

A DAY-TO-DAY JOURNEY WITH **CHARLES DE FOUCAULD**

For many of us Charles de Foucauld has been an inspiration and his way of living the spiritual life has helped us to both see and live Jesus in the here and now of our lives. Brother Charles reminds us that God is where we are and that we need not do something out of the ordinary to live the life of the Gospel but rather we are to do the ordinary in an extra-ordinary way. We meet God in every moment of our lives. Brother Charles' focus is on the hidden life of Jesus in Nazareth. We look at Jesus before he became a public figure, before he was known as a healer or teacher. We look to Jesus who lived in a particular way among his on family and friends. We see Jesus as he visits with friends, attends the weddings and funerals of the people of Nazareth. We see Jesus who wept and laughed, knowing the stories and the ordinary gossip of the people. Brother Charles has us focus on these aspects of Jesus' life in Nazareth so that we might come to the awareness that all of our lives are ordinary and although we too are hidden in the situations of our life it is precisely there, in the midst of living, in the midst of the people we are surrounded by that we meet God. Here and everywhere is Nazareth. Brother Charles says, "The life of Nazareth can be lived any where." Contemplatives in the midst of the world we are called to open our eyes and see-see it is God who is among us.

Charles de Foucauld was born in Strasbourg, France in 1858. As an adolescent he lost his faith. He was immersed in worldly pleasures but they failed to satisfy him. He was left in a spiritual desolation. After three years as an army officer he undertook a scientific expedition to Morocco, in which he had risked his life. It was on his expedition that he observed the faithfulness of the Muslim people. It was the faithfulness of these believing people that called him to search further. On his return to Europe his cousin introduced him to Father Henri Huvelin and with him Charles rediscovered his faith in Christ. Charles says that at the same moment as he was converted that he knew he had to give his entire life to God.

Charles spent seven years as a Trappist monk but was haunted by the life of Jesus at Nazareth. Jesus was an ordinary worker among workers it was in this hidden and rather obscure way that God came to live among us. Charles leaves the monastic community to live as a hermit and handy man at the Poor Clare Monastery in Nazareth and it was here that he found peace. Charles was eventually ordained a priest and went to the Sahara to live among the nomadic tribes. He lived and worked among these tribes each day discovering more about them and becoming more aware that God lived here among these forgotten peoples.

On December 1st, 1916 Charles was killed, shot by the shaky hand of a sixteen-year-old boy guarding him as his house was ransacked. Brother Charles died alone in a foreign country. No one came to join him even though he had great hopes that brothers and sisters would come to live the ordinary hidden life of Jesus of Nazareth. In time two

others came along and embodied the vision of Brother Charles. It was Rene Voillaume who founded the Little Brothers of Jesus, The Little Brothers of the Gospel and the Little Sisters of the Gospel. It was Little Sister Magdeleine who founded The Little Sisters of Jesus. Since the early days of these foundations there are many others who have joined the family of Charles de Foucauld.

Brother Charles invites us to live the life and spirituality of Nazareth.

“...Take the life of Nazareth in its simplicity and broadness as your objective in every way and in every connection... no special costume or habit-like Jesus at Nazareth...no enclosure-like Jesus at Nazareth...no isolated place or abode, but close by some village-like Jesus at Nazareth...not less than eight hours of work (manual or otherwise, but the former as far as possible) per day-like Jesus at Nazareth... neither large properties, nor large buildings, nor large expenditures, nor even large sums in alms, but real poverty in every respect-like Jesus at Nazareth... Pray as Jesus prayed, pray as much as Jesus prayed; always make plenty of room for prayer... and, as He did, do plenty of manual work, for manual work does not mean time taken from prayer, but time given to prayer... The life of Nazareth can be led anywhere at all; you must lead it wherever it will be most helpful to your neighbor.” (Brother Charles, notebook, July 22nd 1905)

In this calendar we will walk through the year with Brother Charles, Rene Voillaume and Little Sister Magdeleine.

JANUARY

1

OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS, SOLEMNITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

My God, you are so good!
That's how you always are!
You are always the one who
“Does not break the bruised reed,
Nor quench the smoldering wick!
(Bro. Charles meditations)

2

ST.BASIL THE GREAT, ST. GREGORY NAZIANZEN, BISHOPS AND DOCTORS
I walk by the light of what I believe to be the Lord's will; completely obedient to the authority of the church- I submit everything to that.
(LS Mag. P.30)

3

With what love, what respect, with joy, with what eager tenderness must we welcome anyone who comes to our house, any human being whatsoever. Everyone, everyone, everyone. When we welcome them, we welcome Jesus!
(Bro. Charles Vol. LSM p.66 diary)

4

ELIZABETH ANN SETON, RELIGIOUS

When people see me, they must be able to say 'Because this man is good, his religion must be good.' If anyone asks me why I am good and kind, I must answer 'Because I serve one who is far more 'good' than I am.'

(Bro. Charles, bea 3)

5

JOHN NEUMANN, BISHOP

The weakness of human means is a source of strength-
Jesus is the Master of the impossible.

(Bro. Charles, LSM p.6)

6

BLESSED ANDRE BESSETTE, RELIGIOUS

As soon as I believed there was a God, I understood I could do nothing else than live for Him alone- my religious vocation goes back to the same moment as my faith. God is so great! What a difference there is between God and all that is not God!

(Bro. Charles, from a letter, LS p.32)

7 RAYMOND OF PENYAFORT, OP, PRIEST

Try to have as many relations with the as possible, so that you establish trust and friendship. Live as much as possible as they do.

(La vraie Figure du P. de Foucauld, Paul Lesourd, p253-254/ 35 I)

8

Love should be what gathers you to myself, not distance from my children. See me in them and, as I did at Nazareth, live close to them, lost in God.

(BR.C)

9

It seems to me that here in Beni Abbes the atmosphere is better for understanding the aspect of Brother Charles' prayer which must characterize that of the Little Sisters... A familiar and trust-filled kind of prayer which we address to Jesus as our Beloved Brother; yet we must never forget to see the Lord in him, so great and so beautiful that our admiration and praise must be tireless.

(LS Mag. P.34)

10

...I asked for religion lessons: he (Fr. Huvelin) told me to kneel down and go to confession, and then immediately sent me to receive communion.

(Bro. Charles, meditations-LS, p.19)

11

Oh my God!
 How surely you had your hand on me,
 And how little I felt it!
 You're so good,
 You took such good care of me!
 How closely you were keeping me
 Under your wings,
 While I didn't even believe you existed!
 Bro. Charles , meditations)

12

Islam really shook me to the core. The sight of such faith, of these people living in
 The continual presence of God, made me glimpse something greater, truer, than
 Worldly concerns. I started studying Islam, and then the Bible.
 (Bro.Charles, from a letter)

13

HILARY, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

The prodigal son, received not only with inexpressible goodness,
 Without punishment, without reprimand, with no memories of the
 Past; but received with kisses, with the best tunic and the ring
 Reserved for the son of the master of the house; not only received like that, but actually
 Sought out by this blessed father, and carried back by him from the far-off country.
 (Bro.Charles, meditations)

14

It is only on the path, obeying as a child obeys its parents, that you will fulfill your
 vocation to Love. "The more united people are to the church, the more united they are to
 the Holy Spirit which gives it life, the more they love the one whose body it is, our
 Beloved Lord Jesus".
 (LS Mag. P.31)

15

To pray is to think about Jesus and love him... The more we love, the better we pray...
 (Bro. Charles, LSM p.32)

16

I won't be happy until I've found the most misunderstood and despised tribe on the face
 of the earth, the single poorest individual, and said to them: "The Lord Jesus is your
 brother and he has raised you up to himself...and I have come to you so that you might
 accept to be my brother, my sister, my friend."
 (LSM, p.40)

17

ANTHONY of the desert, ABBOT

It is good to live alone here;
 You accomplish something even without
 Doing much of anything, because you
 Become more and more like the local people.
 You are so little and approachable.
 (Bro. Charles, a letter)

18

The whole history of the foundation is summed up in thee few words: God took me by the hand and, blindly, I followed...in what seemed the most total darkness, and in the most disconcerting absence of human means, but with unlimited trust in Jesus as all-powerful, master of the impossible.
 (LS Magdeleine p.7)

19

Every Christian must be an apostle... To see every human being above all as a brother sister, child of God. Every Christian should view every human being as a beloved brother, sister... and have for all human beings the feelings of the Heart of Jesus.
 (Bro. Charles Bea 3)

20

FABIAN, POPE AND MARTYR; SEBASTIAN, MARTYR

You must travel about so that you can get known, so that a lot of people will see you and you can enter into relation with them and become friends. You must make stays with them, so that there will be long conversations with the same people repeatedly and you can cultivate the seed that your travels have merely planted.
 (Paul Lesourd p278/ p35 I)

21

AGNUS, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

Two o'clock in the morning – How good of you, my God, to wake me up! Still six hours left with nothing to do but contemplate you, to stay at your feet, just saying: I love you.
 (BR.C)

22

VINCENT, DEACON AND MARTYR

Before being religious, be Christian. Have the plain human virtues of hospitality and charity and cultivate them to their highest degree. Only after that should you add on the virtues of religious life. This is why I want your lives to be flooded with light.
 (LSM Vol. 1 p.67)

23

When you love someone, you want to talk to the one you love constantly, or at least look at your beloved without ceasing. Prayer is nothing else than that, an intimate conversation with our Beloved. We look at him, we tell him we love him, we enjoy being at his feet.

(Bro. Charles of Jesus Ecrits Spirituels, p.3/ LSM Vol. 1 / p.127)

24

FRANCIS DE SALES, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

Humility, you will be everyone's little sister and friend – Christian or non-Christians, fortunate or unfortunate, rich or poor, of every social class.

(LSM 50)

25

CONVERSION OF PAUL, APOSTLE

Our friendships and our human loves get deeper in Jesus. I would like to give you a formation that makes you able to give your whole heart with complete freedom and have it increase your love for the Lord instead of decreasing it. He took on a human heart. He loved and let himself be loved.

(L.I,p.175/LSM, p.127 Vol.1)

26

TIMOTHY AND TITUS, BISHOPS

The gospel will be your treasure. It is the book of life and contains the Science of Love. You will steep your mind and your heart in it so that, by the way you live, you can then become a living proclamation of the Gospel, a Gospel in action.

(LSM, Vol. 1 p.128)

27

ANGELA MERICI, VIRGIN

To rejoice at having less rather than at having more, and to desire it. To rejoice not in gain but in lack and failure and need. This is when we possess the cross and the poverty of Jesus, the greatest goods the world can give us.

(Bro. Charles/ LSM p.187 Vol.1)

28

THOMAS AQUINAS,OP., PRIEST AND DOCTOR

Holy Communion will mean for you, first and foremost, a way to participate fully in the Eucharistic Sacrifice. From it you will draw strength and fervour for each day. And you will find in the Holy Sacrifice the means for uniting your day, with all its prayer and work and suffering, to the redemptive passion of the Savior.

(Green Booklet,p.28/ LSM Vol.1 p.128)

29

You too, one day, perhaps only for a single hour, caught a glimpse of a tiny light that made you leave everything for the Love of Christ. I beg you, don't close your eyes to that light.

(LS Mag. P.8)

30

I ask you, God, for the grace to die as you died for me, to shed my blood for you as you shed your blood for me. You, God did all that for me, an ungrateful and sinful creature. Let not my will be done but yours. The one thing that summarizes all my desires: Let me live and die in the way that glorifies you the most. It is you I love, Jesus. It is according to your will and your thoughts, not mine, that I want to live and die.

(Bro. Charles, LBOG magazine p.11)

31

JOHN BOSCO, PRIEST

For my part, I cannot understand love without trying to be like the one I love, without sharing all his suffering, without a burning desire to make my life like his and a need to share all his crosses.

(Bro. Charles, Oeuvres Spirituelles, p.521/ LSM Vol.1 p.187)

FEBRUARY

1

We are made to be mixed deeply in among the multitudes, the way Jesus was as he traveled around Galilee. He was harried and jostled from all sides and he stayed serene, caressing the little children, giving hope to poor sinners, consoling the afflicted, healing the sick.

(LSM Vol. 1 p.68)

2

FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

Contemplatives in the midst of the world, daring to assert that their contemplative life can be lived to the full in crowded cities or on the highways just as well as in the silence of the cloister – that is disconcerting to those who think it is only possible within a structured, recollected monastic environment. This is because they haven't taken a long enough look at Jesus, the greatest contemplative of all – Jesus during the hidden life in Bethlehem and Nazareth, Jesus during his public ministry, Jesus who only retired to the desert for forty days, far from the crowds, while he lived thirty-three years among his people, simply as one of them.

(LS Mag. P33)

3

BLASÉ, BISHOP AND MARTYR; ANSGAR, BISHOP

Your first grace, in which I now see as the first glimmer of my conversion, was to let me know famine... You had the goodness to let me suffer from material difficulties. You let me know spiritual famine through a deep desire for a better moral state... and then, when I turned so timidly towards you, and prayed that strange prayer, 'If you exist, let me know you', with what tenderness you ran to embrace me.

(Bro. Charles, Med S Evan 382)

4

Of monastic life: We have chosen the imitation of Jesus crucified.

(Br. Charles, writings)

5

AGATHA, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

It is in this sense that I sometimes say that we must go among people with an "unconditional" friendship that looks for nothing in return and doesn't measure the results it gets. It bewilders us when people ask us, "What are the results of your apostolate? What influence do you have on the people around you?" This is a way of speaking that doesn't mean to anything for us. Our vocation is to make Christ loved through our selves, without trying to gauge the results. God measures them and God sees them.(LSM Vol.2 p.90)

6

PAUL MIKI, PRIEST AND MARTYR AND COMPANIONS

A week ago they sent me to pray beside a poor worker, a local Catholic who had died in the neighboring hamlet. What a difference between his house and where I live. I long for Nazareth.

