

ORDER OF FRIARS MINOR EAST ASIA CONFERENCE



EAC Ministers' Meeting Final Statement

Precious Blood Retreat House, Hong Kong | August 24–28, 2025

Gathered as brothers at the Precious Blood Retreat House, Hong Kong, from August 24 to 28, 2025, the Ministers of the East Asian Conference (EAC) of the Order of Friars Minor reflected together on the life and mission of our Franciscan brotherhood in this part of the world. In a spirit of synodality and co-responsibility, we discerned concrete steps in the areas of formation, mission, JPIC, finances, safeguarding, and the two documents of the Order, namely, the *Final Document of the International Lay Brothers Gathering* and the *Final Document of the International Chapter of Mats*.

Our meeting took place within the Jubilee Year of Hope (2025), which calls the Church to be “pilgrims of hope,” and during the celebration of the 8th Centenary of the *Canticle of the Creatures*. These milestones inspire us to be witnesses of joy, fraternity, and hope in a wounded world, and to renew our Franciscan commitment to live as brothers to all, to care for creation, and to proclaim peace. With this spirit, we present the following resolutions:

I. Formation and Studies

1. The EAC gratefully accepts the offer of the Vietnam Province of St. Francis of Assisi to host the next Common Integration Program (CIP) in 2026, with hosting to rotate among the three Provinces: the Philippine Province of San Pedro Bautista, the San Antonio de Padua Province of the Philippines, and the St. Francis of Assisi Province of Vietnam.
2. The Foundation of Hong Kong shall host the EAC Young Friars Gathering in 2028.
3. The venue of the EAC Lay Brothers Gathering in 2029 shall be decided at the next Ministers' Meeting.
4. Each entity shall revise its Formation Manual in light of the recommendations of the most recent International Meeting of Formation and Studies, including safeguarding, the use of digital media, formation for mission, and ecology.
5. The EAC shall continue its collaboration with the FCAO, particularly in the Asian Franciscan Formators Training (AFFT), in exploring an Asian Franciscan Ongoing Formation Moderators Training, and in strengthening programs in English and Italian language studies.

II. Mission

6. The EAC supports the drafting and submission of the FCAO Common Mission Formation Program, to be presented at the June 2026 FCAO Meeting for approval, addressing missionaries, post-novitiate friars, updating, and re-entry.
7. The EAC approves the holding of the Secretaries for Missions and Evangelization Meeting in Nagasaki, Japan, on February 23–27, 2026.

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8. Each entity shall revise its *Ratio Evangelizationis* in line with the new *Ratio* of the Order.
9. The EAC supports the call for volunteers for the Nagasaki Project, and the EAC President shall write formally to the Minister General to offer this opportunity to the whole Order.
10. The EAC commits itself to continue responding positively to the missionary calls of the Order, taking into consideration the 2024 General Animation Guidelines for *Missio ad Gentes*.

III. JPIC

11. The EAC supports the Asian Franciscan Network for Peace and Ecology Meeting scheduled for October 13–18, 2025, in Manila.

IV. Finances

12. The EAC reaffirms its support for the establishment of the Franciscan Foundation Asia and encourages greater participation and contributions from each entity.

V. Lay Brothers Vocation

13. The EAC Ministers, in their respective entities, shall concretely implement the proposals of the International Lay Brothers Gathering in their life, mission, and formation programs.
14. The EAC shall sustain the triennial Lay Brothers Gatherings at the Conference level.
15. The EAC Ministers, in their entities, shall promote in both initial and ongoing formation the identity of all friars as brothers, cultivating a fraternity of equals that transcends clerical or functional distinctions.

