

- *Editorial*
- *Fraternity news*
- *David Standley obit.*
- *George Hay obituary*
- *I search for answers*
- *How our money is spent*
- *Letter to the brothers*
- *Nazareth*
- *Stop press*
- *Emails to the Editor*
- *Seeds in Ireland*

Be Brothers!

Britain & Ireland.

- *British short retreat*
- *British accounts*
- *Your recruiting*
- *Publications received*
- *Reminders (rear page.)*

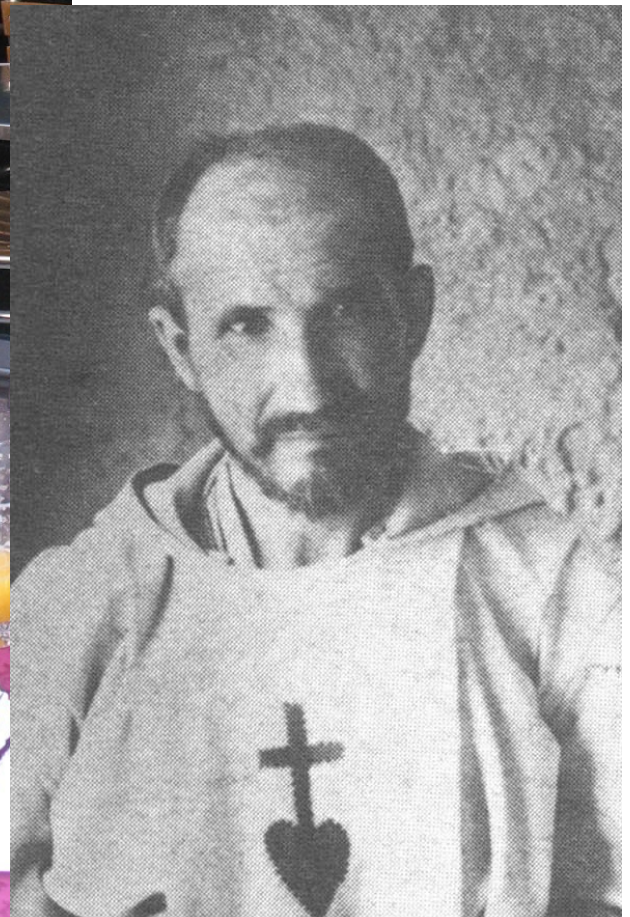
Jesus Caritas
Fraternity of
Priests

New series 32

June 2024



***“I abandon myself
into Your hands.”***
***Brothers in Christ, RIP.,
2024 and 1916.***
***David Standley and
Br. Charles.***
(See obituary page 3)



Editorial

I hope I may be forgiven (if that is the word) for unusually featuring one contemporary brother not only pictorially on the cover, but occupying several pages inside.

However David Standley, of Greenwich fraternity, London, who died on 21st March, was not even an 'ordinary' Jesus Caritas brother. He was a gentle man in each sense of the expression, who was ready to act on his deeply committed beliefs. As such he was a true follower after Brother Charles and Our Lord and deserves some special recognition.

At almost the same time we in Britain also said goodbye to George Hay of Plymouth fraternity on 1st April, who will also go down in history as a gentle and very devoted follower of Brother Charles. His obituary follows later on in the mag.

In honouring the people who are now past, we inspire ourselves to at least in part follow where they have scored such deep furrows. May they rest in the glory they have always deserved. +



Fraternity news

- **“Be Brothers Britain & Ireland”** -is distributed by email as a PDF file to British & Irish brothers via their Responsibles and also to British fraternities as 'hard copy.'
- **The British 'Regional' Team** has, since the last issue, met on 18/1/24 and over 9-10/4/24 with sundry informal communications at other times. *Steve Squires hopes to stand down as British Regional Responsible soon, so the hunt is on for a willing replacement. Also, any offer to be a co-editor for “Be Brothers” (with right of succession!) would be welcome to have a chat. E1000 has been sent to support the International Team’s work (not least for poor fraternities; see page 11.) Consideration is being given as to how more can be attracted to the Fraternity.* Other decisions made appear below or elsewhere in this issue.
- **The annual British Responsibles meeting in September** was very poorly supported so may be discontinued.
- **The 2025 British new year mini-retreat** will be led by Bishop David Oakley (a Jesus Caritas brother) Tues-Thurs. 14-16th January for the first time at Wistaston Hall nr. Crewe (www.orc-crewe.org) £175. Details from < barnabas.page@gmail.com > 0117 9833939.
- **Plymouth has a new Responsible in Gilmour McDermott, based at Liskeard.** Emeritus Peter Coxe has semi-retired to live with the L’Arche community in Bognor Regis, Sussex.
- **New fraternity** Congratulations to Fr. Roy Waters for gathering 6 brothers into yet another fraternity to add to Arundel & Brighton Diocese’s existing 5, with one based in Guildford.
- **Note that each “Be Brothers” can be viewed on the international website:** <http://www.iesuscaritas.org/en> soon after publication.
- **The British Lay Fraternities of Jesus Caritas** have a new website and include our website in their list of other fraternities vested in Br. Charles. Cf: <https://littlebrothercharles.co.uk>
- **Please remember in your prayers Michael Jones,** Responsible of Southwark Dartford fraternity, who continues unwell.
- **PRESS DATE for the Nov. 2024 “Be Brothers Britain & Ireland” is 1st Sept. for full articles; snippets accepted till Sept.15th.** Contributions from British and Irish local fraternities very welcome. +

David Standley, died 21st March 2024



A picture 'stolen' from David as he enjoyed a street breakfast in the 'souk' market of the city of Fez, Morocco, during the English-speaking Jesus Caritas 'Month of Nazareth' held in Morocco during 2008.

The editor is indebted to Hazel Bradley of the lay fraternities of Jesus Caritas for forwarding the following writings by David that were provided by Pat Gaffney.

I reiterate Pat's own apology for only being able to provide most of them in photographed typescript form, but the editor is unfortunately also not able to spare the time to physically transcribe them (anyone like a co-editor's role?!)

But they tell us who David was and as such it is hoped they can provide some sort of inspiration for the rest of us.

He also had the near unique privilege for an 'ordinary' diocesan priest of gaining an obituary of over 1 page length in the "Tablet" magazine of 27th April, based largely on the sermon given at the funeral in Southwark Cathedral, which was led by Archbishop John Wilson.

David's funeral is, at time of going to press, still available to watch on https://www.youtube.com/live/FO3cL_StmCo?si=N58KZXNUorp0vle0

First, a short article by David from the newsletter of Pax Christi (the Catholic peace campaigning group.)

Christians always pray for peace. 'Blessed are the Peacemakers'. I was in that crowd. I had been a child in WW2, living among the bombs

over London. Peace came in 1945, wonderful. But the post-war world was full of strife and suspicion, and the Cold War took over. As a student, and later as a priest, I was still praying for peace. Then in the 1970s I discovered Daniel Berrigan and Dorothy Day. I was excited by their radicalism and non-violent active resistance. And by their literacy: the poetry and prose of Daniel Berrigan, the journalism and graphics of the Catholic Worker. They were alive and on fire with the Gospel. Photos of their resistance inspired me. I wanted to join in, possibly meet them. Daniel Berrigan came to a student meeting in England (I think he was 'underground' at the time). At one point he was asked, 'What's the point of celibacy?' Sitting on an upturned orange box he replied, 'It enables you to go to prison more easily'. YES! I have not lived up to that very consistently, but Pax Christi and Catholic Peace Action have been luminous in my life.