(Bro. Charles, April 10th 1894, LMB Osp.31)

7

The call to Nazareth: I no longer want a monastery which is too secure. I want a small monastery, like the house of a poor workman who is not sure if tomorrow he will find work and bread, who with all his being shares the suffering of the world.

Oh, Jesus a monastery like your home at Nazareth, in which to live hidden as you did when you came among us.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

8

JEROME EMILIANI, PRIEST

The time we take for retreats is meant to give us the chance to make our love grow. That's why, when someone comes and interrupts us, they should get a smile from us anyway, and feel our love. The great commandment of charity comes ahead of keeping silence on retreats. I beg you, be Christian and human before being a religious. You'd be in the wrong place staying in our congregation, if you're made for a different ideal.

(L.I, pp.126-127 LSM Vol. 1 p.68)

9

Like The Israelites, Moses, The Prophets and many of The Saints, The Christians:
One must go through the desert and sojourn there to receive God's grace: There must be this period of self-emptying in which he purifies himself of all that's not God...In this solitude, in this desert life, alone with God... God gives Himself to him totally, if he in his turn will give himself totally to God.

(Br. Charles, writings)

10

SCHOLASTICS, VIRGIN

"If you do not become like this little child, you will not enter the kingdom of Heaven."
(Mt. 18:3)

These words you had not understood. Maybe the explanations you had been given were mistaken or far from reality, not taking into account the real helplessness and weakness of a little child. So then, to make you understand better, the Lord reduced you to helplessness- perhaps the helplessness of being sick and unable to make the least effort of your own, or the still more painful helplessness of somebody struggling without strength in the midst of temptations, when work and suffering seem unbearable...

(LS Mag. P.10)

11

OUR LADY OF LOURDES

Truly believe, with the faith which knows that nothing is impossible, which makes words like worry, danger, or fear lose all meaning.

(Bro. Charles, lsm p.12)

12

We must put an end to the present system
And abolish slavery, because it is the just
Thing, the right thing to do.

(Bro. Charles, a letter)

13

My love for you is growing. Oh, that's the great mystery, in the inmost depths of the soul, and nobody can ever know the King's secret. People will only see what's on the outside and they will be all the more severe with me. You, Lord, know the secret between us. Why should I want to go to heaven so badly? Heaven is now-it's you, Lord!

(Doc. I, pp.55-56/ LSM p.114)

14

CYRIL, MONK AND METHODIUS, BISHOP

Our vocation is essentially a vocation of loving. And this love is not an ideal, abstract one. It means loving all people as our brothers and sisters, to the point that the suffering it brings us gets into the deepest recesses of our being. To the point of dying for that love, if God wishes...

(LSM Vol. II p.6)

15

Cultivate your judgment; then submit it totally, but intelligently, to religious obedience. Develop your personality to the highest degree, but solely to put it at the service of Christ. Not everyone has the same lights, the same graces, and the same vocation. All of you need not fit into the same mould. Try instead to discover your personal calling so as to bring it to fulfillment in the framework of our common vocation as little sisters.
(LSM, Vol. 1 p. 114)

16

There is no sinner so great,
No criminal so entrenched in his ways,
That you don't insistently offer him
Paradise,
As you gave it to the good thief
For the price of a moment's good will.
(Bro. Charles)

17

SEVEN FOUNDERS OF THE ORDER OF SERVITES, RELIGIOUS

Let us have hope!
Because whatever our faults may be,
Jesus wants to save us.
The more we have sinned,
The closer we are to death,
The more desperate our situation,
The more, so to speak, Jesus wants to save us,
Because he came to save what was being lost.
(Bro. Charles, meditations)

18

PETER DAMIAN, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

By preference the little sisters will go where no one else would, where the church is not present yet; they will be ready to leave for the ends of the earth in order to carry the Gospel message and be Christ's witnesses there.
(LS Mag, p.23)

19

I thirst for the life, which I have sought these past seven years. I caught a glimpse and an inkling of it as I walked the streets of Nazareth where Jesus, the poor worker, himself walked in obscurity and abjection.
(Bro. Charles, June 24, 1896 OS p.26)

20

Don't be afraid. Travel light, even lighter than bubbles, throughout the world. Go very far, without looking back; bury yourselves in the midst of all those masses of people who are despised and abandoned. (LS Magdeleine, p.14)

21

PETER DAMIAN, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

I cannot love you differently from how I love myself, nor desire for you anything other than what I desire for myself: To grow in virtue; To grow in the love of God; To do God's will; To fulfill God's desires, to love God passionately in thought, word and deed; To breathe nothing but God's love and to console God as much as possible at every moment of our lives. I ask this for you with my whole heart, dearest... for I love you with my whole heart.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

22

CHAIR OF PETER, APOSTLE

My great dream has been to create something human, full of mutual love, where there would be a spirit of friendship amongst all. Know how to share your sorrows with one another, when one of you gets bad news, for instance, or has a personal problem that doesn't need to be kept secret. It would be much more human for you too, the one in charge, to admit that you're tired or discouraged, and that life is hard for you as well. That's the spirit of the Little Sisters of Jesus.

(LSM Vol. II p.46)

23

POLYCARP, BISHOP AND MARTYR

People may tell you that your religious profession and your vows, must necessarily make you separated beings. But I will assure that your religious profession has consecrated you, rather, to all the members of the Body of Christ, to all human beings-your brothers and sisters and his.

(LSM Vol. 1 p115)

24

All people are children of God, children whom he loves infinitely; it is thus impossible to want to love God without wanting to love human beings. The more we love God, the more we love people.

(Bro. Charles, a letter, LS p.35)

25

Most of all I will tell you that if you want to give your life to the full, you must not claim there is a better way to do it than the way taken by your Sole Model, Jesus in the Gospel. What Jesus did can be summed up as "the apostolate to the milieu from within the milieu". He made himself a divine yeast in the human dough.

(LSM Vol. 1 p.115)

26

People learn to love God by loving people.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

27

It is very clearly God's will to want us to share the life of the poorest and even the most wretched.

(LSM vol. II p.11)

28

...Did the Lord Jesus choose? On the contrary, didn't he offer his arms wide open to the nails of the cross just so that no one might be excluded from his love, be that person the most miserable, the most selfish, the most ungrateful of human beings, the most unjust of bosses, the most overweening of snobs. The Lord Jesus suffered and died for all. In the name of his Love, all, without exception, have a strict right to your love.

(LSM 51)

29

By becoming such a small and gentle child, he cries out to us: have trust, come close to me! Don't be afraid of me, come to me, do not fear...

(Bro. Charles LS 52)

MARCH

1

The lord took me as I was, with all my poverty and shortcomings. He made me his instrument; I surrendered myself to him completely, but he left me with all my weaknesses clearly visible to all, in order to show that everything was the work of his hands alone, and not mine...It was so hard to have to struggle against everyone... because I felt a force coming from outside, pushing me to leave the well-marked road in order to go into the brush, in the middle of the brambles and thorn bushes where, at the beginning, no one wanted to offer me a hand. I could have sunk into despair a hundred times if the Lord had not always taken my hand and forced me to walk behind him...and utterly tired as I was, I would once again feel a tremendous strength enabling me to defend the idea which the Lord had entrusted to me.

(LS Mag p.17)

2

Our entire existence, our whole being must shout the Gospel from the rooftops. Our entire person must breathe Jesus, all our actions, our whole life must cry out that we belong to Jesus, they must give a picture of Gospel living, our whole being must be a living sermon, a reflection of Jesus.

(Bro. Charles, LSM p)

3

KATHARINE DREXEL, VIRGIN

God was not content just to show His
 Special love for the littlest ones on every page of scripture;
 When he appeared on earth in mortal flesh,
 He became himself the very least,
 He so completely took the last place that no
 Human being has ever been able to descend lower than he.
 (Bro Charles, meditations)

4

CASIMAR

You tell me that I will be happy, with the truest
 Kind of happiness, on the last day.
 That as worthless as I am, I am a palm tree
 Beside flowing waters, the flowing waters
 Of God's will, of God's love, of grace- and
 That I will bear my fruit in due season.
 (Bro. Charles, meditations)

5

We have to build something brand new! Something brand new which is in fact quite old,
 the authentic Christianity of Christ's first disciples. We have to go back to the gospel and
 take it word for word. It's just too painful to see how much we've forgotten it...
 (LS Mag. P.23)

6

...God only speaks if one reduces oneself to silence.
 (Bro. Charles, writings)

7

PERPETUA AND FELICITY, MARTYRS

Accept to stay imperfect to the end of your lives. Accept to be misjudged,
 misunderstood. What does it matter, provided the Lord loves you and you love the Lord
 with all your soul and with a heart like a little child's.
 (LSM Vol. 2 p.143)

8

JOHN OF GOD, RELIGIOUS

We have to seek out not only the respectable poor, but also the ragged, the rejected, the
 disgraced-those who feel ashamed and stay out of sight, thinking there's unlikely to be
 anyone who still wants to be their friends. That's why we now must try to approach the
 women prisoners in the personal distress of their prisons.
 (LSM Vol. II p.11)

9

FRANCES OF ROME, RELIGIOUS

I think we never put enough emphasis on the place of prayer in our vocation. We go to a lot of trouble to explain our poverty, our life mixed in with other people, but the side of our prayer doesn't come out enough in our presentations of our congregation. And yet, without prayer, our deep desire to live among other people loses all its meaning.

(LSM Vol. II p.23)

10

I'm really longing to at last be able to live
The kind of life I saw glimpses and hints of while I
Walked the streets of Nazareth,
The same streets our Lord walked when he was a
Poor workman lost in abjection and obscurity.

(Bro. Charles, meditations)

11

Our vocation is to be a presence of prayer, of gentleness and of love in the midst of those who suffer poverty and hatred.

(LSM Vol. II p.23)

12

One thing we owe completely to Our Lord is never to be afraid of anything.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

13

Love shows what it is made of by faithfulness in small things. We don't have any big things to accomplish. Our life is very simple, it's the life of Jesus at Nazareth. What will make our life great is the love we put into it...

(LSM Vol. II p.48)

14

We are made for all people and we must love everyone without exception. But we must have a preferential love for the little and the poor, and those who are under someone else's domination. And if we go somewhere to give ourselves to a country and a people and a race, it is that we might become one of them, setting aside our own country, people and race.

(LSM Vol. II p.26)

15

I should offer this banquet, not to my family and friends but to the lame, the poor, the blind. I want everybody to consider me as a universal brother.

(Brother Charles, writings)

16

A preferential love for the little ones, for those who are treated with contempt. An effective love that has to be translated into acts and not be content with inner declarations.

(LSM Vol. II p.26)

17

PATRICK, BISHOP

Love your neighbor, that through this love

You can come to love God:

The one kind of love does not go

Without the other;

To grow in one is to grow in the other.

How does one acquire the love of God?

By practicing charity toward human beings.

(Bro. Charles, meditations)

18

CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

I repeat our vocation is a demanding one. We do not have the right to let someone suffer in our presence if by a word or a gesture we can lessen their suffering or prevent it. We must act most especially when the suffering is caused by prejudices of class or race, which rupture universal mutual love and make life painful for the vast majority of people in the world.

(LSM Vol. II p.26)

19

JOSEPH HUSBAND OF MARY

Live in obscurity with Jesus of Bethlehem, with Jesus of Nazareth. Live in obscurity with him in the very midst of the world, to be like a leaven of universal love there, and most of all a leaven of unity. Be this leaven by your friendship, full of respect for every person you meet on your way, whether rich or poor, Christian or non-Christian, good or bad. Be this leaven by your smile rising above all your sufferings and cares.

(LSM Vol.2 p.142)

20

It is impossible for me to understand how people

Can love and not seek to be like the beloved,

Not want to share all his sorrows,

Not desire ardently to pattern their life on him.

(Bro. Charles, meditations)

21

Look inside yourselves. Every heart holds hidden, secret racism, and its roots go very deep. You don't admit it to yourself, but you always look at your neighbor with feelings of superiority. The proof of it is that you pass judgments. You wouldn't judge if you thought of yourself as being like the other person or as a bit worse than the others.
(LSM Vol. II p. 32)

22

Your rule:
To follow me.
To do what I would do.
Ask yourself in everything:
"What would our Lord have done?"
and do it.
That is the only rule you have,
But it is an absolute rule.
(Bro. Charles, meditations)

23

TURIBIUS DE MOGROVEJO, BISHOP

I want to get things quite clear about our apostolate...

It's true that I've always asked you to respect other beliefs and other religions. It's true I spoke about love 'that looks for nothing in return' and doesn't expect results, love that doesn't approach people to convert them but solely out of friendship, to love them, to share their sufferings and to live side by side with them.

(LSM Vol. II p. 34)

24

When one has seen Jesus, one has to go back by another way, the way of conversion and not by the path of past mistakes.

(Brother Charles, writings)

25

THE ANNUNCIATION

It is to the Blessed Virgin that I entrust you, and ask you to receive her little infant Jesus as she holds him out to you, that you may keep him with you always and carry him all over the world with his message of humble and trusting self-surrender, of simplicity and poverty, of gentleness and peace, of joy and love... (LSM56)

26

Pray for me above all that I may have
That burning, generous, passionate love that
Makes one love Jesus above all things.
I don't ask to feel that love, nor to feel that Jesus loves me,
As long as I love him with all my soul, passionately and forever.
(Bro. Charles, meditations)

27

We're afraid of its words because we're afraid of the realities underneath them. We forget to look at Jesus, the Only Model, who became flesh so we could follow him and imitate him to the point of doing the same things he did in the folly of love. May you put every one of his words into action; otherwise your enthusiasm, however well intentioned, will be hollow, empty.

