

## THE MONTH OF NAZARETH

### What is all about?

Sometime in your life as a priest in Jesus Caritas it is important to set aside an extended time to pray, study, and devote oneself to the charisms of the Fraternity. The Month of Nazareth presents an excellent opportunity to step back, evaluate, and prioritize anew the practices and principles to which we have all made a commitment. Such an endeavor takes time and freedom from the distractions, preoccupations, and energy draining tasks with which we are bombarded in our everyday ministry.

For some, the Month of Nazareth has been a veritable life-changing event. For others, it has been a month of much-needed rest. For all, it is an opportunity to grow more deeply in the experience and in an understanding of Fraternity. Those who have “made the Month” report a quantum leap in successfully living out the particular charisms of Jesus Caritas. For many, it is an immersion in the mystery of their own priesthood and the priesthood of Jesus Caritas.

*“The Month of Nazareth is a sharing of the fraternal life at every level: prayer, reflection, manual work, leisure, etc. There is a deepening shared spiritual awareness of the great original intuitions of the Fraternity, with an attempt to confront the conflicting appeals of the Church and the world, the situations in which priests have to live.”*

(from the **Directory**)

In the United States, the Month is generally offered at least every other year at the site which affords a comfortable climate, adequate exercise facilities, and space to be apart from other programs. For four weeks, the participants live by supporting each other not only in prayer and faith sharing, but also in service, e.g.,

manual labor and food preparation. There is also the challenge of living with and valuing the disparate personalities, temperaments, ages, and experiences, strengths and weaknesses which such close living affords. Forming a fraternity for these weeks is critical in order to experience the benefits that can be received by living out the Jesus Caritas way of life.

### What can I expect?

Participants gather under the guidance of a priests with previous experience of the Month who volunteers to facilitate and manage the myriad of details necessary to experience a good Month. Often, this is either a previous National council member or past National Responsible.

The Month is spent exploring many important topics: from the life of Brother Charles de Foucauld to aspects of the monthly Review of Life; from the practice of the Day in the Desert to the essential elements that mark someone who lives a Foucauldian community life.

The order of each day is meant to be relaxed while including the essential elements of **Adoration, Eucharist, and fraternal Reviews of Life**. Other activities, depending on time and place, may be included in the Month. One week of the Month is given as a **Retreat** with extended time for prayer and conferences given by a leader strongly rooted in the Fraternity.

Each week includes a **Day in the Desert**. Of all Fraternity charisms, this seems to be the most difficult to maintain consistently. The Month is structured so as to afford the luxury of four of these days. Take the opportunity to indulge yourself and see how the flowers bloom in the Desert.

Weekends allow ample free time to pursue personal leisure activities, although many *fraternities* choose to spend this time together in a more relaxed way.

The cost of the month is meant to be kept modest and affordable to all. In fact, our National Council subsidizes the Month of Nazareth in the U.S. and gives generously to other countries to keep the Month of Nazareth accessible. Attendees generally cover the cost of their room and board, and travel as well. Scholarships are available.

### What do I do now?

You may be asking, “How can a priest take a whole month off?” Most participants take off the four weeks, with only the three weekends inclusive. Dioceses usually recognize the week of retreat as fulfilling the annual canonical requirement. And, canon law (cc. 533,550) grants a priests a full month for vacation each year. Since one of these weeks is retreat, you still have vacation time coming!

The Month is **important**. Every fraternity member should attend a Month of Nazareth. It is well worth making a priority and following through. If you haven’t yet made the Month, take a few moments now to resolve to do so. Begin now to plan ahead; block out the time and keep that calendar clear. Many have done it and all are glad they did.

If you cannot make the next Month, is it possible for you to support one of your fraternity brothers in making it? Even if it is impossible for more than one member of your fraternity to attend, you can take turns and help each other to go. The Month of Nazareth is truly worth the effort you expend!

## WHAT OUR BROTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE MONTH OF NAZARETH

*“An incredible grace! A pearl of great price!  
Go sell whatever you have and buy the  
field!”*

*“The faith sharing and Reviews of Life were  
done in a caring and supportive atmosphere,  
respectful of each person’s uniqueness.”*

*“The Desert Days became opportunities for  
me to grow in my personal relationship with  
Jesus.”*

*“The early hour of adoration was not always  
easy, but keeping it as the first activity of the  
day was a stroke of genius. It focused our  
attention on the infinite majesty of God for  
the rest of the day.”*

*“The openness to speak and share deeply  
shows the respect for the brothers, despite  
many obvious theological and political  
differences. It witnesses to the fact of  
pluralism as a gift and that God has as many  
faces as we who are created in God’s  
image.”*

*“The Month of Nazareth helps move us from  
the small group support (of the local  
Fraternity) to becoming universal brothers  
which lies at the heart of Jesus Caritas. The  
Month is analogous to the Sacrament of  
Confirmation as completing one’s initiation  
into the church...The daily holy hour brings  
me to a consciousness of the many brothers  
and sisters from around the world who are  
companions with me in this prayer  
experience.”*

## PRAYER OF ABANDONMENT

*Father,*

*I abandon myself into Your hands Do  
with me as You will*

*Whatever You may do I thank You*

*I am ready for all*

*I accept all*

*Let only Your will be done in me And  
in all Your creatures*

*I wish no more than this, O Lord*

*Into Your hands I commend my soul*

*I offer it to You*

*With all the love of my heart*

*For I love You, Lord*

*And so need to give myself*

*To surrender myself into Your hands Without  
reserve*

*And with boundless confidence*

*For You are my Father*

Amen

### For Information:

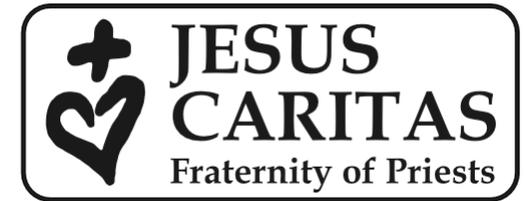
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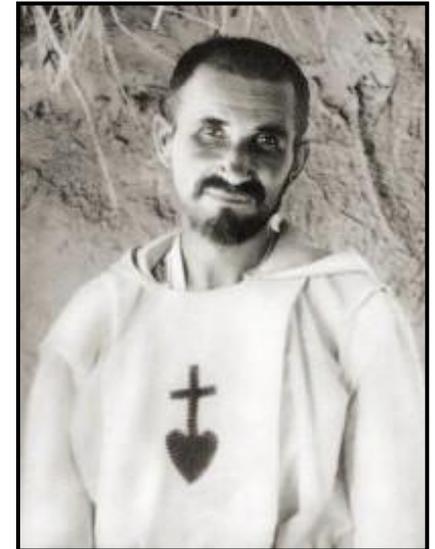
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## MONTH OF NAZARETH



Charles de Faucauld

*For Brother Charles de Foucauld,  
“Nazareth” was the place and the lived  
experience in which Jesus became the  
Obedient Son, the Faithful Servant, the  
Suffering Servant, the Universal Brother. In  
Jesus Caritas “Nazareth” stands as a  
symbol of God’s transforming grace offered  
to us, his sons and priests.*