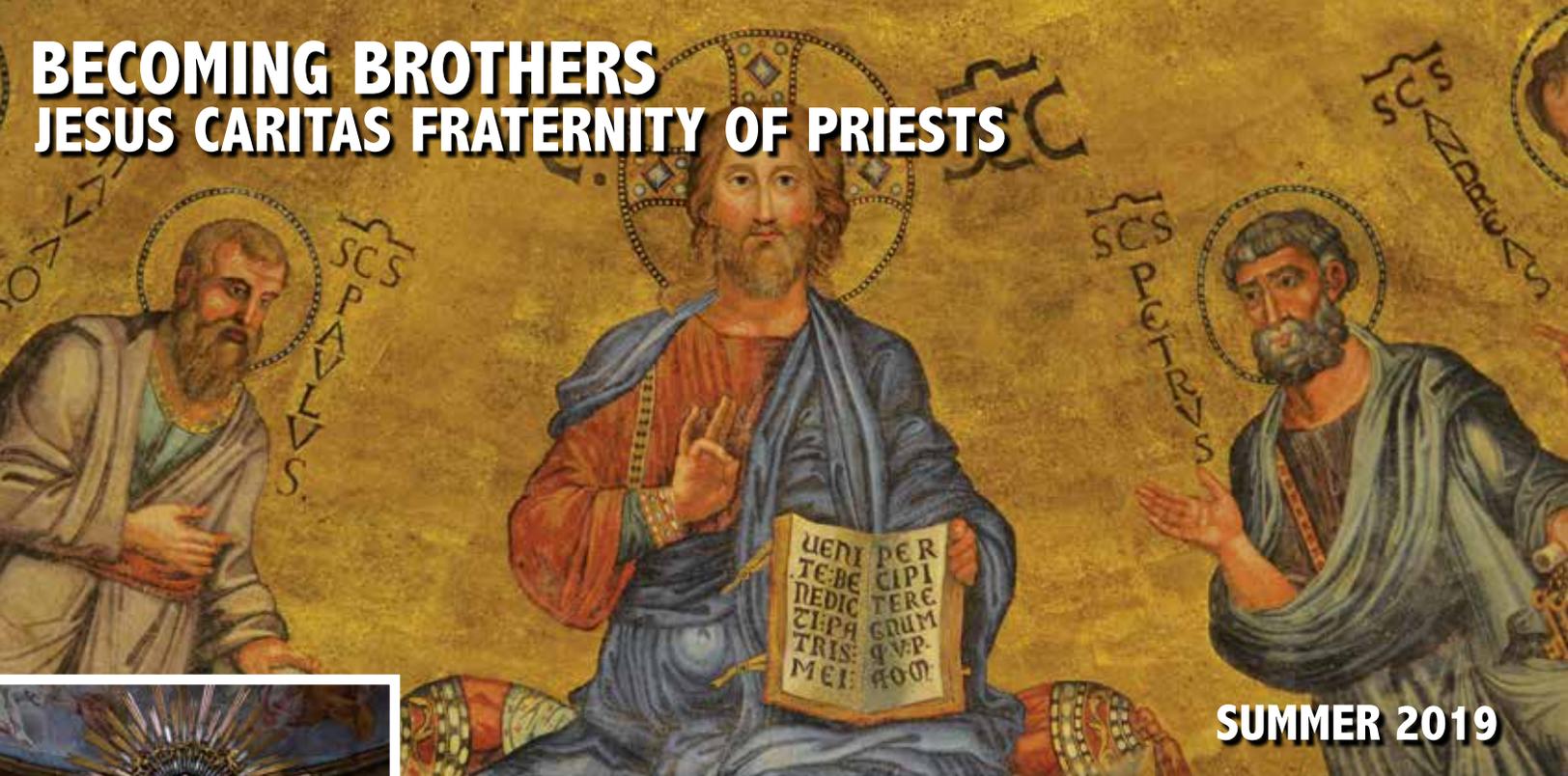


BECOMING BROTHERS JESUS CARITAS FRATERNITY OF PRIESTS



SUMMER 2019



IN THIS ISSUE

A Letter from the General Responsible to the Brothers of the World	2
Jesus Caritas National Retreat	5
Report From Penasacola	6
Upcoming Dates	6
National Fraternity	7
Blessed Charles De Foucauld <i>A Grain of Wheat</i>	8

From the Responsible

Dear Brothers and Friends of the Fraternity,

Whether it has been during my vacation or hosting guests here at the Fraternity on Tybee, one of the joys of the summer has been some great conversations. I hope my memory is fairly accurate in recalling some of the above insights from those conversations.

