eucharist (formed by Sister Maggie and himself) and the Central City Ministry with the Poor, Fr. Jim and Sister Maggie have helped raise 14 children into adulthood.

The Universal Brother: Charles deFoucauld Speaks To Us Today

Little Sister Kathleen of Jesus

(New City Press, Hyde Park NY.)

The author states that she felt the heartbeat of Brother Charles deFoucauld in the Frigate, his curiously shaped 49' x 6' hermitage in Tamanrasset. Little Sister Kathleen allows us to share a like experience in her text THE UNIVERSAL BROTHER. She served on the formation team of the Little Sisters with travels throughout the world.

This is no card-board saint she presents, but a backdoor convert and modern mystic. A man so obsessed with his mission that he fretted over the minutiae of the religious order he designed on paper. A patriot in a colonial endeavor that now brings shame. A strategist who could vehemently condemn slavery in Beni-Abbes, but pastorally and prudently downplay it at Tamanrasset. A man so in love with the people among whom he lived that he would travel to France to learn how to knit so he could teach his charges how to make winter clothing -- although himself not adept at it. "Me, gazelle! Him, slug!" Moussa in his broken French commented on his teacher's skill.

The heartbeat we feel as we page through this narrative is not in imitation but rather in the call to abandonment. The author pounds home the point that this is "the essence of his spirituality." Its fruit is in the apostolate of friendship. In a Moslem world it was witnessing more than conversion although the change he effected in Moussa was to turn him from a thieving marauding desperado into a better and more moral Moslem. Would that still work, we question, in today's terrorist-infused Islamic world.

2019 Donors

Mobile - Rev. Augustine J. Moore	Peoria - Rev. Greg Nelson	Newark - Rev. Richard M. Liddy
Phoenix - Msgr. George Schroeder	Archdiocese of Indianapolis -	Paterson - Rev. William Cramer
Los Angeles - Msgr. Joseph F. Greeley	Fr. Julian Peters - Director	Santa Fe - Rev. Juan Mendez
Los Angeles - Rev. Tim Klosterman	Kansas City Kansas - Rev. John C. Reynolds	Brooklyn - Dr. Christopher Lee Coleman
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Denver - Rev. Robert Kinkel	Archdiocese of St. Louis, Missouri -	Cleveland - Rev. Robert J. Sanson
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Wilmington, DE - Rev. John Hynes	Great Falls - Billings - Rev. Richard J. Schlosser	Cleveland - Rev. Ron Szudarek
Boise - Rev. Leslie P. Kish	Bismarck - Rev. Paul Cervinski	Cleveland - Rev. Dennis M. Hrubciak
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Savannah - Rev. Thomas F. Nellis	Lincoln - Rev. Nicholas Baker	Youngstown - Rev. Thomas Cebula
Savannah - Rev. Gerald P. Ragan, "Hap"	Lincoln - Rev. Robert Barnhill	Youngstown - Rev. Donald Feicht
Savannah - Fr. Paulinus Okpala	Lincoln - Rev. James F. Benton	Youngstown - Rev. Joseph Rudjak
Savannah - Fr. Brian LaBurt	Lincoln - Rev. Maurice Current	Youngstown - Rev. Edward Wieczorek
Winona - Rev. David L. Arnoldt	Lincoln - Rev. Gregory P. Pawloski	Youngstown - Rev. Mel Rusnak
Des Moines - Rev. Donald G. Bruck	Lincoln - Rev. Philip J. Rauth	Tulsa - Rev. James Caldwell
Des Moines - Rev. Kenneth Gross	Lincoln - Rev. Harlan Waskowiak	Portland, OR - Rev. Richard G. Rossman
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Boise - Rev. Joseph F. Schmidt	Omaha - Rev. Richard Reiser	Erie - Rev. Mark Nowak
Boise - Msgr. Andrew J. Schumacher	Newark - Rev. Albert J. Berner	Erie - Rev. Charles Schmitt

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National Retreat 2019

Fr. Julian Peters, OSB, from St Meinrad, Indiana, led seventeen priests on retreat at Marywood in St Johns, Florida from October 14-18. Retreatants came from Washington, Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas, Pennsylvania, New York, South Carolina and Georgia.

Julian, who serves on the faculty of St Meinrad Seminary, shared a breadth of experiences in reflecting upon how God will get us to where we should be – even if it's the farthest from our desires. He also spoke more deeply about love and peace and asked if we were really approachable and available to God. Then he invited us to honestly touch base with our griefs and how we deal with them. Julian also shared with us an ordination homily (on You Tube) where a bishop asks, "Are you broken enough to be a priest?" (You can look it up yourself). Finally, we enjoyed a beautiful Desert Day in order to listen deeply to God's promptings in our lives.

All enjoyed the excellent food and brand new accommodations at Marywood, while some went for a swim off the dock, a walk in the woods, or visited the nearby shrine of Our Lady of La Leche – the first Catholic parish established on the continent – 200 years before the missions in California. The weather was quite good - Tropical Storm Nestor struck the day after we departed.