Continued overleaf

***Statement from Pat Gaffney, Vice-President &
former General Secretary of Pax Christi. March 2024***

David Standley RiP

We are sad to report the death of Fr David Standley, a priest of Southwark Archdiocese and a long standing peacemaker. David died peacefully in St Peter's Residence, Vauxhall, on Thursday 21 March 2024.

David's ministry was rich and varied. In the 1970s he was university Chaplain in Cambridge and the University of Kent. He then served in parishes including Bexleyheath, Clapham, Battersea, and the Isle of Sheppey where he also undertook prison chaplaincy work. For many, many years he was attached to the work of L'Arche and their communities in London in particular. Since the 1980s he has been a part of the peace-work of Catholic Peace Action and Pax Christi. Those who knew David will also remember his warmth and friendship, his intellect, his critical questioning, his love of music, art and poetry which seemed to inform how he saw the world.

In the 1980s David joined Catholic Peace Action, taking part in the annual Ash Wednesday witness at the Ministry of Defence (MoD) in London against nuclear war preparations. 1987 saw one of the largest Ash Wednesday gatherings when more than 300 people attended a pre-action liturgy, led by David, at St George's Cathedral, Southwark. The next year David was among many who were arrested for marking the MoD building with blessed ash and charcoal. In his statement during his court hearing in May 1988 David said: I ask you to reaffirm in this court the great tradition of English law which protects innocent life, cherishes the earth and refuses to be subservient to passing Government policy... I am a Christian and a priest. I am charged to proclaim the law and love of God and to preach the Gospel of Christ. The case was proven against him but David and two others received an absolute discharge.

Throughout the 1990's to the present, David was a regular participant at Pax Christi's Ash Wednesday liturgies at the MoD and the annual commemoration service for Blessed Franz Jägerstätter. One year he offered a reflection on Franz, whom he greatly admired. David appreciated the value of internationalism in peace-making. In autumn 2015 he joined a Pax Christi pilgrimage of peace and reconciliation to Flanders to commemorate the centenary of the end of the First World War, with Pax Christi members from the UK, France, Belgium and Germany. With the Justice and Peace Commission of Westminster Diocese, David participated in a European Pilgrimage in 2018. Its purpose was to visit some of the key places which symbolise themes of justice and peace in Europe, and to remember that the European Union was originally a peace project.

In a Pax Christi newsletter in 2022 we invited members to describe that 'lightbulb' moment for them that brought them more fully into work for peace. David wrote: "Christians always pray for peace. 'Blessed are the Peacemakers'. I was in that crowd. ... As a student, and later as a priest, I was still praying for peace. Then in the 1970s I discovered Daniel Berrigan and Dorothy Day. I was excited by their radicalism and non-violent active resistance. And by their literacy: the poetry and prose of Daniel Berrigan, the journalism and graphics of the Catholic Worker. They were alive and on fire with the Gospel. Photos of their resistance inspired me. I wanted to join in, possibly meet them. Daniel Berrigan came to a student meeting in England (I think he was 'underground' at the time). At one point he was asked, 'What's the point of celibacy?' Sitting on an upturned orange box he replied, 'It enables you to go to prison more easily'. YES! I have not lived up to that very consistently, but Pax Christi and Catholic Peace Action have been luminous in my life."

David, we thank you for your consistency.

1988 - Homily given to parishioners on Ash Wednesday before David took part in marking the building at the Ministry of Defence.

Homily preached at St. John Vianney RC Church, Bexleyheath, Kent
The Sunday before Ash Wednesday, 1988. Fr. David Standley

This week, on Ash Wednesday, the Church calls us to turn again to Christ, to hear the gospel, and to plead for mercy--for ourselves first, and then for the world. We know there is much in our lives that cries for God's mercy, so many ways we fail to live out the gospel. I want today to speak about one in particular: we find ourselves caught up in a national defence policy that has the power, and the will, to commit mass murder. I want to say two things: first, how this national defence policy looks in the light of the gospel; second, why I shall be at the Ministry of Defence this Ash Wednesday.

The use of nuclear weapons, or any weapons of mass destruction, is condemned by all the churches. The intention to use them is equally condemned--an intention is father to the act. Our current policy of nuclear deterrence is not bluff. We declare ourselves willing to use nuclear weapons in certain circumstances for reasons of so-called national security, and we mean it. We are prepared to annihilate vast numbers of innocent people, and risk the very existence of life itself, unleashing unknown damage on ourselves and future generations through radiation and atmospheric pollution. This is the Big Sin of our time, as Kenneth Greet has called it: the readiness to destroy people and environment on an unimaginable scale for the sake of national security.

Connected with this is the arms race and the arms trade, which divert and devour the earth's wealth, which God means us to use to save lives, to improve basic health, and feed the hungry. Two brief examples: one jet fighter could provide 40,000 pharmacies in rural Africa; about one quarter of the world's scientists are involved in weapons research. When I was a student chaplain I noticed that science graduates who wanted to do research found it very difficult to find a post not related to the arms industry.

The Big Sin. Are not abortion and the arms race part of the same thing? Both are destroying live now. The INF agreement is very welcome, but we must not exaggerate its importance; it touches only %4 of the nuclear arsenal, and already the armed forces are clamouring for new weapons to compensate for what it to be dismantled.

Ash Wednesday is the annual cry for mercy. We use ashes, a potent symbol. We promise to do something to mend our lives. In this matter of nuclear weapons, which is a kind of leprosy in our time (cf. today's gospel, Mk 1:40-45), we are not powerless. We can do something. We can pray, very important, though God has a habit of turning our prayer back into a question: Yes, but what are you doing about it...? We can speak out. We can protest. We can resist.

On Ash Wednesday, after celebrating the liturgy here with you, where I belong, I shall go to St. George's Cathedral in Southwark. There, with christians from many different traditions, we shall ask for God's mercy, for ourselves and for our nuclear-infected world. We shall mark one another with blessed ashes. also to be blessed will be the ashes of items personally treasured [in my case photos of this parish church, family, friends in L'Arche, Charles de Foucauld] which we intend to lay at the wall of the Ministry of Defence. We shall continue the liturgy at the MoD, and attempt to mark the wall with a simple cross in washable charcoal, or write the word 'Repent'. There will be no violence, no shouting, no confrontation, If the police prevent us, we shall not push. We may be arrested. Many people will be there praying. It may go on all afternoon.

It will not be a demo, nor a picket. It will be a religious act that connects Ash Wednesday with the nerve centre of nuclear war preparations, A small resistance, in the name of Christ. In some ways it will be pathetic, feeble. It is a symbolic act, which some will read, and some will not.