(LS Mag, p.23)

28

There must be no economizing on alms: no reductions here but rather increases... The best way to lack nothing is always to share very generously with the poor, seeing in them Jesus' representatives and Jesus himself.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

29

Wherever we are, we must be households of prayer and adoration. This is the primary way for us to be leaven in the human dough.

(LSM Vol. II p.48)

30

What great faith Our Lord Jesus Christ asks of us and how just that is. Do we not owe him such faith? It looks impossible to us but Jesus is the master of the impossible.

(Br. Charles, writings)

31

We must not be afraid to be seen to openly pray as this is something that Muslim people do all the time.

(LSM)

APRIL

1

My life's goal, as you know, is to imitate Jesus' hidden life at Nazareth as perfectly as it can be done.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

2

FRANCIS OF PAOLA, HERMIT

It's lack of unity that creates hatred between classes, races and nations. In front of the Blessed Sacrament exposed, beg the Lord that there may be unity among people.

(LSM vol. II p.54)

3

One must persevere without seeing; one must therefore be capable of always starting over with no “purpose,” for no “reason” at all-for His sake. This amounts to saying that, if you are to succeed at all in praying this way, you will need a great deal of courage; and you will need even more in order to prolong your prayer and persevere in prayer.

(Rene Voillaume, In the Midst of Men, p.33)

4

ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

Be people of the Gospel, above any other book, above any other teaching. If God took the trouble to speak, it's so that we could draw life from his words: “My words are spirit and life.” (Jn 6:63). Always think of this: “Alas for knowledge which does not turn into love...” What is truth without life?

(LS Mag. P.19)

5

VINCENT FERRER, OP, PRIEST

Loving God,

Loving people,

That is my whole life:

May it always be my whole life, this is my hope.

(Bro. Charles, a letter)

6

My greatest wish is that you be a “smile” on the world. If that's all you were- the little ray of sunlight that brightens and warms a dark and icy room – that would be enough.

(LSM57)

7

JOHN BAPTIST DE LA SALLE, PRIEST

It is so pleasant to feel one is in the hands of God carried by the Creator, Supreme Goodness and Love- Deus caritas est.- The Love and the Lover, The spouse of our souls in time and eternity. It is so pleasant to feel oneself being carried by his hand through this short life towards that eternity of light and love for which he created us.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

8

Take interest in what is going on in other places. Admire civilizations other than your own. Your horizons have to open out onto the whole world, to open so wide that one day the world will seem quite small to you.

(LSM vol. II p.54)

9

When in the course of a journey we suffer from cold inclement weather, hunger or fatigue or if we are in danger, we must make an act of union with Jesus fleeing into Egypt and thank him for letting us suffer with him. (Bro. Charles, writings)

10

It's difficult to have a heart open to all human beings. You don't have the right to exclude a single person. Otherwise your love is cut off from its root in universality and evil has found its way into your heart. That will poison everything.

(LSM Vol. II p.55)

11

STANISLAUS, BISHOP AND MARTYR

Let us be like Priscilla and Aquila. We must concern ourselves with those around us... There must be Priscilla and Aquila united among themselves in their individual and collective activities and knowing one another well, each in the mystical priesthood of the faithful soul offering itself and Jesus for all the intentions of the divine savior – The glory of God, the coming of his kingdom, the fulfillment of his will, the salvation of souls – and like Jesus making the salvation of all mankind their life's work.

(Bro. Charles, Writings)

12

Be in the world a presence of unity, of gentleness and of joy. You have no other direct mission in the Church except every Christian's mission. All work, each in their own way, to make the Kingdom of Christ come.

(LSM vol. II p.66)

13

MARTIN I, POPE AND MARTYR

Let us be persons of desire and of prayer.

Let us never believe anything to be impossible:

God can do all.

(Bro. Charles, meditations)

14

More and more I'm thinking that we are not made for our own personal perfection, nor in order to found nice, well – organized communities. Our role is much more one of clearing the ground and sowing seeds... the whole world is calling us... Faith is disappearing, love's fires are going out because there are not enough hearths where true brotherly and sisterly love may be kept burning... We've had enough "charity" on a large scale; what we really need is friendship, tenderness, and if people don't find that in the religion of Christ among his close friends, they will look for it elsewhere...

(LSM p41)

15

Those who love can do anything; They can do all kinds of things that those who do not love exhaust themselves trying to do in vain.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

16

And isn't it true that when you will have felt the depth of people's need you will hunger all the more for Jesus to fill you, you will desire to withdraw with him.

(LSM, writings)

17

Do not worry about doing things exactly right. Do what you think best day by day, and most of all, do what God lets you do.

(LSM Vol. II p.84)

18

You will understand that my desires have not changed in any way. They are stronger than ever. But I obey with simplicity and with deep thankfulness, trusting that at the end of this long trial the will of God will be clearly manifested. For all of us have only one desire: to know the will of God and to throw ourselves into doing whatever that might be, with our whole heart and whole strength.

(Bro. Charles, RB p.134)

19

We should call ourselves an **“International Congregation of Workers who are Contemplatives”**.

(LSM vol. II p.85)

20

Adoration,

Wordless admiration

Which is the most eloquent form of praise-

That wordless admiration

Which contains the most passionate declaration of love.

(Bro. Charles, meditations)

21

ANSELM, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

You will strive to live with your eyes and heart fixed on Jesus, with an inner attitude that will lead, little by little to great intimacy with him. And he will continue to become more and more the center of your life and the passion of your heart.

(LS Mag. P.20)

22

Let us then follow Jesus' teachings, his counsels, his words, his example...rather than those of such and such a master or such and such a saint, if they should diverge even in the slightest from those of “our only master”, the only one who is perfectly Holy, “Jesus”.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

23

GEORGE, MARTYR; ADALBERT, BISHOP AND MARTYR

You have only one model: Jesus. Don't look for another.

(LSM, writings)

24

FIEDELIS OF SIGMARINGEN, OFM,CAP: PRIEST AND MARTYR

But before all else we must ask ourselves what prayer is.

Why not take that very simple definition of Father de Foucauld: "Prayer is thinking of God by loving him". Prayer gets love going; there is no prayer without love; nor is there either prayer without a thought which moves out to him who is loved.

(Rene Voillaume, Faith and Contemplation, p.31)

25

MARK, EVANGELIST

You will strive to live with your eyes and heart fixed on Jesus, with an inner attitude that will lead, little by little, to great intimacy with him. And he will continue to become more and more the center of your life and the passion of your heart.

(LSM, writings)

26

You are there, my Lord Jesus, in the Holy Eucharist! You are there only a meter from me in the tabernacle! Your body, your soul, your humanity, your divinity, your entire being is there in its double nature! You are near, my God!

(Bro. Charles, writings)

27

You will not forget that it is very often the little and the poor who will evangelize you and reveal Jesus to you.

(LSM, writings)

28

PETER CHANEL, PRIEST AND MARTYR; LOUIS MARY DE MONFORT, PRIEST

Let Us thank God and wait patiently when we are in darkness. We should just search for him quietly and obey him. If we remain in darkness, we should be convinced that he wants it that way, for our own greater good. He will take us out of darkness when the time is right, He who alone knows what is right for us... We just need to be faithful, full of confidence and thankful. (Bro. Charles, Rome 1896 Meditation on Genesis 7)

29

CATHERINE OF SIENA,OP : VIRGIN AND DOCTOR

Love the poor above all, those who are treated with contempt and yet who are Christ incarnate in the most truly living manner, the most beloved and cherished sheep of the flock. Love them as they are, beneath their outwardly impoverished appearance... That is their greatest claim to your love. The Lord's favorites are the little and the poor.

(LSM, WRITINGS)

30

PIUS V, POPE

Let us then read the Gospel with love,
 As though we were sitting at the feet of the
 Beloved himself, listening to him speak to us.
 (Bro. Charles, meditations)

MAY

1

JOSEPH THE WORKER

To express the value of solitary contemplation to the worker's world, and to the contemplative world, and to the contemplative world the worth of corporate labor, put your prayer into your work and your work into your prayer. Give work its true value in union with the divine worker, Jesus, the carpenter.
 (LSM)

2

ATHANASIUS, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

We are made to be deeply mixed into the crowds, like Jesus on the roads of Galilee: hemmed in and pushed from all sides, he maintained his inner peace, even as he hugged the little children, raised up poor sinners, consoled the afflicted, healed the sick.
 (LSM, writings)

3

PHILIP AND JAMES, APOSTLES

There I found it all, the ideal I was dreaming of: following the Gospel fully, embracing total poverty, burying myself in the midst of abandoned groups of people...and above all, love in all its fullness: Jesus-Caritas, Jesus-Love.
 (LSM)

4

...Dig into the Gospel, and you will see how Jesus will enlighten your inmost being. His words will be your "life". They are the words of God himself. They contain the most solid nourishment there is. (LS Magdeleine, p.21)

5

"If you do not become like this little child, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven."
 (Mt. 18:3)

These words you had not understood. Maybe the explanations you had been given were mistaken or far from reality, not taking into account the real helplessness and weakness of a little child. So then, to make you understand better, the Lord had reduced you to helplessness-perhaps the helplessness of being sick and unable to make the least effort of your own, or the still more painful helplessness of somebody struggling without strength in the midst of temptations, when work and suffering seem unbearable...
 (LSM, Green Booklet)

6

Prayer in one way makes real a presence of love. Take for example what happens when you are parted from someone you love. The love you have for that person can carry you to him, even without your actually thinking about him; however when there are at the same time prayer and love, then you really come close to the one you love.

(Rene Voillaume, Faith and Contemplation, p31)

7

The weakness of human means is a source of strength – Jesus is the master of the impossible.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

8

You will love Jesus with a measureless love, a “crazy” love, which can’t imagine not having an urgent need to be like the beloved, to resemble him. And you will strive to walk in his footsteps, to follow him all along his earthly journey.

(LSM, writings)

9

You ask me if I am ready to go somewhere
Else besides Beni Abbes to spread the Holy Gospel;
For that, I am ready to go to the end of the world
And to live till the last judgment.

(Bro. Charles, a letter)

10

Prayer is not a psychological need, it is demanded by faith, and it is a demand by our baptism in Christ. It has been said that prayer is the breath of the soul.

(Rene Voillaume, Faith and Contemplation, p.31)

11

The fraternities should be small houses of love where the Sacred Heart burns so as to light that fire which Jesus came to bring to the earth, oasis of prayer and hospitality which radiate so much holiness that the community is lit up and warmed by them. A little family, which imitates so perfectly the virtues of Jesus, that the people around come to love Jesus.

(Bro. Charles, Letter to H. de Castries, 12 March 1902)

12

NEREUS AND ACHILLEUS, MARTYRS; PANCRAS, MARTYR

Real love makes great demands on the one who loves. To love as Christ Jesus loves, involves a willingness to serve the smallest and most insignificant of his brothers and sisters, to give our lives to them, as he did. This is the only way in which people will know us for his disciples and friends.

(LSM)

13

Rene Voillaume Born Into Eternal Life

...God only speaks if one reduces oneself to silence.

(Bro. Charles)

14

MATTHIAS, APOSTLE

We are inundated with requests to take over the running of schools, hospitals and dispensaries, to which we have only one reply: we want to be 'one of them'. In other words, we wish to become one with the poor, the humble and societies outcasts...Our aim is friendship, which implies equality, so that we may love and help one another. This is our only vocation.

(LSM)

15

ISIDORE THE FARMER

A vocation is not chosen but found, and once found to be embraced wholeheartedly.

(Bro. Charles)

16

Look on the map of the world and see if there isn't in some corner a handful of people who attract no one precisely because they are just a handful scattered over a great distance...Do not listen to those who tell you that you're wasting your time to go throughout the world in search of that one lost sheep because large numbers await you elsewhere...

(LSM)

17

Let us then follow Jesus' teachings, his counsels, his words, his example... rather than those of such an such a master or such and such a saint, if they should diverge even in the slightest from those of "our only Master", the only one who is perfectly Holy, "Jesus".

(Bro. Charles, LS, p.24)

18

JOHN I, POPE AND MARTYR

If you are here at Beni-Abbes, this is because something has happened in your life, something resulting from a personal encounter with God, an encounter involving profound, I might even say essential, changes in your relationship with God and in your social behavior. And we ought also to consider whether a call of this sort does not also involve responsibility for a mission entrusted to us. Once you are active, in the Fraternity, in a given environment, you will find it easier to realize that your vocation involves a mission. That mission is to share the lot of the poor, to work with them for their liberation and, more than all else, to show them Jesus Christ.

(Rene Voillaume, Follow Me, p.16)

19

Join Jesus in his immolation for the salvation of all, and in particular to offer the divine feast to the poor. At the same time, Nazareth becomes wherever is most useful to my neighbor... for those most in need... for the abandoned.

(Bro. Charles, ordination notes.)

20

BERNARDINE OF SIENA, OFM:PRIEST

God leads us along such unexpected paths!...Only let us be faithful and let ourselves be carried along with great love.

(Bro. Charles, Letters to my Trappist Brothers)

21

Let us never worry about the future : at each instant of our life...let us do what the will of God imposes on us at the present moment.

(Bro. Charles, Meditation on the Gospel.)

22

When we are in love, don't we find the time we pass with the beloved perfectly well spent and good? Isn't that the best way to use our time, unless the desire or well being of the beloved calls us elsewhere?

(Bro. Charles, meditations, LS p.39)

23

It is love which should help you

Be recollected in me,

And not distance from my children.