2019 Donors *continued from page 4*

Erie - Rev. Gregory P. Passauer

Erie - Rev. Jerome S. Simmons

Erie - Rev. Thomas Suppa

Erie - Msgr. John W. Swoger

Charleston - Leonard Tighe

Rapid City - Rev. Ronald B. Garry

Wilmington, DE - Rev. Michael B. Roark, Vf

Amarillo - Bishop John W. Yanta, Emeritus

San Antonio - Rev. Michael Degerolami

San Antonio - Msgr. Michael Yarbrough

Salt Lake City - Rev. Robert Bussen

Seattle - Rev. Richard Hayatsu

Seattle - Rev. James E. Lee

Seattle - Rev. Michael J. McDermott

Seattle - Rev. Thomas L. Vandenberg

Yakima - Msgr. John A. Ecker

Yakima - Rev. Michael J. Ibach

Yakima - Rev. William Shaw

Yakima - Rev. Alejandro Trejo-Estrada

Milwaukee - Rev. Richard Aiken

Milwaukee - Rev. Patrick E. Heppe

Milwaukee - Rev. Joseph F. Hornacek

Milwaukee - Rev. Philip D. Reifenberg

Milwaukee - Rev. Daniel J. Sanders

Milwaukee - Most Rev. Richard Sklba

Milwaukee - Rev. Neil Zinthefer

Cheyenne - Rev. Charles Hardy

Cheyenne - Rev. John E. Murray

Cheyenne - Rev. Michael Carr

Cheyenne - Rev. Thomas Ogg

Cheyenne - Msgr. James O'Neill

Cheyenne - Rev. Gary J. Ruzicka

Formation in the Spiritual Charisms

As we head towards the end of our term, the National Fraternity more than ever sees a need for formation in the spiritual charisms of our Fraternity. Our fraternal spirituality can be a real gift to the much-needed reform in the Church. We pour so many resources into the formation of priests but hardly anything once they are ordained.

Giving oneself to spiritual formation after priestly ordination is a manifestation of a humble search for sanctification. It is a way of overcoming one's weaknesses amidst the challenges of a secularized and a rapidly changing society. Ongoing formation constantly develops the life of holiness among the priests so that they may have an effective missionary heart and mind and be open to the real needs of the Church and of the world.

We have failed in our efforts to help our brothers experience the blessings of a Month of Nazareth, which is the primary formation structure of the Fraternity. However, we are committed to pressing on. We are committed to exploring new avenues of formation while trying new ways to approach the Month.

- On the retreat we talked to Father Julian Peters, OSB, a monk and priest of Saint Meinrad Archabbey, who serves as Director of the Institute for Priests and Presbyterates, about forming a partnership to develop an introductory workshop on how to form a fraternity.
- Mark Mertes is approaching a new way of recruiting for a 2021 Month of Nazareth.
- The National Fraternity is meeting in Conyers, GA this coming February to experience a Week of Nazareth developed by Ron Belisle. If you are interested in sharing our spiritual charisms with your priest friends, please join us.
- Formation Brochures are available online at our web page - <https://jesuscaritasusa.org>. You can print the brochures from our website and share them with your brother priests or ask Shannon Axon to mail some copies by emailing her at Jesus.Caritas.USA@gmail.com

From the Responsible *continued from front cover*

fraternity brothers, Dave Arnoldt, happily fills in for me on Tybee, so that I can enjoy some family time. I rejoice in my wonderful faith community of St. Michael and being able to share with them the mission of building up God's Kingdom on a beautiful and somewhat funky island on the coast of Georgia. I rejoice in the everyday opportunities of pastoral care. I rejoice that the caring is reflected back to me more than I ever deserve.

I rejoice in you my brothers. I rejoice in my fraternity in Augusta and the new fraternity forming here on Tybee. I rejoice that some of you have taken me up on the invitation to come and visit. I rejoice that the fraternity has always been a place of spiritual accountability and therefore a place of spiritual growth for me. I rejoice in the National Fraternity and their resolve to help others be formed in the charisms of a spirituality that is so live giving to Diocesan Priests. I rejoice in the spiritual and financial support that so many of you give to our efforts.

I rejoice in having been blessed with some great mentors over the years. I rejoice in great priests like Tom McCormick and Jim O'Donnell. I rejoice those good priests of the fraternity who have gone on to glory; men who taught me so much about fraternal life and spirituality like Dan Danielson who taught us all and Don Dunn who was my Month of Nazareth director and Mike Hull from my own fraternity. I will offer a Mass for them this month and for all our deceased fraternity brothers. How blessed we all are to have been drawn deeper into the Mystery of God's Love by having shared the journey with our brothers in fraternity!

Fraternally in Christ,



Fr. Jerry "Hap" Ragan

National Fraternity

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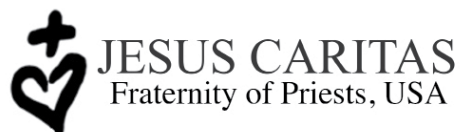
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Upcoming Dates

Regional Jesus Caritas Retreat

Holy Spirit Monastery
February 3 – 5, 2020
Conyers, GA

Week of Nazareth

Holy Spirit Monastery
February 3 -- 7, 2020
Conyers, GA

Jesus Caritas USA Assembly

St. Paul Retreat Center
July 20 – 24, 2020
Detroit, MI