While we will still have our National Retreat at Marywood in Florida from October 14-18, I'm greatly disappointed that we could not recruit enough priests to hold the Month of Nazareth this September. No doubt, Blessed Charles is smiling down from heaven and views my failure with great empathy. I'm grateful to all of you who tried to recruit for the Month.

Praying through the conversations that I've had this summer and my own experience of the demographics of the priesthood today, I've gotten some perspective of why it is almost impossible to ask a priest to devote a whole month to his spiritual well-being. But it shouldn't be. A spiritually healthy priesthood would go a long way in moving us towards a much-needed reform of Church life. Through our review of life, contemplative prayer through a daily Holy Hour and monthly Desert Day, our care and fellowship

"One of the unintended results of the Reformation has been the choice to believe what you wish, and this has led to a decline in shared moral values and little concern for the common good."

— Brad S. Gregory, Professor of Early Modern European History at the University of Notre Dame.

"The indifference about faith practices among Catholics is much more complex than disgust with the abuse scandal."

— Fr. Tom Murphy, Pastor, Our Lady of Lourdes, Port Wentworth, GA

"We are not only trying to form seminarians as missionary disciples but also trying to prepare them to be open to emerging structures as the present structures collapse or prove inadequate for ministry."

— Rev. Alfredo I. Hernandez, S.T.L., Vice Rector/ Dean of Academic Formation, St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary, Boynton Beach, FL

continued on page 7

Feast of the Visitation of Mary, 31 May 2019

A Letter from the General Responsible to the Brothers of the World

“The Advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you. (John 14:26)

Warm greetings of peace to you, dear brothers,

With all humility, I make a personal confession why it took me so long to write this letter. Many times, I sat in front of my computer not knowing what and how to write. It felt like a pregnant woman about to give birth, but her pelvis is too narrow for the newborn. I struggled with words, but my biggest struggle was the heart, having the right spirit and disposition of a brother. Many of you are mere names to me without faces and stories that we share to qualify our being brothers. I needed the time to ground myself to the Father who has invited me to leave the comfort of my homeland and is sending me as a missionary brother. I needed moments of nakedness before Jesus at prayer whose Spirit at Nazareth is inviting you and me to this great adventure of downward mobility, living simply but with joy, in ordinariness and obscurity, finding the last place, consumed by the gospel of the greatest as the least, seeing Jesus in the poor, apostolate of goodness, not lording over but serving, to be poor in spirit for the sake of the kingdom. I needed the space of being rekindled by the spirituality, life and intuitions of Brother Charles through the testimonies of brothers and sisters who are deep into the life and the tradition of the Fraternity.

The meeting with the spiritual family at Haiti last April, my visits to the brothers in Haiti, Dominican Republic and the United States and my retreat at a Trappist Monastery in Georgia have been a tremendous help. (These will be the subject of my next letter). Jesus too needed that space in my heart for my conversion because even if I am 30 years in the fraternity and have been in 3 Months of Nazareth, I still have unhealthy and immature ways that may stand in the way of this ministry. Being an unfinished project myself, I need your honest feedback and fraternal advice. Please tell me and I would gladly receive them as a gift for my on-going formation.

Before I was elected general responsible, my world revolved around my little fraternity in a small village, without TV and internet, as a chaplain of a small Carmelite monastery of nuns and dean of studies of a small college seminary, coming from a small diocese in the Philippines. My world was then very small, my way of living very rural and the thought of writing to the brothers all over the world is overwhelming at the least. I thank the Advocate for enabling me to write. I pray that these same words may not stand in His way of teaching us everything that Jesus wants us to know. I thank you for your generous patience. I am so sorry for those who feel orphaned by my long silence. In my silence, I whispered your names in my prayer (thanks to the directory), one day at a time.

