

Jesus Caritas National Fraternity Meeting Conference Call Tuesday, December 5, 2017 4pm Eastern Time

On the line: Greg Pawlowski, John Jacquell, Ron Belisle, Hap Ragan, and Joe Greeley. Bob Amundsen was in the dentist chair and could not join us.

1. Review of Life – Hap led us in an opening prayer. Hap also said the Hour is producing some good – blessings, insights – breaking out of a fantasy world. He feels more open and even evangelical in the community and spoke of two examples of that. John lost his deacon at Holy Rosary – sudden death – and experienced the parish (Fred’s “family”) really weeping and holding each other, with some chuckles, as well. Greg confessed his Holy Hour is better (after having written about it for the newsletter). His diocese asked each priest to read *The Better Pastor* [Patrick Lencioni] and utilize a trio of people to discuss and pray through it. Also, a fraternity brother abruptly retired (after a stressed out experience). Joe has felt punk, but ever since Veteran’s day he’s on the road to shedding pounds and exercising. He’s also facing Christmas without help [2500 families, 3000 people]. Ron’s Christmas cactus is blooming – a good sign. Medjugorje & Malta visits were not so easy / getting around / not finding priests. He also has some separation anxiety, trying to think kindly of his successor. He’s had a hard time finding Adoration (people and various distractions), but keeps the Holy Hour otherwise.

2. Month of Nazareth

- **Site** – Hap is anxious to hear if Bob can get something finalized. As a backup, we thought about his place, Tybee Island, although the embedded retreat would have to happen elsewhere.

- **Promoting** – invite, invite, invite. Publicize everywhere. Here is where you really learn to be ‘fraternity.’ We really need the formation the Month provides.

3. Ron’s Travel’s – Malta and Chile – Ron is going to Chile the end of January. Alex (Yakima) is still planning to go the Pan-American Assembly, but could not get weekend coverage, so may have to return early.

4. Come and See – Vacation Days in Detroit – John returned from his Lake Erie circuit ready to compose an article, but received the newsletter with a better one already printed by Hap. Talk it up!

5. Committee for Universal Brother Award – Greg’s (and Don’s) proposal will be printed in the next newsletter. We discussed having it every third year (at the Assembly). But, let’s see how many nominations we get. Return date will be in late January or later. Greg and Hap articulated some reflections about our growth (or lack thereof) – including our individual fraternity brothers. We are challenged to walk with each other.

6. Report for the 2nd Pan American Assembly (reprinted from the agenda)

Take time to reflect on the issues that challenge the Church in America. Given the present political climate, we can overlook the fact that the U.S. Church has given some good moral leadership in the areas of Migration and Ecology. What are other issues that we need to address?

These then are the challenges that the Fraternity faces in the U.S.:

- 1) With humility we need to develop a missionary concern for the well-being of our brother priests whether they have an interest in joining a fraternity or not. The gift we have received that nourishes our priesthood, we should give as a gift (Mt. 10:8). Too many of our fraternities are somewhat selfishly turned in on themselves. Our mission needs to be a passionate concern for the well-being of all priests.
- 2) Some of us have shaken the dust in testimony against a younger generation of priests. We have found them to be overly clerical and not very open to values that are important to us. We need to have a little humility and get over ourselves. We need to engage them. We need to affirm their zeal and desire for holiness. We need to find common ground in our love of Jesus and in our desire to serve God's people.
- 3) We need to give more energy to promoting the spiritual charisms of the Fraternity. We might live them differently than Blessed Charles but if we adopt them to our present time and give ourselves to them, they can be so enriching to our priesthood. It can be difficult to find the time for adoration and contemplative prayer. Keeping our own wants and desires simple in a consumer society is a challenge. Living as a universal brother to the poor and those on the peripheries of life is not always easy in a world that is so polarized. And yet, these practices and attitudes lead us deeper into the Mystery of God's love.

7. International Dues We gave \$1,000 earlier this year; Hap will send a check for \$5,000 more (actually planning to deliver to the assembly personally).

8. Prayer of Abandonment – was commenced at 4:53 pm EST.

Next Conference Call – Tuesday January 2nd, 2018