

Three Years of Italian Courage Priests' Chapter Celebrated in Prayer

Translated from *Courage Internacional's* Spanish report

In the holy place where St. Paul was martyred, the *Abbazia delle Tre Fontane* (Abbey of the Three Fountains) on the outskirts of Rome, a chapter of priests of Courage met in a prayer of thanksgiving for their third anniversary. The chapter has been directed from its beginnings by their chaplain, Fr. Victor deLuna. The first meeting of the priests was on January 31, 2017, but it was not until end of this February, just a few days after the beginning of Lent, that they had the opportunity to take a day of retreat with prayer and silence as well as dialogue and fellowship.



Seven priests, out of the ten that make up the chapter, were able to attend. They had a meditation on the Five Goals of Courage, associating them with the Lenten liturgical season in view of Easter. There was time for personal meditation with the Holy Scriptures and the Magisterium of the Church, and guided reflections with some excerpts from the book by Daniel C. Mattson, *Why I Don't Call Myself Gay*.

The schedule was designed in such a way that the priests were able to follow the rhythm of the Liturgy of the Hours, praying them in community with the Trappist monks who live in the abbey, which favored a climate of prayer and recollection of the senses.



There were also opportunities for participants to share with the group about how they have been applying the Five Goals in their lives — their successes, struggles, and difficulties — all with an awareness of the search for holiness and walking in the light of Christ, accompanied by the Magisterium of the Church.

Father deLuna reported that the priests “appreciated how Courage's spirituality has been a human and spiritual place where they do not feel alone, where they can preserve their chastity, live a holy priesthood, and meet brothers priests who experience this condition [SSA], but are able to continue to grow in holiness and live their vocations and ministries with greater serenity, in mutual support in the fight. ”