See me in them,

And just as I did in Nazareth,

Live close to them, lost in God. (Bro. Charles, diary, 1904)

24

I am nothing, but Jesus has given me a tiny spark of his love. We can't continue to let people suffer all around us, and not go out to them under the pretext that we have to protect ourselves, like a soldier who, in order to keep his uniform impeccably clean, avoids the mud of the trenches and the danger of the bullet wounds... (LSM p43)

25

BEDE, OSB, THE VENERABLE, PRIEST AND DOCTOR; GREGORY VII, POPE;
MARY MAGDALENE DE PAZZI, OCD:VIRGIN

From the moment in which we begin to judge anyone, to limit our confidence in him, from the moment at which we identify the person with what we know of him and so reduce him to that, we cease to love the person and he ceases to be able to become better. We should expect everything of everyone. We must dare to be love in a world that does not know how to love.

(Bro. Charles)

26

PHILIP NERI, PRIEST

All our thoughts, all our hearts should be occupied just with the love and contemplation of Jesus, enjoying the company of our Beloved...so we should be there with Him: sometimes looking at Him without saying anything, sometimes asking Him questions, always enjoying His presence...

(Bro. Charles, meditation on MK. 6,30-32)

27

AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY, OSB: BISHOP

To love, what is it?... It is to desire passionately... the welfare of the beloved.

(Bro. Charles, Meditation on Luke 10:27)

28

Littleness: Jesus who is to be imitated is the one who took the last place so firmly that no one could take it from him.

(Bro. Charles)

29

To do the Father's will that is our life.

(Bro. Charles, Meditation on the Gospel)

30

We find that we don't love enough; yes it's true, we'll never love enough. But the good Lord knows from what clay he has formed us, and He loves us more than a mother can love her child. And He who doesn't lie, has told us that he will not reject anyone who comes to Him.

(Bro. Charles)

31

THE VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Surrendering one's life into the hands of the Creator at the hour of death and recollecting oneself at prayer to commune with God in the silence of one's soul are both actions which depend on the same faith in the transcendent and immanent reality of an incarnate God who is Love and Author of human life.

(Rene Voillaume, The Truth Will Make You Free, p.138)

JUNE

1

JUSTIN, MARTYR

Prayer is simple conversation with God. So it should be something absolutely natural, absolutely true, the expression of what is deepest in your heart. It's the state of soul which looks at God, wholly taken up in contemplating Him, saying that you love Him, by your looks, while being silent in words, and even in thought. The best prayer is that where there's most love. (Bro. Charles)

2

MARCELLINUS AND PETER, MARTYRS

I have a dream... I dream of being able to show great tenderness towards all human beings. I mean a divine tenderness... The world is so desperately in need of love. I want to love human beings everywhere, to kindle a spark of love in all four corners of the earth.

(LSM)

3

CHARLES LUANGA AND COMPANIONS OF UGANDA

We have to work at filling our minds and hearts with the Spirit of Jesus, by endlessly reading and re-reading, meditating and re-meditating his words and examples. May they do to our souls what water does to stone, when it falls drop by drop, over and over in the same place.

(Bro. Charles, meditations, LS p.41)

4

Like Jesus during his life on earth, make yourself all things to all people: an Arab in the midst of Arabs, a nomad among nomads, a worker among working people... but above all be human in the midst of humanity. Don't think that, in order to keep your dignity as a religious and your life of union with God safe from dangers from without, you must set up barriers between yourself and the world of the laity. Don't set yourself on the margins of human society.

(LS Mag. P.25)

5

BONIFACE, OSB: BISHOP AND MARTYR

The Gospel showed me that 'everything must be enclosed in love'.

(Bro. Charles from Beat paper p1)

6

NORBERT, BISHOP

My heart is going to have to grow deeper and larger, to accommodate all the needs and sufferings of the world.

(LSM)

7

Is this a dream, Father? Is it an illusion of the devil? Or is it an invitation from the Good Lord? If I were sure that it came from God I would do whatever was necessary right at this moment, not tomorrow, to enter this way. When I think about it, I find that it is perfect... But when I think about the one who has this ardent thought... I do not find in him the stuff God ordinarily uses to do good things... It is true that once it has begun, if it comes from God, God will make it grow... Something else gives me courage to take up such a task despite my misery and sinfulness. That is, Our Lord said that when one has sinned much, one must love much.

(Bro. Charles, Letter to Fr. Huvelin, September 22, 1893 OS p. 667)

8

I was deeply affected by this, my first encounter with racial tension... since earliest childhood I had sensed that the intolerance and mutual lack of understanding between classes, the hatred between nations and the harsh contempt of one race for another, make for some of the greatest sins against the justice and love of Christ.

(LSM)

9

EPHREM OF SYRIA, DEACON AND DOCTOR

The Good Shepherd can bring the lamb back to the fold at the eleventh hour as at the first; his goodness is as limitless as his power. To “hope all things” is an obligation for us, as the holy Spirit tells us through the words of St. Paul.

(Bro. Charles, meditations, LSp.23)

10

The Little Sisters of Jesus. Their community life should be a living witness to Christian love, ‘Jesus Caritas’. They will not be cloistered. Their doors will always be open, so that their communities will be a meeting ground for lay and religious who will find there deeper understanding and greater love.

(LSM)

11

BARNABAS, APOSTLE

That is the essence of our vocation: to manage the difficult task of finding a place in our hearts for all those people we are in close contact with in our day-to-day life, those whom the Lord places on our path – and to do it as though they were the only friend we had...

That is the message of our Community, and I want us to carry it throughout the world, over every continent, to all peoples, be they Christians, Muslims, Jews or Buddhists, Marxists, pagans or atheists.

(LSM p43)

12

How good you are, my God! Always, you are the one who “does not break the bruised reed, nor put out the smoldering wick”.

(Bro. Charles, LS p.44)

13

ANTHONY OF PADUA, OFM, PRIEST AND DOCTOR

He saves us and we must let ourselves be saved.

(Rene Voillaume, Source of Life, p.45)

14

If our religion is the truth, if the gospel is the word of God, we must believe and put it into practice, even if we are absolutely the only ones to do so.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

15

Let the heart cry out, let it ask of God, with childlike simplicity, what it desires...for oneself or one's neighbor...always to be followed by: not my will, but Thine. The other way of praying is to say in simplicity the words at the end: My Father, Thy will be done.

(Bro. Charles, Meditation on the Gospel)

16

We must make ourselves accepted as reliable friends by Muslims so that we are the ones... upon whose affection, wisdom and justice they can always count.

(Bro. Charles, letter)

17

It is through reason and the Gospel, with enlightenment from the Holy Spirit, that God lights the way for us.

(Bro. Charles, Spiritual writings quoted by M. Lafon)

18

Close to the Moroccan border he wanted to construct a hermitage where each of the monks who lived there could share; “Right to the last mouthful of bread, with each poor person, every guest, every unknown who arrived, and welcome each human being as well a loved brother.

(Bro. Charles)

19

ROMUALD, ABBOT

My God, deign to grant that I may feel your presence in me always, and feel also that awed kind of love we experience in the presence of one we love passionately, which makes us stand transfixed before the person we love, unable to take our eyes off them.

(Bro. Charles, meditations, LS.p39)

20

We must neither act without praying, nor pray without acting when we have the means of acting.

(Bro. Charles, Meditation on the Gospel)

21

ALOYSIUS GONZAGA, SJ, RELIGIOUS

You must destroy in yourself everything that is not God...make yourself a desert here, where you can be alone with Me.

(Bro. Charles, writing)

22

PAULINUS OF NOLA, BISHOP; JOHN FISHER, BISHOP AND MARTYR, AND THOMAS MORE MARTYR

That which is impossible to man is possible to God... God loves and can do all things. He respects the liberty that he has given to man, but does not withhold free gifts of his grace, which is such that it can overturn all obstacles.

(Bro. Charles, Letter to Marie de Bondy, March 23rd 1916)

23

Love consists not in feeling that one loves, but in wanting to love; when one wishes to love, one loves; when one wishes to love with all one's heart and strength, one loves with all one's heart and strength.

(Bro. Charles, writing)

24

BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Be contemplative, but remain very close to your brothers and sisters at the same time; get involved in their lives, share their joys and their sufferings, make yourselves all things to all people!

(LSM p.36)

25

The death of self which the Carthusian monk, for example, seeks in the observance of his Rule the Little Brother is to find above all in the mass of suffering and misery around him, in the arduousness of his prayer, in the grind and fatigue of his work. Through these as His instruments, Jesus will be speaking to you daily, constantly, urging you always to further bounds towards purer, more self-denuded love.

(Rene Voillaume, In The Midst of Men, p.107)

26

My God you will not leave us in darkness when we have need of light... You will watch over us and lead us by the hand, without our being aware of it and when our souls need light, you will always give it.

(Bro. Charles, Meditation on the Gospel)

27

CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

To his bishop he wrote, "The local people speak of me as a brother to the poor, but not only the poor, of all human beings."

(Bro. Charles)

28

IRENAEUS, BISHOP AND MARTYR

Know you'll die... a martyr, and hope it will be today.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

29

PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES

I was doing evil, yet I knew it was wrong and I wasn't
 Really enjoying it. You were making me feel profound sadness,
 A painful emptiness, a sadness like I've never known before or since.
 It would come back to me every evening when I'd find myself
 Alone in my apartment. It kept me silent and weighed me down
 During what were supposed to be parties: I'd organize them, but
 When the time came, I'd go through them silent, disgusted,
 Infinitely bored. You were giving me that vague uneasiness of a bad conscience, which,
 however fast asleep it might have been, was not completely dead. I've never felt that
 kind of sadness, malaise, restlessness, except at that time, my God; it was a gift from you,
 and how far I was from suspecting it!

(Bro. Charles, meditations-LSp.15)

30

FIRST MARTYRS OF THE CHURCH OF ROME

I want you to believe that true friendship and profound affection can exist between people
 who do not come from the same religion, nor from the same race, nor from the same
 social background... Your love must grow, become sensitive and respectful. It is easy to
 find people who love generously, but people who love with sensitivity and respect for
 each individual person is rare. The Lord's own countenance is in every person. How our
 lack of sensitivity and respect in loving must have made him suffer during his agony and
 passion. He said: "What you did to the least of mine, you did to me... And in the
 measure in which you did not do something for one of these little ones, you did not do it
 to me either".

(LSM 47)

JULY

1

See each human being as a brother to love.

(Bro. Charles)

2

To put the love of God into practice, put into practice the love of people.

(Bro. Charles, Letter to Louis Massignon)

3

THOMAS, APOSTLE

Read and reread without ceasing the Gospel in order to always have the spirit of the
 works, the words and the thoughts of Jesus.

(Bro. Charles)

4

ELIZABETH OF PORTUGAL, RELIGIOUS

The gladness of poverty has another and deeper cause, the fact of giving oneself up into the hands of God and His Providence, which poverty according to the Gospel means. To put oneself in this position out of love is to achieve concretely the self-abandonment of the child where God's fatherly solicitude becomes almost palpable.

(Rene Voillaume, In The Midst of Men, p.96)

5

ANTHONY MARY ZACCARIA, PRIEST

Even more than helping me to know the Muslims whom I love with all my heart, it will help me to do good to them, which I desire ardently.

(Bro. Charles)

6

MARIA GORETTI, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

The desert is only a very short passage, a time of purification and test, abounding in grace... where one receives the law of God... God is always there with us... there God speaks to us and always gives us guidance. (Bro. Charles, Commentary on Psalm 104)

7

Think a great deal of others; pray a great deal for others. Devote yourself to the salvation of your neighbor by all the means in your power, by prayer, by goodness, by example...

(Bro. Charles)

8

Prayer is just conversation with God, that state of the soul which gazes on God, wordlessly, entirely taken up contemplating him, telling him how we love him, telling him by the way we look at him while we speak no words with our lips, or even with our thoughts. The best prayer is the one in which there is the most love. (Bro. Charles, meditations, LS p.41)

9

To be loving, gentle, humble, with all human beings:

This is what we have learned from Jesus.

Not to be aggressive toward anyone.

Jesus taught us to go out

“like lambs among wolves.” (Bro. Charles, a letter)

10

Whether people come to us from the north, the east, or the west, whether they come from England or Italy, they come with the same desire: a life that is both deeply contemplative and deeply mixed in with the world.

...It's not possible that that would cause love to diminish... And isn't love the essence of all contemplative life?

(LSM p.37)

11

BENEDICT, ABBOT

Don't let the words "contemplative vocation" and "contemplation" frighten you. Don't picture an exceptional vocation so high that most people can never come near it.

(LS M p.35)

12

"All that you do to one of these little ones, you do unto me..." The material alms that we give to a poor person is given to the creator of the universe.

(Bro. Charles)

13

HENERY

You have to go through the desert to be found by God.

(L.S. Magdeline)

14

KATERI TEKAKWITHA, VIGIN

All are children of God, who loves them totally. It is impossible to love God, or want God, without loving mankind or wanting mankind.

(Bro. Charles)

15

BONAVENTURE, OFM BISHOP AND DOCTOR

We are all sons of the Most High! How we ought to esteem every human being, how we ought to love every human being! He is a child of God... Let us love this man as God loves him every moment of his life... Let us esteem, let us love every man from the bottom of our heart, because of God, our common Father.

(Bro. Charles, Commentary on Psalm 81)

16

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

Our whole existence, our whole being has to proclaim the Gospel from the rooftops. Our whole person has to breathe Jesus. All our actions, our whole life has to cry out that we belong to Jesus, we have to present the image of a life lived according to the Gospel. Our whole being has to be a living proclamation, a reflection of Jesus, has to breathe his beauty, make him visible, a shining image of Jesus.

(Bro. Charles, meditations, LS p.41)

17

It is evangelization not by word, but by the presence of the Most Holy Sacrament... charity, fraternal and universal charity, sharing up to our last mouthful of bread with each poor person, each guest, each stranger and welcoming each human being as a well-loved brother.