It is a principle of English law that it is permissible to break a lesser law to prevent a greater crime, or to rescue someone in danger. So, you may break a window

Continued overleaf

Continued from overleaf

to prevent a rape or rescue a child. Our small acts of civil disobedience attempt to draw attention to the genocide being planned in the Ministry of Defence.

And in the courts, if we are charged we will have a chance to explain, The crime against humanity being planned in the MoD does not usually get a hearing in the courts. Our small crosses on the wall are also saying property is not sacred, especially this property, but human lives are. And this building endangers human lives everywhere.

It is not easy to take part in non-violent civil disobedience. I don't relish it, and the decision is not lightly taken. As a priest I am conscious of my special position of pastoral trust, and of my responsibility to you here. I can only say, I feel I am being responsible. This is how I hear the gospel, this is my way of keeping Ash Wednesday. Not all are called to this kind of resistance, I feel I am at this point in my life. I recognise I may have greater freedom in this matter than others. The lay people involved have more to lose--jobs and reputations are at risk.

We have been preparing all year, we have prayed a great deal. Some have kept up a relationship with employees and police at the MoD through regular leafleting. They are well known there, and grudgingly respected. These people are not solemn or grim-faced, certainly not fanatic. Among them I find a strength, solidarity and joy that speaks to me deeply of the gospel.

Last year some of you came with me. May I invite you again now. Others of you will be hurt and angry, which is distressing. We can still express our unity in the eucharist, and believe in one another's goodwill, and pray that the peace of Christ will grow, painfully, in our world.

With Kenneth Greet, 'I believe that, under God, the future depends on a great popular uprising of ordinary people the world over. Only so can the tide of history turn and the long slow journey back from the brink of disaster and towards sanity and peace begin.'

(Fr. David Standley is the parish priest in Bexleyheath, Kent. With blessed ashes and charcoal he marked the wall of the MoD, was arrested, charged with committing criminal damage, latter changed to 'marking walls without the owner's permission.' On 5 May at 10am he will be in the magistrate's court in Wells street, W1. Sixty-five other Christians were also arrested that day and hundreds were there in prayerful support. Editor.)

International Jesus Caritas Team members in Rome



Eric LOZADA and Matthias KEIL, both members of the International team of our fraternity of priests, were sent by their respective dioceses as representatives to a

congress in Rome. The Dicastery for the Clergy had organised an international conference there from 6 to 10 February on the subject of "Ongoing formation for priests". Around 1,000 priests from 60 different countries took part in this congress. In appreciation of our Fraternity of Jesus Caritas priests, Eric was invited to sit in the front row during the audience with the Pope. This allowed him to meet the Pope directly. In his address, the Pope said, among other things: "Always forgive!" The aim of ongoing, i.e. lifelong, formation is to renew and deepen the "pastoral love" of a priest.

Pictures 1: Eric LOZADA and Cardinal Lazarus You, S-Korea, Prefect of the Dicastery for the Clergy. 2: Eric and Pope Francis. 3: Eric and Matthias KEIL at the congress. +

*1988 Newsletter, David's statement to the Court
following the Ash Wednesday action.*

ST. JOHN VIANNEY PARISH

Telephone: 01-303 1957

21 Heathfield Road,
Bexleyheath,
Kent. DA6 7LU

Wells St Magistrate's Court
5 May 1988

STATEMENT FOR THE DEFENCE

'I am charged under the Metropolitan Police Act 1839 with "marking a wall without the owner's consent".
Yes, I did mark a wall, the Ministry of Defence in Horseguards Avenue. With a cross. It was Ash Wednesday.
But in English law, to be guilty of a crime requires both a prohibited action and a guilty frame of mind.
I admit the prohibited action.
I deny the guilty frame of mind.
On the contrary, my action was done to alert people to the wrongness, madness and unlawfulness of what is being planned in the Ministry of Defence, in our name.
This court has a duty to uphold the law, not just the Metropolitan Police Act, but the more fundamental laws of our country.
It is unlawful to plan the mass murder of innocent people.
It is unlawful to intend to pollute and devastate the earth on a scale that would inevitable follow a nuclear strike.
It is unlawful (and, I submit, criminally negligent) to risk the lives of our own citizens with a defence policy that invites a similar or worse retaliation.
This court, and you Sir, have a choice:
to uphold the letter of the Metropolitan Police Act 1839, or
to uphold the more central principles of law to which I and others were witnessing on Ash Wednesday.
I ask you to reaffirm in this court the great tradition of English law which protects innocent life, cherishes the earth, and refuses to be subservient to passing Government policy.
Does this court want to line up with courts in another country in 1940, which would have found someone guilty for marking a cross (without the owner's consent) on the outside of a truck heading for Dachau?
I am a christian and a priest.
I am charged to proclaim the law and the love of God, and to preach the gospel of Christ.
I am also charged to care for my people.
I am trying to do all these things, and in this court I am asking the law to protect us.
If you choose to see only a mark on a wall, so be it.
And God help us all.'

David Standley

Verdict: CASE PROVED Sentence: ABSOLUTE DISCHARGE

Same verdict and sentence for two co-defendants: Pauline Condon, a Quaker nurse; and Ezio Roattino, missionary priest.

The court found us technically guilty as charged, but the sentence affirms our action and its moral purpose. A small but famous victory. But we remember the 60 other defendants who received sentences which they are now serving or resisting.

*Homily 2001 at Pax Christi Ash Wednesday liturgy, MoD.***'God does not forbid'**

Ash Wednesday Homily
28 February 2001 - Ministry of Defence
Readings: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

There is an old English prayer that goes, 'From plague and pestilence and human frailty, deliver us, O Lord.'

Some disasters are beyond our control: we are victims. Hurricanes, earthquakes, floods wreak their havoc.

Most disasters are a combination of the wild uncontrollable forces of nature together with human frailty and folly: If houses and schools were better built, if flood barriers were in place, if government and private companies did not cut corners and spent more on health and safety, then these catastrophes would cause less damage. It is usually the poor who suffer.

A few disasters are the result of human arrogance and madness. One prime example is housed in this building, coyly called the Ministry of Defence.

Among other activities it is the Ministry of Nuclear War Preparations.

In our name the government, our government, is prepared to launch a nuclear strike first, if in their judgement our national security requires it.

That disaster may or may not happen. God forbid. But God does not forbid. God leaves it to us to forbid it. And yet in one sense the disaster is already here. We are all tainted by the very existence of this policy, this willingness to commit the crime and sin of mass destruction.

And the disaster is already here in the amount of resources that are spent on the nuclear weapons programme, while so many people in the world (including our own country) are suffering malnutrition, hunger and inadequate housing.

Our security comes not from nuclear hardware and nuclear posturing, but from greater international justice and mutual respect between peoples, cultures and religions. We are here to

pray for that, and to name and shame the arrogance and sin of nuclear war preparations.

This week many have gazed aghast at the smoking funeral pyres of animals slaughtered in the race to prevent the spread of foot and mouth disease.

Most of these animals are bred for slaughter, about half a million a week.

