



EASTER RETRAIT 2020

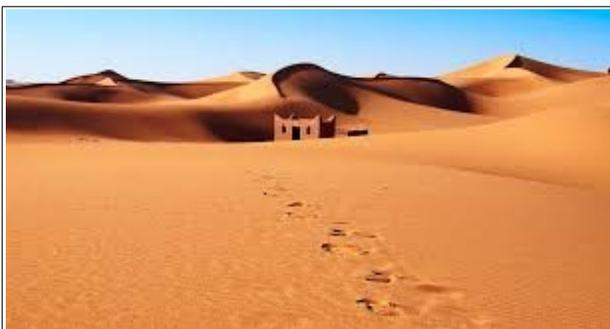
THE LIFE FOR BROTHER CHARLES

A free life

SECOND DAY,
Thursday, April 16

On this second day of Easter retreat we will savor the freedom of the children of God. The Risen Christ gives us freedom; the one who was locked up is now free like the wind. No weight catches you or a bandage prevents you from walking. Brother Charles is only tied to the will of God, the will that he discovers in his searches and his imitation of Jesus: "**To believe you have to humble yourself, you have to be small, you have to confess that you have little spirit, admit a quantity of things that are not understood ...**". Charles de FOUCAULD, "Spiritual Writings". In these days of "Easter confinement" we can experience the greatness and smallness of the world where we are. Our communication with the exterior is reduced to greeting us "Japanese style" and the use of electronic devices. We miss the hugs and yet we do not stop feeling the affection of God himself and of the brothers.

It is time to contemplate this entire situation. The empty ostensory of brother Charles can tell us a lot about so many absences, about so many times that we have felt far from God, from people, or from our own inner being. We think that Jesus is not there, because we are looking for him in an empty tomb. The absence of God in so many people makes us sad, and we would like to bring him closer to Jesus, who has not stopped loving them, seeking them, embracing them. Absences that are sometimes filled with something artificial, useless dreams or fantasies. God is a God of the living, said Jesus, and He is a God who gives us freedom, despite our present moment of "standing" or shut up at home. Soon we will be able to say "free the inmate". Nothing is going to prevent us from hugging and greeting each other again as we always have. At this moment, Jesus does not keep his distance and embraces us when we adore him. His love is stronger than the limitations that we now have to live.



Holy Saturday has been a desert day for me. It is, perhaps, the most appropriate day of the year to live it like this, until the time of the Easter Vigil. A desert that can be a repetition of what is lived every day, but that once again placed me in the immensity of God, of his call,

of his invitation to feel free in the moment of Nazareth, which is that of confinement. The desert, which makes us find ourselves empty of everything and expecting everything from the Lord. The Assekrem with the four walls, the garden, the orchard, the street or the field that we see from the window ...

How do we identify with this living, free Christ in our mission? **"We do not have the obligation to constantly give alms, or advice, or to pray, but we do have to give a good example, all the more since our works are known, although we believe we are completely alone..."**, Charles de FOUCAULD, "Spiritual Writings". Our mission, to be together with people in their difficult moments, in the daily life of their lives; also allowing us to invade by his humanity, by his happiness or his sadness, his apparently insignificant things, his shared path and his faith or lack of it, is the mission where Jesus sends us. *"Jesus, with his redemptive work, gave us again the freedom, the freedom of the children"* (Pope Francis). Christ gives us the freedom to leave everything, to put time aside, the condition of being a consecrated person, the social image we have, to say yes to the person who needs us, to whom we can do good, without "advice of priests", without being officials of the liturgy or sacraments. It does not matter the external forms; the important thing is the love that we put.



"Jesus came not only to change the natural course of physical life, but to infuse in it a new meaning with the strength of his Spirit and the power of his word, transmitting to human beings an ever-living hope, inexhaustible source of true joy. The tombstone that Jesus' disciples must remove is huge and heavy, as the slab of death continues to bury thousands of deaths today in the world coronavirus pandemic and the masses of the poor and marginalized throughout our land." José CERVANTES GABARRÓN, (priest of the diocese of Cartagena, Spain, in a Lenten homily). Given the diversity of calls that we receive, of the messages that overflow our electronic devices in these weeks, let us respond with Easter joy. Many people need us - simply - to know that we are there, that we



are more important to them than a surgical mask. They know that our face and hands do not spread more than the love of Jesus, and we know that his people are also a paschal song of praise, of thanksgiving. So we have to thank people. One by one, with his face and his name, before Jesus in adoration, putting at his side who we do not see, but we do feel.

"The person who loves is open to the sorrows of others and feels impulses towards compassion and help, because he feels unity with the afflicted. It comforts every person you see suffering. He

*knows that it is one with the original energy in which everything participates. This occurs simply when we open up and come into contact with each other with pity."*Willigis JÄGER, "Where our longing takes us. Mysticism in the 21st century", Desclée de Brouwer (Willigis JÄGER celebrated his Easter last March)

Easter gives us back the joy of being saved, the freedom to be happy, the hope of a more positive world, of appreciating the effort and work of many people who leave their skin for others. Let us thank God for this liberating Jesus, small in the little ones, and very great in our hearts.



Good and happy Easter to all.