VI. Response to the International Chapter of Mats

16. The EAC shall organize youth gatherings for EAC entities in preparation for World Youth Day 2027 in South Korea.
17. The EAC Ministers, in their respective entities, shall identify friars with a passion for youth accompaniment, provide them with training in youth ministry, and assign them to intercultural and digital contexts of mission.
18. The EAC proposes that more experiential, intercultural, and inclusive approaches to formation be integrated into the AFFT.
19. EAC entities are encouraged to hold inter-Franciscan gatherings that strengthen our shared Franciscan mission and values as our synodal expression.
20. The EAC Ministers shall ensure regular meetings at the entity level of guardians and leaders to foster collaborative and synodal leadership.

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VII. 8th Centenary of the Order

21. Each entity shall continue its plans for the celebration of the 8th Centenary of the *Canticle of the Creatures*.
22. The EAC proposes integrating the 8th Centenary of the Easter of St. Francis (2026) into FCAO themes and activities.

VIII. Safeguarding

23. The EAC Ministers are reminded to submit their respective Protocols and Guidelines on Safeguarding.

IX. Autonomy of the Custody

24. The EAC unanimously supports the request of the Custody of St. Francis of Assisi (1948) to be recognized as an autonomous custody.

X. FCAO Meeting in Bogor, Indonesia (June 28 – July 4, 2026)

25. The following themes shall be proposed for the FCAO Meeting: the 8th Centenary of the Easter of St. Francis, new forms or renewal of life and ministries, formation, mission, and JPIC collaboration.
26. The EAC approves the inclusion of Conference Secretaries for Formation and Studies, Mission and Evangelization, and JPIC in the FCAO Meeting, provided that these secretaries meet beforehand with their respective entity Secretaries and animators.
27. The EAC requests the AFFT organizers to present its evaluation of the formators' program at the next FCAO Meeting.

XI. Media and Communications

28. The EAC shall ensure the participation of representatives from each entity in the FCAO Media and Communications Meeting in Singapore on April 6–10, 2026, organized by the General Curia.
29. The EAC and FCAO websites shall be activated by assigning media teams for each body.
30. The EAC shall review its statutes in coordination with SAOOC at the next FCAO Meeting.

In fraternal communion, the Ministers of the East Asian Conference entrust these resolutions to the Lord, through the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi.

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Strengthened by the Jubilee Year of Hope, we go forth as *pilgrims of hope* with the People of God. Inspired by the *Canticle of the Creatures*—eight centuries old yet ever new—we commit ourselves to live joyfully as brothers among brothers, to care for creation, and to build a synodal and hopeful Church in East Asia and beyond.

With heartfelt gratitude, we extend our thanks to **Br. Bonaventura Lin, OFM**, Minister Provincial of the Province of BMV Queen of China, and **Br. William Ng, OFM**, President of the Blessed Allegra Foundation – Hong Kong, together with all the brothers of the Foundation, for their services, hospitality, and generous support in hosting and organizing this meeting; to **Sr. Margareth** and the staff of the Precious Blood Retreat House for their dedicated assistance and gracious service as our venue hosts; to **Br. Francesco Li, OFM** for his valuable help in managing the online platform, documenting the meeting, and guiding us during our visits; to **Br. Bonaventura Pang, OFM** and **Mr. Johnny Lau** for their generosity in accompanying and transporting us to and from the airport; to **Br. Derrick Yap, OFM** for his fraternal presence and support on behalf of SAOOC; to **Fr. John Wong, OFM**, our Definitor General, for his loving service and encouragement to the EAC; and to the past EAC leadership and coordinators, together with all the Ministers and brothers present, whose commitment and fraternity made this meeting truly memorable and fruitful.

“As Franciscans and brothers of this time, we boldly affirm our mission to be witnesses of fraternity in a fragmented world, bearers of peace amid violence, defenders of creation in a wounded earth, and heralds of hope in an age of despair. With the spirit of St. Francis, we embrace our calling to be lesser brothers—standing with the poor, journeying with the young, welcoming the stranger, and proclaiming with our lives that another world of communion, justice, and peace is not only possible but already dawning. Together, we go forth—brothers for today, pilgrims for tomorrow, and humble servants of the Gospel—living signs of God’s hope for our world.”