What is normal practice in abattoirs is hidden from our eyes, too grisly for most of us to look at. What plans for nuclear war go on in the inner chambers of the MoD are also hidden from our eyes? They do not want us to know the details, and most people in this country do not want to know either. We are here in a small way to expose those inner chambers, to bring to light the real policies of that go under the name of 'defence'.

We have just heard the gospel that is proclaimed throughout the Church on Ash Wednesday: Do not parade your good deeds before others. When you pray..., when you fast..., when you give alms..., do it in secret. Amen to that. The world is changed and the kingdom grows through the unseen prayer, the hidden sacrifices and the private generosity of countless people.

But there is a place for public protest and resistance, gospel inspired and non-violent, in the face of a government policy that squanders precious resources and threatens mass death and destruction. We are not contradicting the gospel. We are calling our fellow countrymen and women to heed the gospel of Christ, the good news that all human life is sacred and precious, that national security can so often become a false god demanding false sacrifices.

So, no gloomy faces! It is a joyful and beautiful thing we are doing.

Blessed be God for ever.

Fr David Standley

Parish Priest (RC)

St. Vincent de Paul, Clapham, London

*It is a joyful and beautiful
thing we are doing.*

Prayer of Abandonment: Father, I abandon myself into your hands;

Mgr. George Hay, died 1st April 2024

*An appreciation by Adrian Toffolo
(with acknowledgement to Plymouth Diocesan website.)*

George Hay was born in British India in 1930 (at Marden now in Pakistan) and retained many happy memories of his childhood there. Later the family returned to Britain and George was educated at Ampleforth College. He opted for military service in the Navy prior to going up to Oxford. He commenced studies for the priesthood at the Venerable English College in Rome, where he was ordained on 5th July 1959. The following year he returned to the Diocese and began pastoral ministry at the Sacred Heart Church in Exeter.

He was to spend many happy years in Exeter, as it was not long before he was appointed chaplain to Exeter University and he was instrumental in setting up Boniface House as a Chaplaincy Centre from 1966. His duties also included being priest-in-charge of the Catholic community of Crediton where he was involved in the building of the existing church and the setting up of the National Shrine to our patron, Saint Boniface, for whom Fr George had a heartfelt devotion. Students at the University and parishioners at Crediton soon



came to appreciate the talents and the pastoral care of Fr George, and many friendships were made that have endured to this day. In 1978 came the call to return to Rome and take up the task of Rector of the English College, helping to guide a new generation of candidates for priesthood towards ordination. Affection for this wise and gentle leader who gave such a positive example of priesthood to his students has also been enduring.

Monsignor George loved Rome and so many aspects of Italian life, and always welcomed opportunities to return. However, a first spell of health problems led to a return to the Diocese in 1984, a little sooner than may have been expected. Back in the Diocese and after a few months of welcome recuperation in healthy Dartmouth, Mgr George was appointed to Sacred Heart Paignton, where he immediately applied himself to the usual tasks of a dutiful priest. He was a happy priest sharing the life of his people, always diligent in preparing homilies and catechesis, always devout in the celebration of the Liturgy. He was appointed a Canon of the Chapter and subsequently became Provost. Other Diocesan duties included being responsible for the support of the newly ordained clergy, and the ongoing formation of all priests. In 1991 Bishop Budd felt it was time for lighter duties, and Mgr George went to the smaller parish of Okehampton. There he was as zealous as ever, and appreciated as much as ever, but felt he was rather cut off from brother priests and other friends. So in 1997 he came back to Torbay, this time to St Marychurch where he stayed until 2003 and a final parish appointment at Bovey Tracey and Chudleigh. Finally, well beyond the canonical age of retirement, a bungalow was found for him near the church of St Gregory in Kingskerswell where he was to live out his final years, and died peacefully on 1st April 2024.

Mgr George Hay was one of the priests of the Diocese respected by fellow clergy, parishioners and many non-Catholics who had contact with him in various capacities. He was a gentleman through and through, and he was a priest to the core. He was humble, amiable, sincere in his devotion. He had come to know Christ as "The Way, the Truth and the Life" and he never tired of helping others to come to Christ and discover for themselves the riches of the Faith. He will be mourned by many and he will not be so easily forgotten. +

do with me what you will. Whatever you do, I thank you. I am ready for all,

I search for answers

Posthumously by Fr. Tadhg Furlong

Cnoc na Greine – Sunshine Hill – should be a beautiful place to spend a fortnight. And indeed it was. But the sun was away in America and Africa for most of the two weeks. Providentially, the more crucial days were bright. The sun came down on the desert days. The Sunday on Inis Mor was glorious. The darkness and dampness of other days was counterbalanced by the brightness in the eyes of brothers who didn't seem to be affected by the presence or absence of the great light in the sky. The two great lights in the sky were to prompt many of my thoughts.

The sea was beside us. Galway Bay. I was in my twenties when I first saw the Bay. But it was shortly after I was born into this world twenty years earlier that I first heard my father sing about the sun going down over Galway Bay. It was his repertoire for making time. Now, I had the opportunity to spend two weeks on the shores of the bay which brought musical memories to me.

The rise and fall of the tide captured my attention, my admiration, my imagination. At water's edge, I stood on the rocks. I sat down on the rocks – as our brother from Flanders said. I walked on rocks. I went down to the sea six times one day. The ebb and flow fascinated me. I watched the gradual coming in and the gradual going out. I tried to detect the moment – or hour – of turn at low tide and the hour – or moment – at high water. What causes all this motion? I had a vague understanding.



On my return to Rosegreen I pulled out the books to study with interest the entry "Tide". I failed to grasp all the detailed scientific explanation. I read about the sun, the moon and the earth. I read about their changing positions. I read about gravity. I tried to understand the explanation about the influence of each of these bodies on the others. I marvelled at the effect of the sun and the moon on the waters just a few yards from our Nazareth home.

Ship captains use tide tables just as railroad passengers use timetables. Tide-tables are even more dependable because tide times never change their regular pattern. The influence of the distant lights in the sky is responsible. I wondered too how much else I had forgotten of all I had learned between the first time I heard the song "Galway Bay" and the present moment. I found myself asking what are the influences which are responsible for the way I think and move. I searched alone. I have treasured memories of searching together in the group sharings of Nazareth. I was greatly inspired by the words of Charles from London as he invited us to go to the heart of what it means to be "Pastores" today.

These are my questions. What are the influences? What are the guiding lights? I will continue to search for the answers.

Tadhg was a priest in the Archdiocese of Cashel. He lived in Cappawhite, Co. Tipperary and died in his sleep before Christmas 2023. Rest in peace, brother. +

I accept all; let only your will be done in me and in all your creatures, I wish no more than this.

How our money is spent

Matthias Kiel, the International Treasurer for Jesus Caritas, responds to a request as to how our regional contributions to him are used.

Dear National Responsible brothers! February 2024

As Treasurer of the International Fund, I would like to thank you for all the contributions that were paid in during 2023. 2023 contributions were received from the following countries: Spain, Brazil, Belgium (Flanders), Italy, Ireland, Germany (2022 and 2023), South Korea, France, Austria & America.

