

**Letter from the international team  
about the spread of our priestly fraternity IESUS CARITAS  
September 2022**

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***“Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch” Lk 5,4***

Dear brothers,

**THE CANONISATION OF BROTHER CHARLES**

His canonisation in Rome on 15 May this year was a great experience for all who were privileged to witness this event. Again and again, it was said that for the spiritual family of Charles de Foucauld the canonisation is a great gift. But much more, his life and spiritual journey and his charism is a great gift - not only for the Spiritual Family, but for the whole Church. The gift of his charism has not been changed or increased by the canonisation but has been brought into the light and has been officially recognised by the Church.



We are convinced that belonging to our fraternity with its special characteristics can support the priestly ministry very well and form it in a valuable way. Some of us would perhaps no longer be priests if they had not met brothers of the priestly Fraternity Jesus Caritas.

**SHARING OUR GIFT**

From this conviction we want to take a new impetus to make our priestly Fraternity known, especially in places and countries where there are no fraternities.

We want to offer our Priestly Fraternity as a way of living our ministry accompanied by brothers, to remain in living contact with the Holy Scriptures as one of our most important sources for spiritual growing, to develop the contemplative dimension of our lives through adoration and desert-days and finally not to lose closeness and service to the poor in a simple lifestyle.

Therefore, dear Brothers, we ask you to reflect intensely, alone and in community, on the possibilities you see for spreading the seed of the charism of our priestly Fraternity. Are there regions in our own country, are there neighbouring countries, where we could offer the charism of our priestly Fraternity?

**IN COMMUNION WITH OUR SPIRITUAL FAMILY.**

At the origin of the formation of our priestly Fraternity were the Little Sisters and the Little Brothers. Their way of living the Gospel, which was so new at that time, fascinated many priests very much. These priests did not want to become religious, but to remain in the ministry as diocesan priests, but they wanted to live something of the CdF charism. This is how the priestly Fraternity came into being in France in the 1950s, first called “Unio sacerdotalis”, later Jesus Caritas.

This observation of the origins can be significant for us today. For in order to have a starting point for the spread of the priestly Fraternity, the environment of the Little Sisters and Little Brothers is

still one of the best milieus today. For "new plantings" it is therefore certainly a good advice to put out feelers in this direction.

In Rome, at the meeting of those responsible for the various branches of the Spiritual Family, we noticed something else: In many countries there are branches of the spiritual family, especially lay communities, but no fraternities of priests. Probably a point of contact could be found there to make our Fraternity known and invite some priests to participate in it and introducing them to "the spiritual means" we have.

## **HOW TO PROCEED?**

Three aspects seem important to us:

### **1. the preparation phase:**

Here the first question is: Do I, do we really have the conviction that it is good if someone gets to know the priestly Fraternity and joins it? Where this conviction is lacking, there is probably no reason to start with an initiative to spread the priestly Fraternity.

This conviction must be shared by some priests, because a "mission project" is not a matter for one person, but always for a small group.

Another important stage in the preparation is the search for contacts and points of contact. This is probably one of the most difficult tasks, to find a group of priests who are willing to commit themselves to a few days with CdF. Finally, the preparation should also include prayer for a good outcome. We are convinced that especially older priests from our midst will be happy to take on this ministry.

### **2 The implementation phase**

The most suitable way seems to us to organise a "WEEK WITH SAINT CHARLES DE FOUCAULD". In this week there should be two focal points: a) Presentation of the biography of CdF b) Presentation of the priestly Fraternity with its *means of spiritual growing*. These days should be embedded in an atmosphere of prayer, fraternity, joy and service.

### **3. the follow-up phase**

Just as every newly seeded plant needs care and nurture, so it is with a newly founded Fraternity. It needs accompaniment to be able to stand on its own feet. For this, integration into the national and continental level is important, but above all contact and exchange with experienced priests. The concrete form of this "mentoring" will be very different and depends on the respective circumstances and persons. It seems important to us to plan some form of accompaniment right from the beginning.

Dear brothers, we know that all attempts in this direction are not easy. But we think it is important and it seems to us that now is a good time to do it. So we urge you to talk about this and carry out some initiatives.

We especially ask the continental and national responsible brothers to make this letter a priority concern in your next assembly.

We also ask that you inform us of any steps you take in this direction. Perhaps we have ways to support you.

We wish you courage and confidence in your important ministry.

the international team  
Eric, Honoré, Fernando, Tony and Matthias