(Bro. Charles, Letter to Henri de Castries, 23 June 1901)

18

CAMILLUS DE LELLIS, PRIEST

Not to become attached to look after the well-fed sheep, clean and docile, leaving the scabby ones to their wretched fate, but loving all men and women because of God their Father and their Savior, and giving care and attention especially to the sick, to sinners, because they are more in need.

(Bro. Charles, Meditation on the Gospel of Matthew 9:13)

19

God walked these paths. God became a worker at Nazareth; God became a brother.

(Bro. Charles)

20

Our liturgy closes the door of our monasteries to Arabs, Turks, Armenians and others who are good catholics but do not know one word of our languages and offices in Latin.

(Bro. Charles)

21

LAWRENCE OF BRINDISI, OFM, CAP: PRIEST AND DOCTOR

For the Brothers of the Sacred Heart: May their universal and fraternal charity shine out as a beacon.

(Bro. Charles, Constitutions, article 30)

22

MARY MAGDALENE

Being alone in my cell conversing with you in the silence of the night is sweet, my Lord and you are there as God, as well as by grace! Yet staying in my cell when I could be before the Blessed Sacrament is as though St. Mary Magdalene, when you were at Bethany, should have left you on your own... To go and think about you alone in her room.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

23

BRIDGET OF SWEDEN, RELIGIOUS

To make myself everything to all: laugh with those who laugh, weep with those who weep, to bring them all to Jesus.

(Bro. Charles, Diary 1909)

24

My God, you are good! Because you want to be my Father and that all mankind, how much more must I have the sentiments of a tender brother for all, no matter who they are, no matter how miserable they are.

(Bro. Charles)

25

JAMES, APOSTLE

In the general interest of science and of the Tuareg people, and of the good administration of what belongs to this people... before the old people have disappeared, it would be very interesting to write down the memories of some of them at their dictation and learn from them in conversation what they can tell us about the past history of their country and its old customs.

(Bro. Charles, Letter to Monsieur L Mercier)

26

JOACHIM AND ANNE, PARENTS OF MARY OF NAZARETH

But above all, I must say that in asking for this double bread of grace and of the Eucharist, I do not ask it for myself only, but for us, that is to say for all mankind.

(Bro. Charles)

27

I am not here to convert the Tuaregs but to try and understand them.

(Bro. Charles, Quoted by Lehureaux, In the Sahara with Father de Foucauld, p.115)

28

There is a final aspect to evangelical poverty, and that is that it is entirely subservient to love and must, in short, be but an expression of love. When poverty becomes harsh with others, careless of the needs of the sick and the weak, or joyless and austere it is not in accord with love, it is not the poverty of Christ.

(Rene Voillaume, In The Midst of Men, p.98)

29

MARTHA

The poverty of Jesus is a life-giving mystery. The farther we penetrate into that mystery, the better we shall see how utterly one the Gospel life is. It is from the Love of Him who is infinitely Simple, of Him who is sovereign Poverty incarnate, that poverty heads, and its natural flow is towards love of the little and the wretched; humble itself, it cannot live with hardness or pride.

(Rene Voillaume, In The Midst of Men, p.101)

30

PETER CHRYSOLOGUS, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

Those who love can do anything; they can do all kinds of things that those who do not love exhaust themselves trying to do in vain.

(Bro. Charles, LS p.38)

31

IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA, PRIEST

While I was in Paris getting my account of my journey to Morocco printed, I found myself in the company of some very intelligent, very virtuous, and deeply Christian persons. I said to myself-excuse the expression, but I'm just repeating what was going through my mind-that maybe this religion wasn't so stupid after all.

At the same time, an extremely strong interior grace was driving me. Even though I didn't believe, I started going to church; I felt at ease only there, and I'd spend long hours there saying this strange prayer over and over: "My God, if you exist, make me know you!" (Bro. Charles, conversation with a friend,LS,p.17)

AUGUST

1

ALPHONSUS LIGUORI, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

The life of Nazareth is that of the majority of people, very much like their ordinary life. It is also that of religious who live a hidden, contemplative life and, at the same time are in touch with the people around them. (Bro. Charles, writings)

2

EUSEBIUS OF VERCELLI, BISHOP; PETER JOHN EYMARD, PRIEST

One has not to speak to the Tuaregs directly of Our Lord; that would make them run away. One must give them confidence, make friends of them, do little services for them, be linked with them in friendship.

(Bro. Charles, Letter to Marie de Bondy, 16 December 1905)

3

On Matthew 9:22: "Real faith... causes every impossibility to disappear; makes nonsense of those words 'anxiety', 'danger', 'fear', makes us walk through life with calm, peace and deep joy, like a child holding its mother's hand." (LSM)

4

JOHN MARY VIANNEY, PRIEST

It is certain that besides the priests, Pricillas and Aquilas are needed, seeing those whom the priest does not see, entering where he cannot enter, going to those who run away from him, evangelizing by means of beneficent contact, kindness poured out on everybody.

Charity which is the basis of religion... obliges every Christian to love his/her neighbor, that is every human being as himself/herself. Every Christian should therefore be an apostle: that is not a recommendation, it is a commandment, the commandment of charity. Lay people should be apostles to all those they can reach: their relatives and friends first, but not only them; there is nothing restricted about charity, which embraces all those embraced by the Heart of Jesus... By what means?... with all those they are connected with, without exception, by goodness, tenderness, fraternal affection, example of virtue... with certain people without saying a word about God or religion, waiting patiently as God waits patiently, being good as God is good, with brotherly and sisterly tenderness and praying; by speaking according to the measure which they can take it in... above all to see a brother or sister in every human being... to see a child of God in every human being. (Bro. Charles, Letter to Joseph Hours, 3 May 1912)

5

DEDICATION OF ST. MARY MAGOR

Retreat times are opportunities to make our love grow. That is why people who come and disturb our retreat should still be met by our smile and our love. The great commandment of charity comes before the silence of a retreat. I beg you be Christian and human before being religious.

(LS mag.p.27)

6

THE FEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

As soon as I believed that there was a God, I understood that I couldn't do otherwise than live for Him. My religious vocation dates from the same hour as my faith.

(Letter to H de Castries, 1902, Bro. Charles)

7

SIXTUS II, POPE AND MARTYR AND COMPANIONS; CAJETAN, PRIEST

On Matthew 14:31: Jesus says 'Come' and we have the grace to walk on the waves. It seems impossible to us, but Jesus is the Master of the impossible... Let's walk along the Way where He calls us with an absolute faith, for heaven and earth will pass, but His words will not pass. (Bro. Charles)

8

DOMINIC, PRIEST

In our life, whether hidden, or especially when public,... let us take periods of repose, periods of solitude spent in the company of Jesus... Let these retreats have three characteristics that Jesus indicates. Let them be peace and quiet... times of appeasement... A time of solitude: the more we are alone with Jesus, the more we shall find happiness in him, love loves private conversation... Let it be a time of solitude in the company of Jesus... now looking at him without saying anything, now questioning him.

(Bro. Charles, Meditation on Mark 6, 30-32)

9

I am a monk and not a missionary, made for silence and not for speech. (Bro. Charles)

10

LAWRENCE, DEACON AND MARTYR

One has to pass through the desert and sojourn there to receive the grace of God; it is there that one empties oneself, that one drives away from oneself all that is not God and that one completely empties the little house of our soul, to leave space for God alone... It is a time of grace, a period through which every soul must necessarily pass that wishes to bear fruit... Intimate life with God, a turning of the soul to God, in faith, hope and charity... One can only give what one has and it is in solitude, in this life, alone with God alone... that God gives himself completely to the one who gives himself completely to Him. Do not fear that you are neglecting your duties towards creatures; on the contrary, it's the only means you have of serving them effectively.

(Bro. Charles, Letter to Fr. Jerome, 19 May 1898)

11

CLARE OF ASSISSI

Contemplative life is a life of friendship with the person, Jesus. It is a much deeper interior life, really in relationship with God. Why can't this friendship and relationship co-exist with a call to be with people, even with crowded masses of people?...Is it not rather to the degree to which our intimate friendship with Jesus grows strong and deep that we will long to carry him into the midst of the crowds, to let him shine out from us, to make him loved?

(LSM p.35)

12

But his (Bro. Charles) innate regard for others was increasingly informed by what he found in the Gospels as he reflected upon,"(T)he respect with which Christ...treated every human being: the woman taken in adultery; the woman who touched his garment in the crowd; the Samaritan woman at the well; Zacchaeus in the sycamore tree; the dying thief".

(Bro. Charles)

13

PONTIAN, POPE AND MARTYR AND HIPPOLYTUS, PRIEST AND MARTYR

Charles de Foucauld put these words into the mouth of Jesus: I allowed the devil to tempt me in the desert and that for you, through love for you...so that you may see that temptation is not sin since I myself am tempted,... so that you may see how one resists temptations... An excellent means of fighting them is to confront them with the words of Holy Scripture which find their origin in divine strength. For that it is necessary to be well-acquainted with Holy Scripture.

(Bro. Charles, Commentary Luke 4,12)

14

MAXIMILIAN KOLBE, OFM.CON.,PRIEST AND MARTYR

Guests, poor people, slaves, and visitors – they do not leave me a minute; I am alone for all the work to be done here. Since the little guesthouse was finished on the 15th, we have had guests for supper, to spend the night, for breakfast, it's never been empty. There were up to eleven one night, not counting an elderly sick man who stays there permanently.

(Bro. Charles, letter, LS p.47)

15

THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The Lord's own countenance is in every person. How our lack of sensitivity and respect in loving must have made him suffer during his agony and passion. He said: "What you did to the least of mine, you did to me... And in the way you did not do for these little ones, you did not do it for me."

L.S. M)

16

STEPHEN OF HUNGARY

It is in silence that we love most ardently; noise and words often put out the inner fire.

(Bro. Charles)

17

Formerly I tended to see on one side the Infinite, the holy Sacrifice, and on the other the finite, everything apart from God, and was always ready to sacrifice anything to celebrate Holy Mass. But there must have been a mistake in my reasoning here, for from the time of the apostles the greatest saints have sometimes sacrificed the possibility of celebrating to works of spiritual charity, to make journeys and so on... It is good to live alone in the land (the Hoggar); one can do things there, even though they are of no great importance, for one becomes "at home" there – easily available to people and quite ordinary.

(Bro. Charles, to Msgr. Guerin, July 1907)

18

JANE FRANCES DE CHANTAL, RELIGIOUS

Shall I speak about myself? I feel such a longing for peace far away from everything, and such a sense of being poor and wretched and helpless. And at the same time it seems to me that a great torrent of life streams through my hands and I can't stop the flow. I want to slow it down and I'm not able. In spite of myself I'm involved with so many lives, obliged to say so many things. And all the while I'm frightfully alone, more frightfully than ever. I'm alone with God, a distant, comfortless God who doesn't want to allow me any friendship, any human prop.

(LSM Vol. 1 p. 151)

19

JOHN EUDES, PRIEST

Spend your life in the love of your neighbor. (Bro. Charles)

20

BERNARD, ABBOT AND DOCTOR

The Incarnation has its source in the goodness of God. But even before that there is something else so marvelous, a sign that shines like a blinding light: the infinite humility contained in such a mystery. God, the infinite One, the all-powerful, becoming a man and the least of all. (Bro. Charles, November 6 1897)

21

PIUS X, POPE

My God, you are good! Because you want to be my Father and that of all mankind, how much more must I have the sentiments of a tender brother for all, no matter who they are, no matter how miserable they are.

But above all, I must say that in asking for this double bread of grace and the Eucharist, I do not ask it for myself only, but for us, that is for all humankind.

I ask for forgiveness, as for grace, not only for myself but also for all humankind.

(Bro. Charles, meditation on St. Teresa of Avila)

22

QUEENSHIP OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

And maybe some people will criticize you as they criticized Jesus for eating with known sinners and publicans, for becoming one with the masses, for letting yourself be bothered by children... You will never be asked to keep your eyes lowered in the name of religious reserve, but instead keep them wide open so as the beauty of life and of the entire universe. Do not go around looking serious and austere, and likewise do not be too easily offended or put off by little things. In stead, try to be loving and friendly, with a sense of humor and a spirit of cheerfulness, so that your joy may bear witness to the one who is the Author of all joys, the Source of all goodness.

(L.S. Magdaleine, The Green Booklet)

23

ROSE OF LIMA, OP: VIRGIN

Ah, my God, we have all sung your mercies, you created us all for eternal glory and ransomed us by the blood of Jesus, by your blood, my Lord Jesus, who are beside me in the Tabernacle, but if we all owe you this, how much more do I! I, who in my childhood surrounded by graces,... O my God, how you had your hand on me, and how little I felt it! How good you are! How you guarded me! How you covered me with your wings when I did not even believe in your existence! And while you were guarding me in this way, time passed, you judged that the moment was coming to bring me back into the fold...

(Bro. Charles, Meditation at Nazareth, November 1897)

24

BARTHOLOMEW, APOSTLE

The little building is called the 'khaoua' – the 'fraternity' because Khaouia Carlo is the universal brother. Pray to God that I will truly be a universal brother to all in this country.

(Bro. Charles, a letter to Marie de Bondy, January 1902)

25

LOUIS OF FRANCE; JOSEPH CALASANZ, PRIEST

The local people speak of me as a brother of the poor, but not only the poor, of all human beings.

(Bro. Charles, letter of January 1902)

26

So never forget that it is love that consummates everything in God, love that brought Jesus into the world, love that people hunger for before all else. Unless your poverty is simply an aspect, a countenance, of love, it will not be authentically divine. The demands of poverty must not-indeed, cannot-be placed above those of charity.