- ⇒ The total income amounted to: € 19.278,55
- ⇒ The expenses in the past year amounted to: € 10.399,47
- ⇒ This results in a pleasing surplus of: € 8.879,08

Most of the expenditure was for travel and accommodation costs for the international team that attended the European meeting in France (Annecy) and then spent a week working together for our Fraternity. We also supported the Nazareth Month, which took place in the Dominican Republic.

Budget 2024

The plan for 2024 is for four people from the international team to travel to Africa (Chad) so that we can get an idea of the situation there and encourage the brothers there. One person will travel to Buenos Aires to make arrangements for the world meeting in 2025. This will cost at least 10,000 euros.

Furthermore, we are already starting to save money in order to invite those brothers to the world meeting who cannot afford it. We will need around 20,000 euros for Africa alone. If money is available, we would also like to support Nazareth Months again. Another project that is currently in progress is an English and German translation of the book on Charles de Foucauld, which Andrea Mandonico published in Italian in 2016. That also costs a lot.

I have not been able to give you a precise budget here, but I hope you can now get an idea of the financial situation of the international treasury. I would therefore like to ask you once again for a generous solidarity contribution and at the same time thank you and the brothers in England, Wales and Ireland very much for it. +

General Audience on Charles de Foucauld

Do check this link for Pope Francis' Audience of 18th October 2023 on the apostolic zeal of the believer and Charles de Foucauld (too long to fit in here:)

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2023/documents/20231018-udienza-generale.html#:~:text=God%20is%20always%20near%2C%20he,goodness%2C%20the%20goodness%20of%20Jesus> +

Into your hands I commend my soul; I offer it to you with all the love of my heart. For I

Christmas Letter to the Brothers Around the World 2023

From Eric Lozada, our International Responsible

Christmas seems a long time ago, but not receiving this in time for the November „Be Brothers,“ the editor still felt we should hear from our International Responsible.

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel” (which means, God-with-us). (Matthew 1:23)

“Christmas has always been about this: contemplating the visit of God to his people.” (Pope Francis)

“I was born, born for you, born in a cave, in December, in the cold, on a wintry night, in poverty and in solitude, unknown even to the poorest. Why was I born in this way? So that you may believe in my love, since my love for you knows no limit. As I have loved you so much, put all your hope in me. I teach you to love me... Ever since my birth I have shown myself to you and have put myself entirely into your hands. ... you have been able to see me, hold me, hear me, serve me, console me.... I did not give myself to you just at my birth for a few days or years, but I gave myself into your hands for ever, till the end of time.” (Brother Charles’ meditation on the nativity scene)



Dear brothers,

Christmas greetings to you all!

How are you and your community celebrating Christmas this year? Are there new and creative ways in your celebration from last year’s? Is Christmas still the gentle, quiet and humble presence of the Emmanuel in our busy and loud world? Or do we give the market, tourism and entertainment industries the license to plan our Christmas celebrations? It would be good to take a look at our Christmas celebrations this year vis-à-vis the reality of our world today with all its lights and shadows. I wonder how do families in Gaza, Ukraine, Haiti or any place and people suffering from social unrest, extreme poverty and displacement celebrate Christmas this year? Is the reality of suffering more close to them than that of Christmas joy? We take a reflective look at our world and in interpreting the signs, we celebrate Christmas in a more responsive and appropriate way.

And what about mother earth? Christmas is not only for the human world but for the whole universe, including the ecological environment which is radically altered by the mystery of God-in-the-flesh. I wonder how are sister water, brother wind, sister bird, brother forest celebrating the season? Are the complaints about pollution, climate change, imbalance of the ecosystem depriving them of Christmas joy? For us who may be in the brighter side of the world, what would be our response to the invitation to celebrate the Emmanuel amidst the thundering noise of violence, greed,

love you, Lord, and so need to give myself, to surrender myself into your hands, without re-

apathy towards life in all forms of our world today?

The virgin birth is not only a person but a path. Right in the very ground of our barrenness, vulnerability, helplessness as people and environment, traces of new life appear in the horizon, little manifestations of the Emmanuel break open our consciousness to give birth to new initiatives and shared dreams. As people of hope, we take a long, loving look at the world as the Father sees it when He gave the world its Messiah at the first Christmas. The world was not ready. He has to be born in the poverty of the manger, in the periphery of the village. This is not some sentimental or wishful thinking or a *deus ex machina* but a call to a radical, paradigmatic shift for the birthing of a new heaven and a new earth.

Christmas is a call to solitude of the heart. True solitude is recognizing, naming and claiming our poverty, our emptiness which is also our unlimited space for others. At the very core of our solitude, we encounter the Emmanuel in all men and women as brothers and sisters not only our friends but also those who kill, lie, torture, rape, and wage wars. They become our flesh and blood. When our hearts are full of the goodness of the Emmanuel and empty of fear, anger, indifference, greed, “we become a welcoming home for God and for our whole human family on earth.” (Henri JM Nouwen)

Ours is to wait, not passively though but actively. When we wait, we know that what we are waiting for is growing from the ground on which we are standing. We wait in the conviction that a seed has been planted two thousand years ago and that something has already begun. We are called to be present to the Kairos of Christmas with the certainty that something is happening where we are and that we want to be present to this moment minus the external features of the season. God has planted generously the seed of divinity in every human heart and in our world and we wait with firm conviction and joyful hope with Mary who sang, “the Almighty has done great things and holy is His name.” Blessed are we when we see what God wants us to see in this great season of Christmas.

Some Announcements:

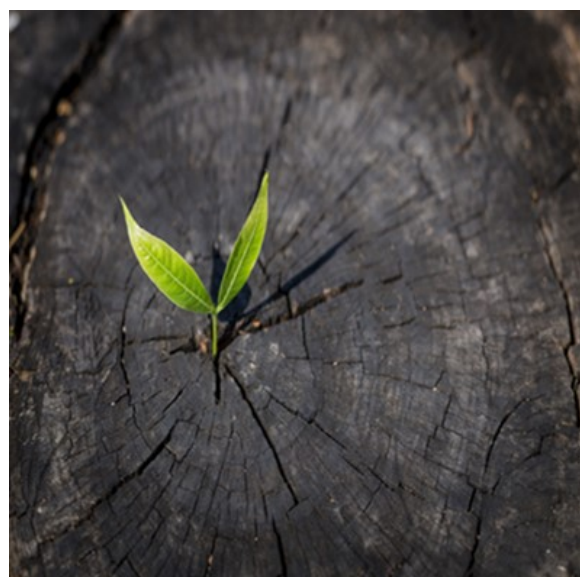
There is a Month of Nazareth organized in the Philippines on July 1-26, 2024 for English speakers. Registration fee is \$400/participant.

Preparations are on the way for our World Assembly in Lulunta, Argentina in January 2025. In the coming weeks, you would be receiving letters from the international team so that we see, reflect, discern and walk together the direction, content and process of the Assembly.

Brothers, I thank you very much for your beautiful witness and firm resolve to follow Jesus more closely in the footsteps of Brother Charles. May our faithful practice of the spirituality so free our hearts that the Emmanuel could give birth in us and in our ministry new and fervent ways of encountering the many faces of the poor today.