Another Look at Cebu Assembly and Beyond

Our Cebu Assembly last January was indeed “a precious manifestation of the Spirit of Pentecost.” My brotherly joy and sincere gratitude to all of you who have prayed for us while in Assembly. To our continental and country responsables with our former general responsables, Mariano and Abraham who have travelled to the other side of the globe just to be in the assembly, thank you very much. To the previous team - Aurelio, Jean Francois, Emmanuel, Mark and Mauricio - for your great planning and hard work before and during the assembly, thank you very much. We can only build on what you have generously labored. Thanks in particular to Aurelio for the legacy project of iesuscaritas.org website and for Jose Alberto Hernandis who is very willing to manage our website. My joy and gratitude to the members of my team with Tony Llanes as my co-general responsible who are very willing to serve. Since ours is service to the international fraternity, may I beg you to write to us your concerns, news, invitations, feedbacks, stories. I personally chose them to represent the four continents

so that there would be more easy access to news and information. Here are our contact details:

Eric Lozada: ericlozada@yahoo.com,
63 9167939 585;

Tony Llanes: stonvllanes@yahoo.com,
63 918 3908488;

Fernando Tapia: ftapia@iglesia.cl,
56 988880397;

Honore Savadogo: sawono2002@yahoo.com,
226 70717642;

Matthias Keil: Matthias.keil@graz-seckau.at,
43 67687426115.

Just as you trust us, can we also trust you to help us in this? More than a top-down dynamic, we wish to have more dialogue, transparency, reciprocity, feedback in our different levels of communication. For a start, we are meeting this 11-18 of October in South Korea and we would appreciate anything from you - personal, local, national, regional - that you may want us to consider and respond to. You may channel them to me or to your continental representative in the team.

Brothers, the Letter from Cebu is not a finished document. It is a work-in-progress. May I invite you (and let us be together in this) to make it a subject for personal and fraternity re-reading and discussion. In Cebu, we have identified and have committed ourselves to be missionary diocesan priests inspired by the witness of Bro Charles. We have contemplated the realities of our society, church and fraternities from the different continents and countries. We have listened to the call of the Spirit to be church in the peripheries (thanks to the prophetic leadership of Pope Francis). And from the calls that we heard, we are firmly resolved to concrete and strategic actions for the development of our society, church and fraternities.

In your re-reading and discussion, may I invite you to treat the document as a friend whose words are Spirit-filled, transformative and prophetic. The reality of violence, terrorism, injustice, trafficking, serious ecological crisis, migration, globalization of indifference, fundamentalism, secularization (the list is too long) is very complex. Yet almost immediately, we tend to project this reality from outside. This attitude is not very helpful. We

need to be more involved. Asking the Spirit for the gift of courage and humility, we take a long, loving look at our interior structures/subcultures - values, mentality, lifestyle, biases, attitude, preferences, wants - as diocesan priests. We name the many subtle ways where we have been part of the problem. We share our realizations to brothers in our fraternity who could help us in our growth. Perhaps, the most beautiful gift we could offer our world today is by owning that we have been a part of the problem. Hopefully, with repentant and transformed hearts, we become part of the solution.

The Spirit is calling us to be a church in the peripheries. Asking the Spirit for the gift of courage and trust, we explore together the peripheries of our soul - the rejected, ugly, despised, deep-seated, hidden, denied parts of ourselves that we need to claim, own, accept, embrace and heal. Here, we need the intimacy of our fraternity to be able to share our deepest wounds without being judged. As need be, we may consult a professional for our on going growth and recovery. Then, the next time we go to the peripheries, we are different. We are more interiorly free and happy missionaries. The sad thing is when we go with our unhealed wounds and unreal selves. We go blind, needy, full of ourselves and we do not even know that. We forget the agenda of Jesus and the Kingdom. How can the blind lead another blind? I am convinced that the best gift of mission we can give to the people of God, especially to the poor is our attentiveness to our ongoing transformation as missionary disciples of Jesus.

Brothers, in Cebu, we saw how we all struggled with the desert day and review of life. We need to treat this fact not as a conclusion but as a starting point. The conclusion is quite obvious, and we need to be honest about it. It means poor quality of our meetings, our relationships, our ministries and even our prayer. This is our poverty and our lack of attentiveness to the essentials. This is also our path to liberation and wholeness if we want it. We need a firm resolve to commit to a regular and quality time of solitude in the desert where the Divine Therapist could transform us and make us whole. Our review of life is not a mere report of our lives and ministries, no matter how honest we are. Rather, it is a place of encounter with the Spirit who enables us to see our lives as God sees us. Our fraternal sharing is a real place of heart-to-heart meeting. In the regularity of such meeting,

continued on page 4

A Letter From the General Responsible *continued from page 3*

we grow together as soul brothers - more trusting, honest, intimate, truthful, less judgmental, pretentious and defensive, more caring and committed to each other's on-going growth as beloved disciples of Jesus at Nazareth inspired by Bro Charles. This witness of fraternity is for me a good vocation campaign.