(Rene Voillaume, In The Midst of Men, p.103)

27

MONICA

Our annihilation is the most powerful way that we have to unite with Jesus and to do good for the souls.

(Bro. Charles, A letter to Marie de Bondy the 1st of December 1916)

28

AUGUSTINE, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

I was growing farther and farther away,

Farther from you,

My Lord and my life.

And at the same time my life was becoming

A living death;

And in that dead state,

Still, you were taking care of me.

(Bro. Charles meditations)

29

BEHEADING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

My Lord Jesus, how quickly the one who loves you with all his heart will become poor, since he will not be able to stand being richer than his Beloved... I cannot conceive of love without a need, an imperative need for conformity, resemblance, and in particular, for sharing all the pains, all the difficulties, and all the hardships of life.

(Bro. Charles, Retreat at Nazareth, November 1897)

30

I try to do the will of Jesus from day to day and am in great interior peace.

(Bro. Charles, Letter to Marie de Bondy)

31

If I were told to define the mission of our community in a single word, I wouldn't hesitate for a moment to cry: Unity, for it can all be summed up in Unity.

(LSM 48)

SEPTEMBER

1

And then you must graft divine love onto this humanity, love without measure.

(LS Mag. P.27)

2

The poorest of the poor; the most repelling; a child newly born; a failing old man; the least intelligent of human beings; the most abandoned; an imbecile; a dullard; a sinner; the greatest of sinners; the most ignorant; the lowest of the low; the person who is the most repugnant, physically or morally – each is a child of God, a Son of the Most High.

(Bro. Charles)

3

GREGORY THE GREAT, POPE AND DOCTOR

We must live with great hope. Christian hope knows that beyond the sufferings and failures there is Resurrection and life. (L.S.Magdeline, 1952)

4

To continue in the Sahara the hidden life of Jesus, not to preach but to live in solitude and poverty the humble work of Jesus. (Bro. Charles, April 1904)

5

When the grain of wheat falls to the earth and it doesn't die, it stays alone, but when it dies it bears a lot of fruit; I haven't died, I am alone... Pray for my conversion so that I can die and bear fruit. (Bro. Charles, A letter to Suzanne Perret)

6

My religious vocation dates from the same hour as my faith: God is so great. (Bro. Charles, August 1901)

7

I don't believe there is any other line from the Gospel which has made a deeper impression on me or transformed my life as much as this one: "Whatever you do to one of these little ones, you do to me." If we just think that these words were spoken by Uncreated Truth, by the same lips which said, "This is my body...this is my blood," how forcefully we are driven to seek out and love Jesus in "these little ones," the sinners, the poor. (Bro. Charles, a letter, LS p.51)

8

THE BIRTH OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

I beg you in the name of Our Lady of Nazareth and of the tiny child Jesus who became incarnate at the annunciation in order to become an example of littleness and gentleness; And in the name of Christ in his passion who suffered so much to expiate our failures to live... Be a presence of real sisterly love in the midst of this world so embroiled in hatred. In Africa, America Asia and Eastern Europe, everywhere-anger and vengeance reigns. Be then a smile on the world even when the world makes you suffer. (L.S.Magdeleine, 1961)

9

PETER CLAVER,SJ: PRIEST

Here there are very many slaves... I don't conceal from my French friends that this slavery is an injustice, monstrous immorality and it is their duty to do all they can to suppress it...It is our duty to take all the necessary steps to bring relief to these poor unfortunates...We haven't the right to be as dogs that don't bark, dumb watchmen: we must cry aloud that something is wrong. (Bro. Charles, Letter to Father Guerin, February 4, 1902)

10

You can live your life of Nazareth everywhere: live it in the place where it is most useful to your neighbor.

(Bro. Charles, Tamanrasset Notebook, 1905)

11

Ask yourself, in all things, what would Our Lord have done and do it... it's your only rule, your hard and fast rule! (Bro. Charles, Rules and Directory, 1909)

12

Make your objective the life of Nazareth, in everything and for everything, in its simplicity and breath. (Bro. Charles, Tamanrasset Notebook, 1905)

13

JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

The more we empty ourselves, the more God fills us with His grace... gives himself fully to us. (Bro. Charles, Meditation on the Gospel)

14

THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS

Whatever the motive for which they kill us, if we in our hearts accept an unjust and cruel death as a blessed gift at your hand...if we do not resist, thus obeying what you said, 'Offer the wicked man no resistance' (Mt.5:39), and follow your example... then, whatever reason they have for killing us, we shall die in pure love... and if it is not a martyrdom in the strict sense of the word and in the eyes of men, it will be such in our eyes and it will be truly perfect imitation of your death... for even if we have not in this case offered our blood for our faith, we shall still, with all our heart, have shed it for love of you. (Bro. Charles, Bea 4)

15

Brother Charles is born.

OUR LADY OF SORROWS

O God, we have so many reasons to sing about your mercy. And if all of us have to do that, then how much more should I do it, I who have been inundated with grace. Son of a holy mother through whom I have learned to know You, to love You and to pray to you as soon as I was able to understand. Is not the first thing that I can remember the morning and evening prayer? This was when I prayed: 'God please bless my dad, my mum, my granddad, my grandma Foucauld and my little sister.

And such a pious education! And all these people going to church, bouquets of flowers decorating the crosses, the Christmas cribs, the May greeting, the little altar in my room. I lived a well-protected life from the day that I had a room in my family's house and as long as my faith lasted. I remember going to church with my father and grandfather (that does seem a long time ago)

(Bro. Charles, 8 November 1897 in Nazareth)

16

CORNELIUS, POPE AND MARTYR AND CYPRIAN, BISHOP AND MARTYR

You will not be asked to keep your eyes lowered in the name of religious reserve. Rather I will ask you to open your eyes very wide so that you really see all the suffering around you and also the beauties of human life and of the whole creation.

(LSM D.1945-48, p.50 P.24)

17

Brother Charles is Baptized.

ROBERT BELLARMINE, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

And isn't it true that when you will have felt the depth of people's need you will hunger all the more for Jesus to fill you, you will desire time to withdraw with him? (LSM p.35)

18

My last retreats before deaconate and priesthood showed me that my vocation to the life of Nazareth should not be lived in the beloved Holy Land, but among those souls which are the most sick, the sheep who are the most abandoned. This divine banquet of which I am the minister must not be presented to brothers, family and wealthy neighbors but to the lame, the blind and to the souls who lack priests the most.

(Bro. Charles, meditations, April 8, 1905 a letter to Fr. Caron OS p.37)

19

JANARIUS, BISHOP AND MARTYR

For us, as for the generations before us, the sign of the Eucharist is that of the calm and unchanging appearance of the bread and wine. But the reality to which this spiritual nourishment and this mystical offering are due, sprang from the anguish of a human heart, a sweat-drenched face, a body shuddering as it was racked by pain, wounds from which the blood dripped and the long drawn-out agony of a criminal's death. All this was borne for us by God. Without this torment of the Passion there would be no sacrament. The Eucharist may be described as the link that unites each of us and all our days, with their store of small misfortunes and slight sufferings, to that which took place during those hours of our Lord's suffering as a human person: the Eucharist must be like a channel which, down the lines of the bygone generations and, as it were, outside time, communicates to us the suffering of the Son of Man, so that we may have our part in it. If participation in the Eucharist fails to move us to welcome all suffering as our share in that which counted most for Jesus, and still more, to seek out sacrifice, then our participation in it is barren. (Rene' Voillaume, Brothers of Men, P.44)

20

ANDREW KIM TAEGON, PRIEST AND MARTYR, PAUL CHONG HASANG, CATECHIST AND MARTYR AND COMPANIONS

I am waiting. God himself led me here. Through his own action he brought me to leave – if this is something he wants, which does not seem to me to be certain – he will show me clearly through your voice, dear Father, or through events... So I am waiting and I let myself be carried...

(Bro. Charles, Letter to Abbe Huvelin, March 22, 1900)

21

MATTHEW, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST

Jesus speaks through Brother Charles. I teach you first of all that one can do well to men, much good, infinite well, divine well, without words, without sermons, without noise, in silence and by giving good example... What example? That of piety, of our duties towards God lovingly accomplished, of kindness to all men, of tenderness for those around us... I teach you to live by the work of your hands so as not be a burden to anyone, to have something to give to the poor and I bestow incomparable beauty on this way of life that is possessed by no other, unless it is that of the evangelical worker, a life in imitation of mine.

(Bro. Charles, Retreat at Ephrem, 1898)

22

Loving consists in the desiring the good of the beloved above all else, and in seeking that good at the cost of self-sacrifice.

(Rene Voillaume, Faith And Contemplation, p.81)

23

In order to save us God came to us and involved Himself with us in the most familiar and close contact. For the salvation of souls, He is still coming to us, involving Him with us, living with us in close contact, each day and each hour in the Holy Eucharist. Thus we ought to work for the salvation of souls, go out to meet them, involve ourselves with them, live with them in familiar and close contact.

(Bro. Charles, Rules and Directory, 1909)

24

OUR LADY OF MERCY

We must never despair, neither for ourselves nor for others, not for anyone, however sunk in vice they may be, however much there seems to be not even the least glimmer of kind feelings. Don't ever despair not only of salvation but also of the possibility of them reaching an admirable holiness. God is mighty enough for it. The Good Shepherd can bring the sheep home to the fold at the eleventh hour, as at the first. His kindness and might are limitless. We're obliged to hope for everybody.

(Bro. Charles)

25

Are you fully aware that despite the outer appearances of leading an apostolic life, you must be a true contemplative? Your contemplative life will have to be all the more luminous and fruitful, precisely because you have chosen to be plunged in the activity of everyday life like leaven in the dough... And so, in order that you may be kneaded deeply into the midst of mankind without imprudence, you will have to be filled to overflowing with Christ. He will be the leaven, working through you.

(L.S. Magdaleine, The Green Booklet)

26

COSMAS AND DAMIAN, MARTYRS

In order to convert the world, like the Apostles, in order to be the foundation stone and the Head of the Church, like St. Peter, one cannot prepare oneself in advance, nor over years, nor months, nor days, nor a single minute; it is enough to obey God's orders at every moment.

(Bro. Charles, Commented reading of the Gospel of St. Matthew 4: 18-20, Nazareth 1897)

27

VINCENT DE PAUL, PRIEST

Poverty: To embrace poverty with all our hearts; not only are riches baggage that weigh us down, but they are a danger. It is difficult to reconcile them with the perfect love of God, of Jesus, because they are diametrically opposed to imitation of Jesus. It is difficult to reconcile them with the perfect love of neighbor because what one keeps for oneself one does not give to others and one does not love one's neighbor "as oneself" when one is keeping riches and leaving one's brother to die of hunger, and when one is not sharing what one has with those who are destitute...and from the day that one shares with the wretched, one instantly becomes poor oneself. To love others as oneself is generally synonymous with sharing one's goods with the poor, with stripping oneself in order to give them what they lack. As soon as one loves in this manner, one becomes poor.

(Bro. Charles)

28

WENCESLAUS, MARTYR; LAWRENCE RUIZ, MARTYR AND HIS COMPANIONS, MARTYRS

Even though you may give all your time, even though you spend yourself to the breaking point, even though the purpose of this devotion is a work of the highest importance, such as that of evangelization, it is all worthless and Christ's love is not in you, if your heart is not filled with respect for all people, for the least of people, for those who do not understand you, for those who repel your advances, for those who are your enemies and are wholly unlike you. (Rene Voillaume, Brothers of Men, p.149)

29

MICHAEL, GABRIEL, AND RAPHAEL, ARCHANGELS

I want all the people who live here, Christians, Muslims, Jews, to get used to thinking of me as their brother, the brother of all. They have started calling the place the 'fraternity' and I am really pleased. (Bro. Charles, letter)

30

JEROME

And yet, now as never before, humankind needs to believe in the divine friendship, and not merely in a general and impersonal kind of love with which God may be presumed to bestow upon everything he has created. His love for each individual human being is a friendship of the greatest intimacy, calling every human person by name.