With my fraternal affection

Eric LOZADA



serve, and with boundless confidence, for you are my Father. (*Brother Charles.*)

Nazareth by Paul Churchill (forwarded by Niall Ahern)

One of the main themes in Charles' life was the reality of Nazareth. Nazareth is a place in Palestine where Jesus grew up. Charles lived there for many years.

However, Nazareth was not just a physical place for de Foucauld. It was more a divine environment in which the work of God could be carried out. Nazareth was the place of the ordinary, the important, the normal. Nazareth for Jesus was the place of love, both human and divine. I marvel at the gifts of love of that Mother who was the channel of a graced human love which supported Jesus. It was where for most of his life on earth He grew, humanly speaking, in His relationship with God and learnt so much for His mission. Nazareth is where God touches us by means of the human love in our homes, wider family and society.

Nazareth remains at the heart of de Foucauld's ideas. It was the space where real evangelization could take place, the space where God is actually met. It is clear to me that Ireland is searching for a spirituality of Nazareth which will help it in the future.

Paul Churchill is a priest of the Dublin Diocese, Ireland.

Stop press: An excerpt from an interview with Bishop Declan Lang of Clifton Diocese (Bristol and surrounding counties) with thanks to Peter Slocombe of Clifton fraternity.



In conversation with James Abbot on the evening before his successor, Bosco Macdonald, was ordained as 10th Bishop of Clifton (8th May 2024)

"How has your faith been enriched, or challenged, during the last quarter of a century as a bishop?"

'It's been challenged. I don't know if it has anything to do with age, but you actually think, does God exist? And is there anything after death? These are important questions to ask. And there are opportunities for you to grow in faith. That faith isn't something that we learn from a book. Faith is about a relationship with God. And that relationship... God can lead it anywhere. One of my favourite prayers is Charles de Foucauld's "Father, I abandon myself into your hands. Do with me as you wish. For whatever you do, I thank you. I'm ready for all, I accept all, that only your will be done in my life."

(With acknowledgements to Clifton Diocesan website.)

Among e.mails received by the editor

From: Kathy Mckee
Sent: 16 November 2023
Subject: RE: "Be Brothers" November 2023:

Hi Bob, Thanks for sending us our copy of Be Brothers. I really appreciate your dedication. Too bad you're so far away.

We're in the process of getting our annual little magazine published. There's a company here in Fakenham that do quite a good job. Fr Tom Trahern asked me to do 2 days on Br Charles for the priests of the Brighton and Arundel diocese next year. I think that's around Gatwick! I've just done my time in airports since I went for 5 weeks to Rome for our Chapter. I was a translator. Afterwards I had a week in the little brothers' hermitage in Spello. Lovely! Then I went to Canada for 2 weeks to see my family.

Am now back in Walsingham...quite happy to be back really. We have an Indian little sister with us for 2 years. She's working at the Shrine welcoming pilgrims. So many of them are Asian. She's a great presence...and great in the house as well.

Lots of love from the 4 of us. Your little sister Kathy (*Walsingham, Norfolk.*)

From: Xavier Chevillard
Sent: 16 November 2023
Subject: Re: "Be Brothers" November 2023:

Thank you very much for emailing your sharings; a great testimony of life and service in UK, Ireland and beyond. I am somewhat missing People and life in Leeds which for me was 37 years of my life as a man and a little brother of Jesus since 1972. I remember Don Stoker coming to the farewell celebration in the parish in late 2014, and later on, from Brussels, praying with David Standley who was celebrating online at the time of the pandemic !

My links and sharing with the family of Charles de Foucauld are understandably more in French... I wonder how many of you have come across a relatively recent book by J F Six: **Charles le libéré** -2016, where the author emphasizes the simplification of Charles's life, towards the end: he would sign his many letters **Charles** rather than brother.. and he is no longer seen with the cross on his habit ! Some evolution ! Many people recall 1908 when he was actually saved by his neighbours fresh goat milk... -that was (to me) a major change from giving to local people- All this is brilliantly picked up by Pope Francis in Fratelli Tutti, and recently, as you mention. I could also recall the 'miracle' that put forward his canonisation, that is of a young worker in Saumur who fell 15 m. and recovered; this man is not baptised (that we know of); this happened during a novena to God in the parish of Bl Charles de Foucauld asking for a miracle of Bl. Charles ! What a sign ! Another writer who was influenced by Charles is Eric Emmanuel Schmitt, who found faith in God near the Assekrem - in **La nuit de feu** -2015- and this is very much alive in his latest **Le défi de Jérusalem**-2023, which I hope will be translated.

I will FW you the latest news bulletin of the Little Brothers of Jesus when it is published, as I mean to share this with other friends such as our sisters, and Moira Potier of course.

With every good wish when we remember Dec. 1st...

Xavier (*Little Brother of Jesus*) -in Lille, France

E.mails continued overleaf

E-mails continued from overleaf

From: Moira Potier
Sent: 12 November 2023
Subject: Re: "Be Brothers" November 2023:

Thanks Bob,

...with fond memories too - the photo (*from the Nov. "Be Bros."*) of the view from the Cotswold escarpment brought back happy memories of my car journey with you to Nympsfield.

I also loved the inclusion of the Hopkins poem - I was in my cottage in Ireland in June and was visited by an injured Kestrel (aka a Windhover) for a number of days, we slowly became friends and that wonderful poem came to my mind, it was a really special, spiritual experience !

Moira (*Lay Fraternities of Br. Charles*)

Seeds of the fraternity in Ireland– 50 years ago!
Sent by Niall Ahern, the Irish Responsible.

On the 29 June 1974, Don Stoker, a priest from the diocese of Liverpool, introduced the Jesus Caritas Fraternity to Ireland. We are glad that it was an English priest who brought it to the Irish. Don left us no literature about it. His own story was the magnet that drew us in. For in Don's story we experienced a radiance of the charism of Brother Charles who said, "*As soon as I believed that there was a God, I understood that I could not do otherwise than to live only for him; my religious vocation dates from the same hour as my faith. God is so great. There is such a difference between God and all that is not Him.*"



In the home of the Little Sisters at Labre Park, Don told a few of us how the Fraternity had helped him to be faithful to prolonged daily adoration of the Fathers every since his ordination in 1960. He spoke of adoration in the new way which Brother Charles opened up for us. Adoration meant being with Jesus, our Brother in his adoration of the Father and being led with Jesus into the Father's saving love for every human person.

Don's daily fidelity to the prolonged adoration both attracted and overawed me. On the car journey home from Labre Park I asked Peter Lemass "What are you going to do?". "I am going to try" he said. In a spirit of emulation I responded "If you try, I try." And so Jesus Caritas took root in Ireland as the miracle of Don's life began to happen in ours.

Extract from Reconciliation and the Charism of Brother Charles, published in Be Brothers (Irish Edition) Christmas 1999. Written by Gerry Reynolds of cherished memory. +

The annual British January Short Retreat

We met from 16 – 18th January at the House of the Open Door Community, Broadway, Worcs. – transferred from the Convent at Nympsfield due to a power cut. Fr Jonathan Cotton led us on the Retreat which he based on the findings of the European Conference in Annecy, France in July 2023. We watched the Video produced at the end of the Conference by the delegates – trying new ways to communicate and providing a promotional tool for Fraternities. Afterwards, a copy of the script was provided. VIDEO
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFtENLgcJeo>.