Come, O Holy Spirit, Come

Allow me to speak a little about the coming Pentecost feast. The Acts of the Apostles records, "When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the spirit enabled them to proclaim." (Acts 2:1-4)

With due respect to our bible experts, especially Emmanuel Asi, may I invite you to meditate with me this text. It seems that the favorite place of the Holy Spirit is when persons meet as an intentional community of friends, brothers, ((including sisters) believers of the Risen Christ. At its core, a community, different from a crowd, is a firm resolve of every member to ceaselessly work for what unites rather than what divides, mindful that everything is a gift and that there is only One Giver. Though we struggle with differences (mind you, it is always a tough one) but we keep coming and falling into the Source that unites us. Every time we pray, "Come O Holy Spirit and renew the face of the earth," we are praying what Jesus the High Priest dream of the world, "Father, that all may be one just as you and I are one." (Jn. 17:21) The Holy Spirit, the Giver of Life (as we profess in the creed) infinitely animates, enables, transforms and gathers all of creation so that it becomes one living image of unity in the Trinity just like in the beginning. The whole earth, not just the human world, as Pope Francis fondly calls, becomes our common home where life in all its forms is revered as sacred and a gift. When Paul teaches the community at Philippi "to put all things under Christ,"(2:10) Christ is the universal reference point of everything and not just for Christians. To be men and women of the Spirit, then is to always work for what in-

cludes rather than what excludes, for dialogue, for universal fraternity with everything that is.

Jesus' name for the Spirit is the Advocate. Jesus promised the Advocate who will teach us everything that we need to know. In legal terms, the advocate means a defense attorney. The Spirit is our defense against the spirit of the Evil One operating in our world today, be it in political and economic structures, in interpersonal, familial or communal relationships even in the subcultures within church and religion. It is very cunning and deceptive, always disguised as good and even as license to do evil in the name of God. The text tells us that the coming of the Invisible Spirit takes the visible form of tongues of fire resting on the head of each of the apostles gathered. We pray for that fire to rest on each of us "to transform our hearts of stone into hearts of flesh" and make us more able to discern very well where evil lies from good. May the fire of Truth rekindle our hearts with a passion for Jesus and the Kingdom. The other visible image of the Holy Spirit is a strong wind that fills the entire place of those gathered. We pray for that strong wind to topple down and transform hearts and institutions hardened by indifference, violence, hatred, resentment, exclusion that only fragments God's creation. May the Spirit who is a strong Wind widen the spaces of every human heart to include the poor, the marginalized and the stranger in the family of God's beloved children. May our fraternities be schools of the Spirit so that we become passionate yet gentle disciples of Jesus at Nazareth in our violent and fragmented world as inspired by Brother Charles.

Brother Charles, the Universal Brother

Finally, a note on Brother Charles. Early this year, Little Sister Kathleen of Jesus published a book of the same title. It contains the major themes and I love how it is written. Thank you very much, Kathleen. As you already know, Brother Charles – his life, message, intuitions - should occupy a significant space in our on-going formation as diocesan priests. It is what qualifies us. The more we know him, the more we know Jesus, his Beloved. Brother Charles is not just some icon to be venerated. He is a living call, a tangible point person in our deep longing to follow Jesus.

On the call to be universal brother, Little Brother Antoine Chatelard points out, "It's first about being a brother, before thinking about being universal." In the life of Brother Charles, the intuition to be a universal brother first happened in October of 1901, as Sr. Kathleen narrates, when Brother Charles settled at Beni Abbes. Through the generosity of his cousin Marie, he was able to buy a piece of land strategically located halfway between the walled local villages and the French garrison. He built, through the help of the French army, a little monastery bounded by lines of big stones. And this is the key. "He himself would rarely go beyond it but anyone could enter. He wished to be a universal brother in a context of conflict involving many opposing parties." (p.16).