(Rene Voillaume, Brothers of Men, p.142)

OCTOBER

1

THERESA, OCD: VIRGIN AND DOCTOR

After ten years, after twenty years, after a hundred years, I beg you, stay poor; become poorer and poorer. And in order not to forget it, look at the Nazareth workshop where, for thirty years, the Lord, out of a need to love yet more deeply, forgot about divine splendor in order to become flesh, taking the human condition of a lowly worker upon himself... (LS Mag. P.27)

2

GUARDIAN ANGELS

Prayer you see, is above all thinking of me while loving me; The more you love the better you pray. Prayer is the attention of the soul lovingly fixed on Me.
(Bro. Charles, Retreat at Ephrem)

3

The degree of your union with God will not be measured by the number of hours you devote to prayer each day, nor will you be men of prayer only insofar as these make you so. You will be men of prayer if and when your faith has made your way of looking at things and people like that of Jesus. (Rene Voillaume, Seeds of the Desert, p.116)

4

FRANCIS OF ASSISSI

Mutual love. This is another ideal we have to stand up for. The right to love all creatures deeply, with one's human heart. The closer someone comes to Jesus, the greater right to love she should have. He made a commandment of it. He said, "Love one another." Why see this love as something so disembodied that it isn't real any more? Why not love the way a mother loves her children, the way the fondest child loves its parents, the way brothers and sisters love one another? Love is something wonderful. (LSM Vol. 1 p.135)

5

Bitterness almost always comes from wounded self-esteem or from pride insufficiently subdued. Let us not be quick either to lay responsibility for this kind of feeling at other people's doors or to accuse circumstances. Peace together with the gentleness we must also have with ourselves', returns with humility and the spirit of childhood.
(Rene Voillaume, Seeds of the Desert, p.92)

6

BRUNO, PRIEST; MARIE-ROSE DUROCHER, VIRGIN

The soul is made not for noise but for recollection, and life should be a preparation for heaven not only in meritorious works but also in peace and recollection in God Man, however, is immersed in endless discussion; the lack of true joy he finds in noise should more than convince him that he has wandered far from his vocation.
(Br. Charles, writings)

7

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

The more I try to love Jesus, the more he asks me to love all the people around me.
(LSM vol. 1 p.135)

8

You can only give what you've got; and it's in solitude, in this life 'alone with God alone'... that God gives Himself fully to the one who gives their all to Him...
(Bro. Charles, Letter to Pere Jerome, Trappist)

9

DENIS, BISHOP AND MARTYR, AND HIS COMPANIONS; JOHN LEONARDI, PRIEST

This sharing of the circumstances of life of the poorest of humankind with all its implications-working daily for a living, uncertainty, privation, being tied down to an inhuman job, suffering of all kinds-is a way in which a Little Brother can prove his love.
(Rene Voillaume, Brothers of Men, p.145)

10

Whether our life be that of Nazareth, the public life or the Desert... it should 'cry the gospel'...
(Bro. Charles, notes 1898)

11

Let us do as Priscilla and Aquila did. Let us address ourselves to all those who are around us, to those whom we know, to the one who is close to us: let us take the best means with each person, using words with one, silence with another, and with all, example, goodness, fraternal affection, 'making ourselves all things to all people' in order to gain them all for Jesus.
(Bro. Charles, Letter to Joseph Hours, April 28th 1916)

12

Sharing the life of the poor is thus one of the obligations of friendship towards them. But it cannot bear fruit if we fail to find in the burden of our daily work a means of entry into our Lord's own work and of carrying our cross in his footsteps.
(Rene Voillaume, Brothers of Men, p.145)

13

Attachment to God alone, our savior, and at what a price: Everything for God alone who not only gives us everything, but gives Himself wholly to us, and gives Himself wholly for us...
(Bro. Charles)

14

CALLISTUS I, POPE AND MARTYR

To give up everything in spirit, to be detached in heart from everything, to be poor in spirit, void of all attachment, is absolutely essential to be a disciple of Jesus.

(Bro. Charles, Meditation on the Gospel)

15

TERESA OF AVILA, DOCTOR

Brother Charles will show you that these words (contemplative vocation, contemplation) refer to the very simple, trusting, and loving attitude of a person in intimate conversation with Jesus, the affection of a little child for its father, the confident sharing of a friend with a friend.

This is the essence of prayer, and the meaning of contemplation.

(LSM p.35)

16

HEDWIG, RELIGIOUS; MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE, VHM

Let us never cease from being poor as regards everything, brothers of the poor, companions of the poor.

(Bro. Charles 263rd Meditation on the Gospel)

17

IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH, BISHOP AND MARTYR

We must not be discouraged in the face of difficulties, but tell ourselves that the more difficult, slow and thankless the work is, the more we must hurry to the task and make great efforts. The words of St. John of the Cross, 'we must not measure our work by our weakness, but our efforts by our works', should always be before us.

(Bro. Charles)

18

LUKE, EVANGELIST

We get used to the most wonderful things. If God had not spoken yet, and we found out he was going to send a message to the world...how excited we would be to hear it! ... We have the Gospel, an inexhaustible mine, and we read it absent – minded. Its words scarcely penetrate our souls, and the proof is that we don't live them...

(LSM)

19

ISAAC JOGUES, SJ AND JOHN DE BREBEUF, SJ PRIESTS AND MARTYRS AND COMPANIONS; PAUL OF THE CROSS, PRIEST

The Little Brothers... of all the fraternities must have among themselves the most tender charity, the most perfect unity, the most brotherly love, knowing that they are all...like little brothers around Jesus, their very brother, who tells them: "Be one as my Father and I are one."

(Bro. Charles)

20

PAUL OF THE CROSS, PRIEST

I cannot conceive of love that feels no constraining need of resembling, of becoming like You, and especially sharing all the hurts and pains, all the difficulties, all the hardships of life...I judge no one, Lord; the others are also your servants, and my brothers, and I must just love them... But it is impossible for me myself to understand how one can love You and not seek to resemble You, and not feel the need of sharing every cross.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

21

Anyone who is not ready to suffer everything and abandon him or herself wholly to the will of the beloved does not know what it is to love.

(Bro. Charles)

22

God entrusts his poor children to us... Let us be their consolation, their refuge, their shelter, their home, their father's house. In this way we will be the fathers, brothers and children of Jesus... Let us love the rich because they are children of God, but let us not concentrate on them... let us concentrate on the poor because they have need of everything Jesus has left to us... like himself.

(Bro. Charles)

23

JOHN OF CAPISTRANO, OFM, PRIEST

After ten years, after twenty years, after a hundred years, I beg you, stay poor; become poorer and poorer. And in order not to forget it, look at the Nazareth workshop where, for thirty years, the Lord, out of a need to love yet more deeply, forgot about divine splendor in order to become flesh, taking the human condition of a lowly worker upon himself.

(LSM)

24

ANTHONY MARY CLARET, BISHOP

Loving people, our brothers and sisters, we share the life of the poor, of those who suffer, simply out of love.

(Rene Voillaume, Seeds of the Desert, p. 86)

25

Make your vocation "to become one of them" (the poor) more and more real; let it not be just words. That means a lot, you know: to become one of them means that you enjoy all their richness, that you strip yourselves of the illusion that you are always the one with something to give. It requires total openness and availability.

(LSM)

26

Divine praises are an essential part of love. If we want to fulfill our duties towards God, it is most indispensable to praise Him.

(Bro. Charles)

27

We must not content ourselves to speak of brotherly, sisterly love. We have to speak of unity in love, for I am realizing more and more that that is the purest spirit of the gospel, the pure spirit of Christ whose last message before dying (lovingly remembered and preserved as people's dying words often are) was: "May they be one as we are one, me in them and you in me, that they may be made perfect in unity".

(LSM 49)

28

SIMON AND JUDE, APOSTLES

Woe to you who print on your postage stamps 'Liberty', 'Equality', and 'Human Rights' and then bind slaves in chains. Woe to you who sentence to death those who forge your bank notes, and then let children be stolen from their parents and be sold into slavery. Woe to you who punish the theft of chicken but allow crimes against human dignity and freedom.

No one is more convinced than me that we should not get mixed up with the powers that govern. We should rather love justice and hate evil and scold earthly powers when they commit any grave injustice against those for whom we stand in any way responsible. On earth we do, indeed, represent justice and truth, and we have no right to behave like sleeping guards or silent watchdogs.

(Bro. Charles LBOG magazine p. 40)

29

It is love, which should recollect you in me, not distance from my children. See me in them, and like me at Nazareth, live near them, lost in God.

(Bro. Charles, OS April 1904)

30

Prayer is thinking of God with love.

(Bro. Charles)

31

Is it better to stay in the Hoggar without being able to celebrate Holy Mass, or to celebrate and not to go? I have often asked myself the same question. Before I have sacrificed everything else to have the celebration of Mass. But something must be wrong with this reasoning. Ever since the time of the Apostles, the greatest saints sometimes sacrificed the possibility of this celebration in favor of spiritual works of mercy. It is good to stay here alone. Even if one isn't able to do a great deal, it is worthwhile becoming a part of the country; one is so accessible and so 'very small'.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

NOVEMBER

1

ALL SAINTS

We must return to the Gospel. If we do not live it, Jesus will not live in us.

(Bro. Charles)

2

ALL SOULS

They should carry everyone in their heart, like Brother Jesus who died for all.

(Bro. Charles, Rule #38)

3

MARTIN DE PORRES, OP

You will not forget that it is very often the little and the poor who will evangelize you and reveal Jesus to you.

(LS mag, p.28)

4

Brother Charles Name Day**CHARLES BORROMEIO, BISHOP**

Let us love all human beings; but let our most delicate attention, our most fraternal tenderness and care, be given to those to whom God is twice a Father; to those who have no support, no family, no friends; to those whom the world excludes and deprives: the little ones, the poor, the suffering, the sick.

(Bro. Charles LBOG magazine p.39)

5

For the Little Brother must be at one and the same time a worker and a man of prayer—a man of silence, who must also be alive and attentive to the cares and concerns of his brothers, sisters and friends; a completely detached contemplative, but with a certain freedom of movement and a certain freedom in the use of things.

(Rene Voillaume, Seeds of the Desert, p.85)

6

L.S. Magdalene Born Into Eternal Life

Contemplatives in the midst of the world, daring to say that their contemplative life can be lived to the full in the crowded cities or on the highways as well as in a monastery. Some people are surprised at this but think of Jesus, the greatest contemplative of all, think of his hidden life at Bethlehem and Nazareth, of his public life on the roads. Jesus retired into the desert for only 40 days, far from the crowds, while he lived 33 years among his people, simply as one of them. He was God, that is true but he became man to show us the way. We cannot go wrong if we follow Jesus and seek to imitate him: As you work, as you come and go, as you pass among the crowds, to be contemplative will mean simply that you try to turn to Jesus within you and to enter into conversation with him, as with the one you love most in the world. (L.S. Magdalene, The Green Booklet)

7

Come apart, in a desert place, and rest! In our life, whether 'hidden' or 'public', but especially if we are involved in much ministry, we should have times of rest, times of solitude, moments spent just in Jesus' company... These 'retreats' should have the three characteristics indicated by Jesus here. There should be rest: nothing tiring or forced, nothing painful for the spirit, but times of calm and peace, so that we finish up... reposed and refreshed, having rested pleasantly at the feet of Jesus... then there should be solitude. The more we shall 'taste' His presence, for love enjoys the intimacy of a 'tête-à-tête'.

(Bro. Charles, Meditation on Mk. 6:30-32)

8

The redemption operates in such a way that the great commandment of fraternal love is practicable only in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount. Only our Lord could have really propounded the seven Beatitudes as good news. For this latter is based upon a twofold reality: on the one hand, there is the brute fact that among men poverty, suffering, weakness, and violence exist; and on the other, the declaration that all these things... will henceforth be transformed for men, through our Lord's death and resurrection, into the means of achieving redemption, of bringing God's reign and the establishment of peace.

(Little Brother Rene' Voillaume, Brothers to Men, p.23)

9

DEDICATION OF SAINT JOHN LATERAN BASILICA

Give hospitality to all, as to beloved brothers, to Christians or pagans, good or bad... make no exception of persons, seeing in all Jesus alone.

(Bro. Charles, Rule #30)

10

LEO THE GREAT, POPE AND DOCTOR

How good you are, my God! Always, you are the one who "does not break the bruised reed, nor put out the smoldering wick."

(Brother Charles, Writings)

11

MARTIN OF TOURS

War and hatred are horrible things. It is horrible to think that human beings have put themselves at the service of hatred when two thousand years ago Jesus died on the cross to teach people how to love one another.

(LSM Ip50)

12

JOSAPHAT, BISHOP AND MARTYR

You will not be able to follow Christ in this final stage of His Passover of poverty; the last place is so completely His that no one can ever snatch it from Him.

(Brother Charles Writings)

13

FRANCIS XAVIER CABRINI, VIRGIN

Let us all proclaim the Gospel; let us cry Jesus and the Gospel within the measure and the way God has given us through the holiness of our life and the practice of Gospel values.

(Bro. Charles LBOG magazine p. 38)

14

Go on loving the poor with a preferential love, because you are specially consecrated to them. Give them the best of yourselves; never abandon them for the rich... But I beg you, don't make the same mistake as those who, by their words or their actions, have solidified the barriers between people even more, stirring up people's passionate emotions against each other; they do this because they have forgotten to raise their eyes to the Cross of Jesus the Savior, who, from Calvary's height in Jerusalem, took all of humanity to himself, from one end to the other of the world to the other.

(LSM 49)

15

ALBERT THE GREAT, OP, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

Therefore, let us preach the Gospel in silence and with words. It is the responsibility of all to preach in silence. As for preaching with words, some should do it more than others, but there are very few who should not do it at all. This is according to each one's vocation...

(Bro. Charles LBOG magazine p.38)

16

MARGARET OF SCOTLAND; GERTRUD THE GREAT

My God, I do not know how it is possible for some people to see you in poverty and themselves voluntarily remain rich, to imagine themselves so much grander than their Master, their Beloved and not to want to be like him in all things-as far as it is for them to decide and especially in your humbleness. I do not doubt their love for you, my God but I think there is something lacking. I, at any rate, could not imagine love without a longing, a compelling longing, to imitate, to resemble the Beloved and especially to share all life's pains, difficulties and burdens. To be rich, to live in comfort, deprived, living in misery under the burden of heavy labor- I just could not do it, O God. I could not love like that.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

17

ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY, RELIGIOUS

Rarely did the rich cross the threshold of the holy house of Nazareth; it was the poor who came there with confidence. We must make it so that the poor come with confidence to the fraternity, though we should receive the rich with great love, we should not try to get their visits or wait for them. But let us wait for the poor and arrange everything so that we can give them a good welcome.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

18

DEDICATION OF THE CHURCHES OF PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES

Our soul is a house of prayer; it is made to contemplate God for all eternity...

(Bro. Charles LBOG magazine p.20)

19

Pass like an unknown in the world. (Bro. Charles, writings)

20

My God, here I am at your feet in my cell; it is night and all is quiet. I am perhaps the only one in Nazareth keeping vigil at this hour. What did I do to deserve this grace? Thank you, thank you! I am happy and filled with joy. I adore You, my God, I adore You with all my soul, and I love You with all the strength of my heart; I belong to You alone. My entire being belongs to you; in spite of me, it belongs to You willingly with all my heart. Do with me what You will. (Bro. Charles LBOG magazine p.23)

21

PRESENTATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Events, and especially people, are occasions for receiving the coming of Jesus, and for responding in living faith and the Spirit's love...