The 4 themes chosen for reflection: HOPE, ENCOUNTER, FRIENDSHIP & KINDNESS, MIGRANTS. The overall thrust of the Conference was how to share the gift of Brother Charles and the Jesus Caritas Fraternities – outgoing, missionary. We were reminded of Eric Lozada’s comments in June’s edition of BE BROTHERS: “... how are you being fired up for mission? ... Where are you being led by the Spirit? ...”

Our Scripture Reflection on HOPE was: Ephesians 1: 17-23: May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope he holds out for you. Two publications by Pope Francis were recommended to help us move forward: his Letter, Fratelli Tutti; and his book “I am asking in the name of God – ten prayers for a future of hope.” For those without hope in our world and in our pastoral ministry, our response as Brothers in Fraternity is to sow seeds of hope through encounter & dialogue with the world. Fr Jonathan gave us all a packet of seeds to sow encouraging further reflection. As we sow, we pray: What seed of hope do you want me to sow today, Lord?

Our Scripture Reflection on ENCOUNTER was: Matthew 17:1-8, the Transfiguration. We need to encounter the Lord Jesus first, then transformation follows. Be continually opened to be transformed. Our transformed lives will attract others to join our Fraternals. We considered five moments of Encounter: Sacramental, Nazareth, Desert, in Fraternity Meetings, and on the Margins, with examples from Brother Charles’ life, and looking at these themes in our own spiritual lives.

Our Scripture Reflection on FRIENDSHIP & KINDNESS was: Luke 10: 29-37, the Good Samaritan. We looked in greater detail at Pope Francis’ Letter Fratelli Tutti which concluded by suggesting Brother Charles as an example of how to be a Universal Brother, an example of the theme of this Pope’s Letter. Jesus Caritas Fraternities are ideally suited to model the message of this Papal Letter.

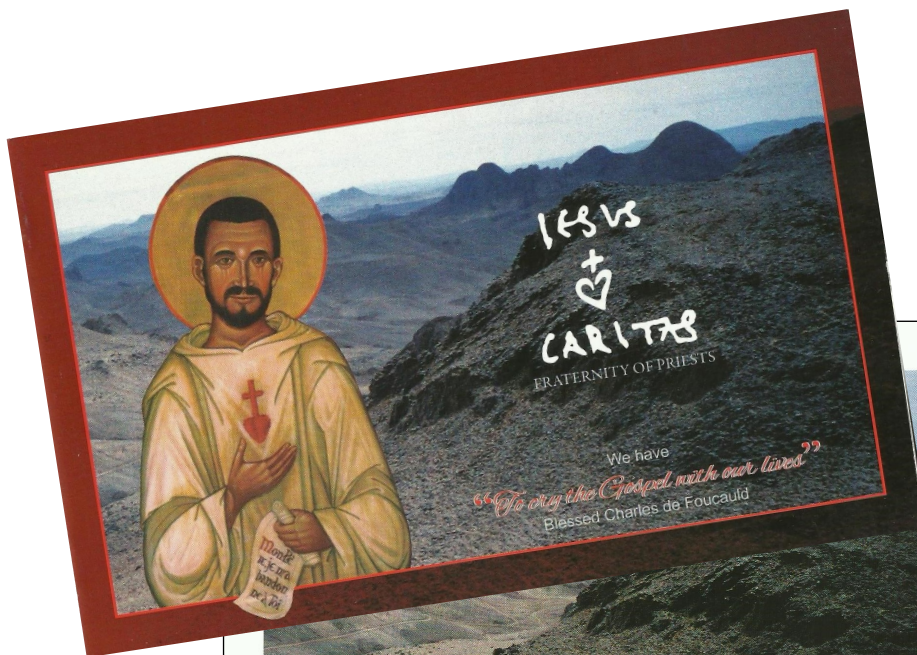
Our Scripture Reflection for MIGRANTS was: Luke 14: 16-24, the parable of the Wedding Banquet. This theme was identified during the Conference as one of the most pressing pastoral issues. So then, you are no longer strangers & sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God. [Ephesians 2:19.] We considered the Document from The Bishops Conference called Love the Stranger. Brother Charles spoke more about slavery and put considerable pressure on the authorities of his day to end slavery among the Muslims. Brother Charles found a deeper level of communion with his Muslim brother & sisters, in the area of the soul, transcending differences of language, culture and religion. A deeper insight into a Truth and a Love that unites the human family – a Truth & Love found only in God. Did not Jesus say he is the Truth? Did not John say in his first letter: God is love. Whoever lives in love, lives in God. [1John 4.] [Ideas from Sr Cathy Wright].

With periods of Adoration each day, Mass, a Reconciliation Service, lovely food and beautiful surroundings – a wonderful time of Retreat was had by all. +

Jesus Caritas Accounts for Britain 2023

Provided by John Nolan, Hon. Treasurer.

| Inflows | £ | £ |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Nympsfield Retreat Jan 2023 | £170.00 | |
| Nympsfield Retreat Jan 2024 | £330.00 | Monies received in advance |
| Subscriptions | £1,510.00 | |
| Total inflows | | £2,010.00 |
| Outflows | | |
| LSOJ for annual mag | £- | |
| Nympsfield Summer 2023 | £550.00 | |
| Nympsfield Team meeting | £390.00 | |
| Printing and postage | £478.77 | |
| Responsibles Meeting: Westminster | £100.00 | |
| Retreat subsidies | £650.00 | JC to Anney |
| Travel | £108.64 | |
| Website | £242.99 | |
| Total outflows | | £2,520.40 |
| BALANCE | | -£510.40 |



Reprinted for a second time is the late Fr. Tony Philpot's excellent description of the origins and ethos of Jesus Caritas.

24 pp., full colour, art paper, A5 landscape format.

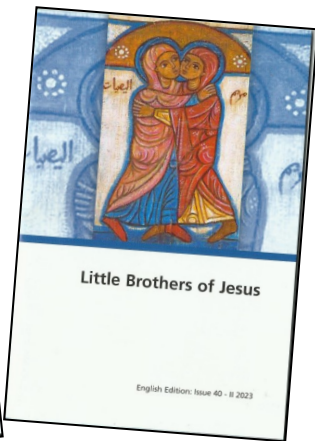
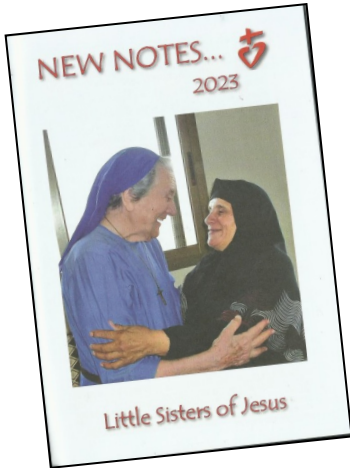
Copies are available free from both the British and Irish Regional Responsibles (contact details on the rear cover of every "Be Brothers.") +