That was a moment of insight! The call to be universal brother is first and foremost the call to be a brother. In Brother Charles, to be brother is to stand in the in-between, (not black or white but gray) in the middle (not the same with being at the center) of many opposing parties. A brother is immersed, rooted, right in the midst of Reality with all its paradoxes, tensions and complex cross-points and he never leaves his stance. If he leaves and moves off the middle, he becomes particular. In embracing one, he excludes the other. He is not some fence-sitter who does not have any concrete stand on any socio-political-economic-cultural or even church issues. On the contrary, he is grounded on what is going on and he stands in the middle of everything. When he opts for the poor and the marginalized, he includes the rich. Precisely, it is only in being at the middle of things that he can embrace all things as universal brother. And it is only then, with this evolving insight that Brother Charles began to call his house not a hermitage (living under a cloistered monastic rule of life) but a fraternity where anybody could come and is welcome. He painted at the ceiling of his fraternity the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus whose arms are wide open to anyone who comes. His consuming closeness with the Sacred Heart of Jesus leads him to imitate Jesus Caritas, the Universal Brother par-excellence of which he is only a humble witness pointing to Jesus.

Brothers, thank you very much for your generous patience in reading along my rather long letter. I continue to hold you, your fraternities and your dioceses in my prayer one country at a time. Please pray for me also your little servant-brother.

With my fraternal embrace in Jesus Caritas,
Eric Lozada

Jesus Caritas *National Retreat* October 13 – 18, 2019

Marywood Retreat Center St. John's, Florida

Join us at Marywood Retreat Center for a week of retreat and fellowship with other priests from across the country, led by Fr. Julian Peters, OSB who is

Director of Saint Meinrad Institute for Priests and Presbyterates. The Institute aims to keep both priests and presbyterates holy, healthy and effective in various ministry settings and stages of life. All priests are welcome, especially those who are interested in exploring the Spiritual charisms of the Jesus Caritas Fraternity for living a happy and holy life as a diocesan priest.

- Marywood Retreat rests on the St. Johns River just minutes from Jacksonville and St. Augustine FL.
- Its 100 acres of beautiful tranquility is accented with towering live oak trees and gardens making it a perfect environment for retreat
- 60 motel-style rooms
- Executive chef and dining room
- Beautiful grounds and dock on the St. Johns River
- Daily Eucharist and Adoration in a beautiful Chapel overlooking the
- St. Johns River
- Private room, and 12 meals are included. The cost of \$500. includes the director's stipend. Scholarships are available.

To register for the Retreat,
please email Mrs. Shannon Axon at
jesus.caritas.usa@gmail.com
or call Fr. Jerry Ragan at 706-267-1073.

Report from Pensacola

The Jesus Caritas Group in Pensacola, FL invited our Bishop to attend the June meeting. He accepted and spent the day with us including lunch. Bishop William Wack is in his second year as Spiritual Leader of the Catholic Community in Northwest Florida. He is eager to learn from and relate to his brother priests. Although he looks like a lad of 32, the Bishop is 52 years old. He told us that he was a Holy Cross Father and grew up in South Bend in a family of ten children.

It was a refreshing experience for all in the group – Gene Casserly, Charles Roland, Seb Nasland, Dennis O'Brien, Les Kish, and John Licari. The day gave us motivation to pray more heartedly for our Bishop.

Editors Note: Brother Charles Roland who sent in this report has agreed to take responsibility for the pre-Lent Southeast Retreat. Brother Charles is happy to announce that the Retreat is returning to its original site, Holy Spirit Monastery in Conyers, GA. – February 3-5, 2020.

Thank You for Your Support

The National Fraternity has decided to do away with dues and rely on the generosity of our brothers to grow the Fraternity. We are grateful for your generous response to our appeal for support. Your support will allow us to continue to share our spirituality with priests

and seminarians throughout the United States and also help the Fraternity to grow in less affluent countries. The plan was to publish the names of our donors in this Newsletter, but due to the length of our new International Responsible's letter, we'll give thanks to you in our fall newsletter. It is never too late to send your check to "Jesus Caritas" at:

Jesus Caritas Fraternity of Priests
PO Box 2638
Augusta, GA 30914

Another easy and painless way to support the Fraternity is through AmazonSmile, a website operated by Amazon that lets customers enjoy the same wide selection of products, low prices, and convenient shopping features as on Amazon.com. The difference is that when customers shop on AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. If you are already an Amazon customer it is easy to set-up. Go to smile.amazon.com and follow the prompts. You can check out thousands of charities but of course we'd be grateful if you chose "Jesus Caritas Fraternity of Priests." Then anytime you shop at that site, we will receive a small donation. Thank you so very much.

