

FRATERNITY OF PRIESTS JESUS CARITAS

LETTER OF ERIC TO THE BROTHERS AROUND THE WORLD

15 October 2020
Dumaguete City, Philippines

Beloved brothers,

Peace and fraternal love to you all at this time of pandemic!



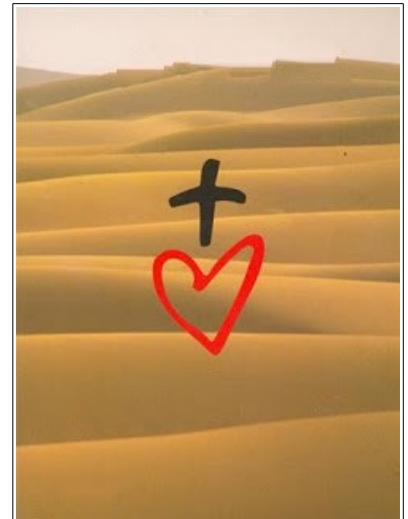
Like Mary of Magdala announcing the resurrection of Jesus to the eleven, I am humbled yet filled with great joy about the things I am about to tell you. The Risen Christ, in preparing the brothers for the good news, instructed Mary to “go and tell my brothers that



they must leave for Galilee. There they will see me.” (Mt. 28: 10) Galilee is Jesus’ chosen place to be seen in his serene but glorious appearance after his painful crossing. It also is a place of encounter, transformation and renewed commitment to follow him beyond the passion event. While they narrated to one another their anxiety about the future, confusion and guilt about all the things that have happened, Jesus came in their midst. He patiently led them to see with new eyes their small stories of disillusionment and pain in the light of the bigger story of the Kingdom of God. Only after experiencing the forgiveness and peace of God in the

Resurrected Christ that the brothers were marked permanently by a renewed joy and dauntless courage to cry the Gospel with their own lives until their own martyrdom.

In the same way, Jesus is inviting us to go to the Galilee of our fraternal communion - local, national, regional and international – and see again Christ’s event in our world and history. With the same spirit, allow me to share with you some proposals, calls for reflection and action vis-à-vis our preparation, celebration and post celebration activities in relation to the canonization of Bro Charles. These proposals are coming from our on line meetings with the international team. It is our hope that we all go collectively and individually to a space of gratitude, joy and awe for this gift. May the same gift also engender renewal, grounding and recommitment for us who have been inspired by the life and witness of Bro. Charles. It is important to note that we are celebrating this gift with the other members of the spiritual family.



So, how shall we celebrate the canonization of Bro Charles? Though the date has not been fixed yet but we feel that it is important to plan and organize our gratitude and joy. Before anything else, allow me to pose this question with you: How important is the canonization of Bro Charles to you who follow his spirituality? How do you understand it? May I invite you to hold this question for some time and listen very well to your inspired valuation of the event. Your personal and the other’s personal discernment when shared and listened to would serve as a wellspring from which our creative planning and celebration of the event could take their inspiration.

It is our firm conviction that this canonization is not about glorifying Bro Charles. This is very much counter to what he lived for. Rather, it is about affecting and effecting renewal in the Church, in our world, in the clergy building on the charism, intuition, message, legacy of Bro Charles. Our Church today, through the courageous leadership of Pope Francis is moving towards mission to the peripheries, renewed evangelization, care for our common home, forging human fraternities for global peace. The pandemic has exposed a more complex virus that is infecting a greater divide



between the rich and the poor, increasing tensions among political leaders of our globe, market economics that edges out human and ecological accountability, culture that has become fast and loose with high-speed digitalized information. The diocesan clergy is in need of an icon that inspires greater radicality in living out the Gospel and a spirituality that grounds our ministry in the non-conventional ways of Jesus in Nazareth. Bro Charles has always been and will always be a witness pointing to Jesus. After he lived what he passionately believed, we are invited to take on the path he trod with the same love and intensity until our last breath.

So, here are our humble proposals:

That the canonization be not merely a one-day event but a prolonged process distinguished by three different phases: PREPARATION; CELEBRATION; PERIOD AFTER CANONIZATION;

That we invite every lay person, religious, deacon, priest, bishop to participate in our local, national, regional and international processes of reflection, prayer and action, if possible, together with the other members of the spiritual family;

That in our **Preparation Phase**, we are guided by the following themes for personal and communal discernment: ***The Situation of the Poor in our World Today*** (by Fernando Tapia); ***The Biography of Bro Charles and Its Validity Today*** (Honore Savadogo); ***Essential Elements of the Spirituality Inspired by Bro Charles and its Actuality Today*** (Tony Lanes); ***Our Way of Evangelizing Inspired in Bro Charles' Witness*** (Fernando Tapia); ***Interreligious Dialogue In the Life and Intuitions of Bro Charles*** (Jean Francois Berjonneau).



They will be available weekly at our website – www.iesuscaritas.org. We read, reflect, pray and be moved into action by these jewels of Bro Charles. May I make a humble appeal to the continental responsables to motivate the national and local responsables to check on our website for these documents so that we could all be drinking from the same well together;



That our reflections may give birth to creative liturgies, missionary and solidarity actions to the peripheries in the local, national, regional or continental levels, if possible, in collaboration with the other members of the Spiritual Family;

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That the Association of the Spiritual Family of Bro Charles shall organize a vigil on the eve of the canonization in Rome and on the day after the canonization at St Peter's, there will be a thanksgiving mass presided over by the Most Reverend John MacWilliam, Bishop of the Sahara. More details shall be announced as soon as the date is fixed.

That in the **period after canonization**, we zealously announce Bro Charles and his spirituality by organizing weeks of Nazareth for young people and for priests who are interested and by facilitating international Month of Nazareth by language.

Thank you very much. May the Universal Brother, St. Charles de Foucauld intercede for us that we may be renewed as missionary diocesan priests and courageous disciples of Jesus of Nazareth today.

Sending to you the brotherly affection of the members of the International Team.

Your servant-brother,



Eric LOZADA