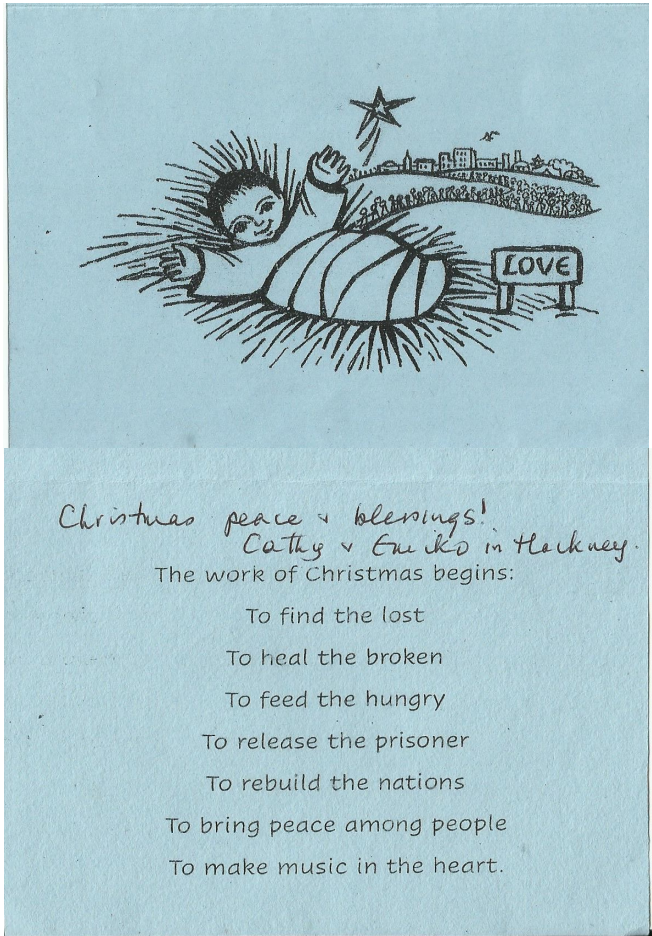
For your recruiting

Publications received

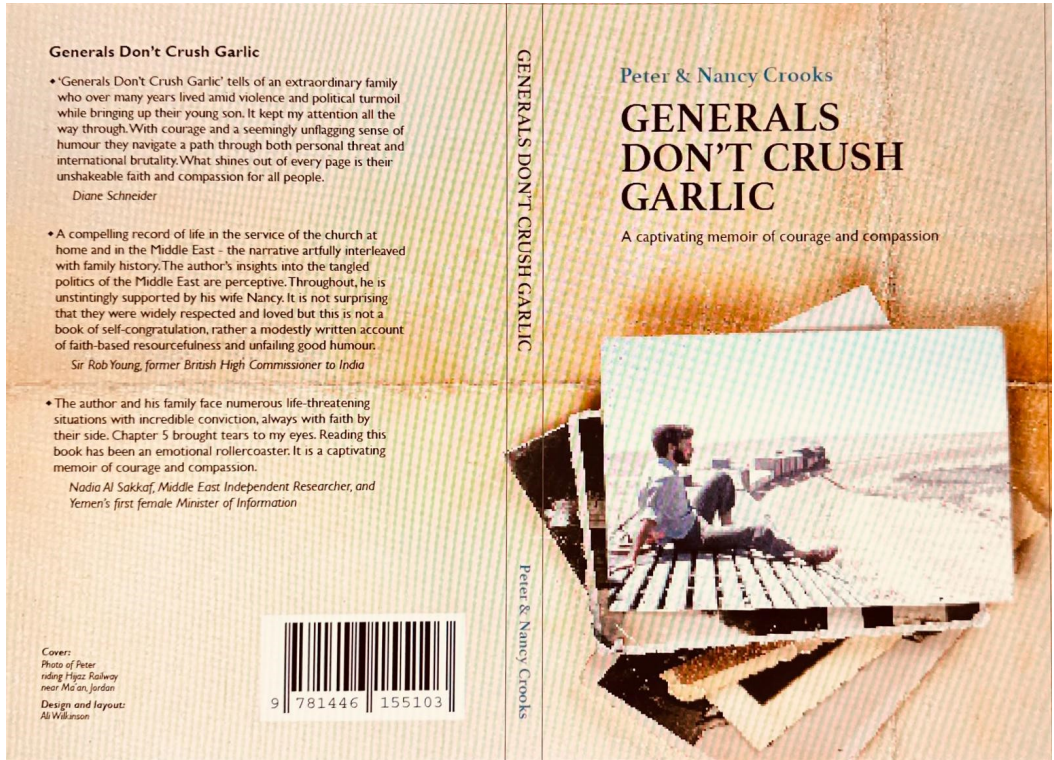
The Little Brothers magazine and the Little Sisters' "News Notes" are now received and passed on electronically to all British fraternities (and any others who ask the "Be Bros." editor.) Much inspirational reading therein! +



The editor was more moved by the sentiments of this Christmas card from the Little Sisters, than by all the other 70 or so cards he received. Would not Br. Charles have been overjoyed by it too! +



Peter Crooks is an Anglican vicar, family man and one of the brothers of Wrexham fraternity. His new book, "Generals don't crush garlic" is a fascinating account of his own life, largely spent in the Middle East. Details from the Editor. Read it to explain the title!



Generals Don't Crush Garlic

- "Generals Don't Crush Garlic" tells of an extraordinary family who over many years lived amid violence and political turmoil while bringing up their young son. It kept my attention all the way through. With courage and a seemingly unflagging sense of humour they navigate a path through both personal threat and international brutality. What shines out of every page is their unshakeable faith and compassion for all people.
Diane Schneider
- A compelling record of life in the service of the church at home and in the Middle East - the narrative artfully interleaved with family history. The author's insights into the tangled politics of the Middle East are perceptive. Throughout, he is unstintingly supported by his wife Nancy. It is not surprising that they were widely respected and loved but this is not a book of self-congratulation, rather a modestly written account of faith-based resourcefulness and unfailing good humour.
Sir Rob Young, former British High Commissioner to India
- The author and his family face numerous life-threatening situations with incredible conviction, always with faith by their side. Chapter 5 brought tears to my eyes. Reading this book has been an emotional rollercoaster. It is a captivating memoir of courage and compassion.
Nadia Al Sakkaf, Middle East Independent Researcher, and Yemen's first female Minister of Information

Cover: Photo of Peter riding Hijaz Railway near Mecca, Jordan
Design and layout: Ali Wilkinson

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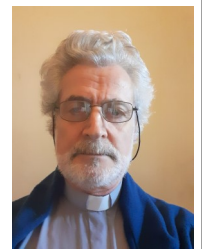
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In addition to local needs, these assist international Responsibles' meetings with any substantial surplus going to fraternities in developing countries. The British subs. also covers the printing and distribution of "Be Brothers Britain & Ireland" in Britain (distributed solely by e.mail in Ireland.)

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Website for the GB fraternities: <https://www.jesus Caritaspriests.org.uk>