Upcoming Dates

September 23 – October 13

Month of Nazareth, Tybee Island, GA

October 14 – 18

Jesus Caritas Retreat, Switzerland, FL

October 13 – 18

Jesus Caritas National Retreat, Marywood Retreat Center,
St. John's, Florida

February 3 – 5, 2020

Pre-Lent Southeast Retreat, Holy Spirit Monastery, Conyers, GA

From the Responsible *continued from front cover*

with each other, our simplicity of life and concern for the least of these, the Fraternity still has a great gift to offer to the Church, especially to Diocesan priests.

When I accepted the Responsibility of leading the Fraternities in the United States, I was determined not to be the one who would “turn off the lights” of a dying structure in the Church.

As I enter my final year of leadership, I would ask you to join with me and the National Team as we press forward to find new structures for formation in Fraternity. So much of the Church’s resources are devoted to the formation of seminarians, but there is so precious little for the ongoing formation of priests. Our Church needs men who persevere in living holy lives throughout their priesthood. The Fraternity for so many of us has been a key structure in living a healthy and holy spiritual life. We need to be advocates of the Fraternity and get a dialogue going among our brother priests and Bishops as to what resources they see as important to the on-going wellbeing of their spiritual life.

On a personal note, on July 10th a dear friend and fraternity brother, Fr. Michael Hull, quite suddenly went to glory. Michael was the pastor of a Syrian Catholic Parish in Augusta, GA whom I hired as a part-time assistant at St. Mary on the Hill. He was only 67 and while he was a great husband, father, and grandfather, his pastoral dedication was extraordinary. He had an easy laugh and a little bit odd sense of humor. In recent years he shared with us that his strong faith was deepened by the contemplative spirituality of our fraternity. He will be missed by many. As our friends from the East would say, “May his memory be eternal. May God grant him rest with the saints.”

Fraternally in Christ,



Fr. Jerry “Hap” Ragan

National Fraternity

National Responsible

Rev. Jerry “Hap” Ragan
802 Lovell Ave.
Tybee Island, GA 31328
706-267-1073
hapragan@hotmail.com

General Responsible

Fr. Eric Lozada
ericlozada@yahoo.com

Western Council Member

Msgr. Joseph F. Greeley
30441 Bourbon Rd., P.O.Box 2008
Lucerne Valley, CA 92356-2008
424-744-1035
joegreeley47@gmail.com

Central Council Member

Rev. Gregory Pawloski
St. Catherine Church
PO Box O
Indianola, NE 69034
308-364-2428
gppawloski@yahoo.com

Eastern Council Member

Rev. John B. Jacquell
Holy Rosary Church
2701 East Avenue
Erie, PA 16504
814-456-4254
Email: pastor@sjberie.org

South Central Council Member

Rev. Bob L. Amundsen
Immaculate Conception Parish
715 Cabrini Drive
Lafayette, CO 80026-2676
303-665-5103 Ext. 106
frbob@lafayettecatholic.org

Northwestern Council Member

Rev. Ronald H. Belisle
1200 E. Phillips Lake Loop Road
Shelton, WA 98584
360-427-4300
ronbelisle@hctc.com

Bishop Liaison

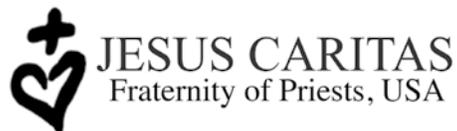
Most Rev. Donald F. Hanchon
4311 Central St.
Detroit, MI 48210
313-596-7444

J.C. National Administrator

Shannon Axon
P.O. Box 2638
Augusta, GA. 30914
jesus.caritas.usa@gmail.com

JESUS CARITAS FRATERNITY OF PRIESTS

PO Box 2638, Augusta, GA 30914



Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Augusta, GA
Permit No. 346

Blessed Charles De Foucauld

A Grain of Wheat

Brother Lenny Tighe has just edited and produced a beautiful little book on the life of Blessed Charles.

The cost of the booklet is \$3.00 and can be purchased directly from Jesus Caritas Publications:

12116 Woodholm Court
Tega Cay, S.C. 29708

***For more information e-mail:
blchdefoucauld@gmail.com***