



la carta

JUNE 2023



Dear Brothers,

May the Peace of Christ be with you, my brothers!

I am writing this letter to you now from the USA. Even though traveling is taking a toll on my health, I am happy and always excited to be with you, my brothers. As your General, I strive to initiate the call for unity and collaboration. Although I was unable to visit some of our houses due to difficult political situations, I still hoped that at least my presence in some or many of these places radiated to our other communities. I take this opportunity to greet all of you for this month of June, on the feast of our holy founder, St. Francis Caracciolo. May St. Francis Caracciolo be always close to all of us in prayer and in all our apostolic work. May his life be a living example to each one of us. St. Francis, teach us always to be humble, loving, and obedient.

In our recent USG meeting, we as a body developed the topic “reigniting our charism.” This is a common challenge among so many religious families. Many of the religious Orders are changing and are, in fact, in crisis. That is because the call for a change in approach on the charism was emphasized. It was noted that an understanding of charism needs to be clear and from there, we can proceed to how we can carry out an approach or a way at this time to live out fully the gift of the Holy Spirit.

In this Lacarta, I wish to share one specific segment of the many great topics we tackled. I will share more in the upcoming letters some of these great points. I wish to share the presentation of the mendicant group, which is composed mainly of the Orders that were founded three centuries before our foundation, such as 13th century. We may call them Friars. The following is without editing and was presented by the Carmelite Superior General. It was originally written in English.



+39 349 831 8995 | 1201-655-8020 (WhatsApp)



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It is entitled “Friars behaving badly”.

In our life together in community, we become aware of the weakness of our way of life. We are members of communities because we believe we were called by the Holy Spirit to dedicate our lives to others as friars who read the Gospel, live in community, and hold all things in common. In fact, our way of life will always demand that we love one another, that is, we love those who are given to us as brothers in community, with a love that is genuine and a love that is experienced.

The expression “Friars behaving badly” suggests the reality of what happens when that love is not there, in members of our Orders who find it difficult to love in this way, and others who after many years of religious life, feel they have never experienced that love. The overall effect is the situation of the friar who chooses not to participate in the life of the community but prefers to go his own way. That is the kind of friar who keeps his money for himself, and gives account to no one, the friar who has other things to do when the community is gathered as a community, the friar with a double life, who does not communicate with the others anymore and the friar who gossips. There are also the friars who have decided that they will only go to places that suit them, who look upon community as a structure that is there to serve their needs rather than something they are a part of building. In many ways, the friar behaving badly is the one for whom obedience is only to himself and his own needs, poverty is only a feeling and chastity is a problem if you make a mistake.



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The best expression of fraternal love for us is participation. We have discovered that our greatest virtue turns out to be our participation in the life of the community and the Order. It is through participation that the life blood of the Institute continues to flow. People who participate give of their best to the community and receive all that they need from the community. Through proper participation many of the ills of community life and individual suffering can be overcome.

I hope that this little speech from our fellow religious of the mendicant Orders inspire all of us and strengthen our common life. At times, we are not brotherly to one another. It is something good for us to reflect upon and maybe recognize that now is the perfect opportunity to consider that maybe we just need to participate more in the life of our respective communities.

AMRG,

Father Ted



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