(Bro. Charles, letter to Massignon, Dec.1st 1916)

22

CECILIA, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

It is necessary to go through the desert and stay there a long time in order to receive the grace of God. It is there that you empty yourself completely, chasing away all that is not of God, so there is room for God alone. This is indispensable...

(Bro. Charles LBOG magazine 20)

23

CLEMENT I, POPE AND MARTYR; COLUMBAN, ABBOT; MIGUEL AGUSTIN PRO, SJ, PRIEST AND MARTYR

Love the poor above all, those who are treated with contempt and yet who are Christ incarnate in the most truly living manner, the most beloved and cherished sheep of the flock. Love them as they are; breathe their outwardly impoverished appearance... That is their greatest claim to your love. The Lord's favorites are the little and the poor...

(LS Mag.p.29)

24

ANDREW DUNG-LAC, PRIEST AND MARTYR AND COMPANIONS

Jesus wishes us to be the "light of the world," the salt of the earth," and the leaven in the bread." This is a matter of "being," not of doing." All our desire, all our work must be so united with Jesus that we shall become light, become salt, become leaven with Him. The rest is not our business. But Jesus also wishes us present in the world's midst. We must therefore be ready to be devoured by those who hunger and thirst for God's holiness. (Rene Voillaume, Seeds of the Desert, p.75)

25

The loss-of-time-for-love's-sake guise under which the pure act of prayer will sometimes come to us is also a means of verifying the quality of our faith in the divine transcendence and so purifying our relationships with others. In an atmosphere of materialism, where efficiency is fast becoming an absolute criterion of a man's worth, people will seldom understand this side of our lives, that seemingly 'serves no good purpose' and "does nobody any good." (Rene Voillaume, Seeds of the Desert, p.65)

26

For me, prayer belongs essentially to life. And besides, I'm not able to separate God from created things, because God is so much alive and present in all creation. And so I want to come to God in prayer keeping creatures with me, not separate myself from them. I want to bring them to him. I don't want God either to be separated from all he has created, all that he loves with his Creator's love, his Father's love. (LSM Vol. 1 p.125)

27

I have chosen Tamanrasset, a village of 20 campfires in the heart of the Hoggar Mountains and of the Dag Rali, the major tribe of the area, far from any sizeable village. I don't think that there will ever be a military post here, nor telegraph, nor Europeans, nor mission in the foreseeable future. I have chosen to settle in this obscure corner, asking Jesus to bless this place where I hope to have as my example, his life at Nazareth. (Bro. Charles, writings)

28

When people pray they'll spend their whole time chasing away the thought of the ones they love and they won't succeed. Why not start right off by taking the ones they love along with them into the prayer, so that it can all be purified by God's own love? (LSM Vol. 1 p.125)

29

My Lord Jesus, who said, 'A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends', I desire with all my heart to give my life for you. I ask you with insistence for this: however, not my will, but yours be done. I offer you my life: cause me to live and die in the way that pleases you most: in you, through you and for you!" (Bro. Charles, Beat. P1)

30

ANDREW, APOSTLE

When the grain of wheat
That falls into the earth does not die,
It remains alone;
If it dies,
It bears much fruit.
I have not died, and so I am alone.
Pray for my conversion, so that
I may die, and bear fruit. (Bro. Charles, a letter)

DECEMBER

1

MEMORIAL OF THE DEATH OF BROTHER CHARLES OF JESUS

Think that you must die as a martyr,
 Stripped of everything,
 Stretched out on the ground,
 Naked, unrecognizable,
 Covered with blood and wounds,
 Violently and painfully killed...
 And want it to be today.
 (Bro. Charles, meditations)

2

The Incarnation has its source in the goodness of God. But from the very first there is one thing that stands out as so wonderful, so sparkingly bright, so astonishing, that it shines as a dazzling sign: the infinite humility contained in such a mystery. God, pure being, infinite, perfect, the creator, all-powerful, vast, sovereign master of all, becomes a human being, uniting himself to a human soul and body, and appears on earth as a man, as the least of all people.

(Bro. Charles, meditations LS p.25)

3

FRANCIS XAVIER, SJ, PRIEST

Make your vocation “to become one of them” (the poor) more and more real; let it not be just words. That means a lot, you know: to become one of the them means that you enjoy all their richness, that you strip yourselves of the illusion that you are always the one with something to give. It requires total openness and availability.

(LS Mag. P.29)

4

JOHN OF DAMASCUS, PRIEST AND DOCTOR

Jesus took the lowest place in such a way that no one has ever been able to take it away from him.

(Bro. Charles Beat p1)

5

A baby, the gentle baby Jesus most of all, couldn't bear to be around harsh faces, harsh eyes, harsh voices. He should get in your way and keep you from being gloomy. A baby obliges you to smile at it, even if you're unhappy. He should get in your way and keep you from being gruff or thoughtless or talkative. You need a deep spirit of prayerfulness in his presence if you want to know its delights. You need inward and outward silence. He should get in your way and keep you from being big. You would frighten him and he wouldn't stay in your arms. He should get in your way and keep you from being disobedient. It would hurt him too badly. He was totally obedient from the manger to the cross. (LSM vol. 1 p.121)

6

NICHOLAS, BISHOP

The source of the Incarnation is the goodness of God...But one thing, so marvelous, and extraordinary, is this: God... the Being, the Infinite, the Creator, the All-Powerful master of everything... becoming a human being, appearing on earth as the last of all humans. Why didn't he choose a higher rank in the world? For example, a king, a prince, a priest, a sage... or at least a middle rank? The reason is all these ranks are only theatrical trappings...

(Bro. Charles LBOG magazine p.12)

7

AMBROSE, BISHOP AND DOCTOR

Jesus was born and he died to teach us to love. Yet we just don't understand him, and there is far more hatred in the world than love.

(LSM Vol. 1 p.130)

8

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

I have a great devotion to Christmas and the flight into Egypt. I love in my comings and going to think of this journey of Jesus and his parents and to unite myself to him and try to imitate them in their contemplation and adoration and joy. We, too, have the Beloved always with us.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

9

He was coming to the earth to redeem us, to teach us, and to make himself known and loved; so he insisted on giving us, from the moment he entered this world and throughout his entire life, this lesson of scorn for human ideas of greatness and complete detachment from the need for human admiration. He was born, lived and died in the deepest abjection and disgrace, and for also completely taken the last place that no one has ever been able to descend lower than he.

(Bro. Charles, meditations LS p.27)

10

"He came down with them to Nazareth and was obedient to them." He came down; that is all He did for the rest of his life. He came down by incarnating himself; He came down by becoming a little child. He came down by obeying; He came down by becoming poor, abandoned, exiled, persecuted, and tortured always placing himself last. "When you are invited to a banquet, take the last seat!" That is what He did from the moment He entered the banquet of life until his death. He went to Nazareth, the place of hidden life, of ordinary life, of family life. He lived a life of prayer and humble work without any witnesses other than God and his neighbors. Humble, obscure, charitable, the life of most human beings. He lived this life for thirty years...

(Bro. Charles LBOG Magazine p.12)

11

DAMASUS I, POPE

Like Jesus, let us adopt the poverty which consist in living like the common people having only what is necessary. Let us not live a conventional poverty, but the poverty of the poor.

(Bro. Charles LBOG magazine p. 17)

12

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE; JANE FRANCES DE CHANTAL, RELIGIOUS

For years I've been dreaming of a new image of the Blessed Virgin, so vividly it's like I can actually see it... not a Virgin tenderly clasping her infant Jesus in her arms, but a Virgin giving her tiny baby Jesus (he is but a few months old, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in her outstretched hands) in a gesture so expressive that everyone will want to receive him.

(LSM57)

13

LUCY, VIRGIN AND MARTYR

Out of the overflowing abundance of his love, Christ, the Son of God, chose to pass through a little infant's helplessness, the only state in which someone is totally given over into the hands of another.

(LSM 53)

14

JOHN OF THE CROSS

It is in loving others that we learn to love God.

(Brother Charles to L.Massignon)

15

For our salvation, God came to us, mixed with us, lived among us in the closest, most intimate way.

(Bro. Charles, writings)

16

Surely, it is one of the most important achievements of contemporary Christianity to have awakened consciousness of the fact that sanctity, total sanctity, is attainable in everyday life.

(Rene Voillaume, Seeds of the Desert, p.49)

17

That is how Our God first appeared, (as a helpless infant) and he wants to be contemplated and adored in this state not only by the lowly but also by the great, for he accepted the adoration of both shepherds and wise men, and he even led them by a star into the presence of this little baby without grandeur or majesty...

(LSM 53)

18

This Bethlehem crib is something so beautiful and so great, for it contains the whole Christ, who is both God and man. And it is just the beginning of something which contains it all: the workshop of Nazareth, the Passion and the Cross-, and all the glory of the Resurrection and of Heaven.

(LSM58)

19

For me, to always seek out the very lowest place, to be always as lowly as my Master, to walk behind him, step by step, as a faithful disciple.

To live in poverty, abjection, suffering, to be lonely and abandoned in order to be in this life like my Master and Brother, my Spouse, my God, who lived his whole life like that, and set the example for me from the moment of his birth.

(Bro. Charles, meditations LS p.27)

20

See in this Incarnation love for humanity, the love God has for human beings and, consequently, which you must have in order to be like him, to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect. That kind of love is so dynamic, active, and deep, that it can leap the distance separating the finite from the infinite, and it causes love to employ for our salvation this unimaginable, undreamed of method, Incarnation: He who is God and creator coming to live on the earth. (Bro. Charles, meditations LS p.29)

21

PETER CANISIUS, PRIEST AND DOCTOR

When I look at the crib and the little infant Jesus in the straw, and the shepherds and the apostles and all those who started what was in fact something great, I think to myself that our poverty and our weakness are the very things the Lord desires, so that it can be him alone acting through us; we are only the instruments, which he can handle without their putting up the least resistance. (LSM54)

22

In order to save us, God came to us, mixed with us, lived with us in closest familiarity, from the Annunciation to the Ascension. For our salvation, he continues to come to us, to mix with us, to live with us in the closest possible contact, every moment of every day, in the Holy Eucharist. Therefore, we must, in order to work for the salvation of souls, go to them, mingle with them and live with them in close and familiar contact.

(Bro. Charles Directory, LS p.29)

23

JOHN OF KANTY, PRIEST

Often very often, I 'm going to talk to you about Jesus, the tiny baby in whom God dwells in all his fullness, in every aspect of his being...God in all his Wisdom, in all his Strength, yet who wanted to veil it all in such a way as to make it accessible to the little, to the very least... "He has hidden it all from the wise and the clever and revealed it to the merest children". (LSM,55)

24

To see Jesus in every human being,
 And to act on that vision:
 Goodness, respect, love, humility, gentleness.
 Live for him more than for myself.
 (Bro. Charles, meditations)

25

CHRISTMAS

In him you will each find the fulfillment of your vocation to be humble, lowly, dispossessed, and to love with a universal heart. In him there lies already everything Jesus was to become: Jesus the worker, Jesus going from place to place, Jesus in his passion, Jesus in glory. Make him grow in you. And when I come ... and see you, I will find in you all the light and gentleness and littleness of the Baby Jesus of Christmas.
 (LSM, Vol. 1 p.121)

26

FEAST OF STEPHEN, FIRST MARTYR

My secret dream, which I scarcely admit
 Even to myself-what I cannot help
 Dreaming about, is something very simple,
 Very small in numbers,
 Like those first very simple communities
 Formed during the earliest days of the Church.
 (Bro. Charles, a letter)

27

FEAST OF JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST

Jesus Himself chose His adorers! First he called the shepherds- simple poor people. Poverty, lowliness, love of the poor, these are the signs that call the poor. This is the divine wisdom of the goodness of my God! If you first called the rich, the poor wouldn't have dared to approach you. Convinced of the need to stay at a distance because of their poverty, they would have let the rich come close to you, and they would have looked upon you from a distance. By letting the shepherds come first, you called all to you. By calling the poor first, you showed them they were important to you, preferred by you until the end of time. At the same time the rich were also called. On the one hand, they aren't usually timid, and the other, it is up to them to decide if they also would become poor, like shepherds.
 (Bro. Charles)

28

THE FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS

Be a tiny baby in the Lord's hands. Always close your eyes and put your hand in his, and make yourself very supple so that he will never have any trouble getting you moving...
 (LSM59)

29

THOMAS BECKET, BISHOP AND MARTYR

The Baby of Bethlehem found his way into the Little Sisters of Jesus and became one of the prime sources of our spirituality. He gave us our note of weakness and self-surrender, and also our note of gentleness and joy. He became our model of spiritual childhood, by which we mean a childlikeness that does not destroy our personalities. Rather, it combines greatness of soul with littleness, and spiritual maturity and youthfulness of heart.

(Interview with Nouvelle Cite, Feb 1983- p25 I)

30

To cry the Gospel by your whole life means trying to live as Jesus lived, with the Gospel to give you light.

It means living his self-surrender as a tiny child in the crib in Bethlehem, his poverty and his very ordinary life in Nazareth, both his contemplative life and his active charity on the roads during his public ministry, his surrender to God, his Father, in the pain of the passion and of the crucifixion.

It means trying to love as he loved, living in the spirit of the beatitudes: in poverty, in gentleness, in a thirst for justice, being merciful, being pure of heart, and rejoicing when you suffer persecution out of love for Christ.

(LSM 60)

31

SYLVESTER I, POPE

PRAYER OF ABANDONMENT

It is the last prayer of our Master; of our beloved... may it be ours... May it not only be the prayer of our last moment but that of all our moments.

Father,

I abandon myself into your hands;

Do with me what 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.

(Bro. Charles, meditations Lk, 23:46)