

BR MASSIMO FUSARELLI, MINISTER GENERAL
EASTER LETTER 2023

“YOU, LORD, BROUGHT ME UP FROM THE REALM OF THE DEAD;
YOU SPARED ME FROM GOING DOWN TO THE PIT” (Ps 30:4)

To the Friars of the Order
To the Poor Clare and Conceptionist Sisters
To all Lay Franciscans

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
May the Lord give you peace!

In Piero della Francesca's Resurrection, Christ stands victorious over death, but if we look closely, we can detect a veil of sorrow in his facial expression. The Crucified and Risen Lord has gone through life and death to the very end. He experienced the reality of the creaturely condition, with its contradictions, right down to the underworld.

Here my thoughts turn to St Francis. At the beginning of his conversion, returning from a dinner with friends, he steps back, stops and experiences a sudden and unknown sweetness, the fruit of an inner visitation of the Spirit (cf. 3Comp 7).

Later, in the encounter with the leper, after his initial instinct to flee because of the repugnance of that decaying body, Francis will finally be able to embrace and kiss him, experi-



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GENERAL CURIA DIARY

- From 5-9 April Br Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General, and Br John Wong, Definitor General, visit the friars in Istanbul, Ephesus and Izmir in Turkey.
- From 10-14 April Br Massimo and Br John will visit the Joseph Vaz Foundation in Sri Lanka.
- From 11-15 April Br Jimmy Zammit pays a fraternal visit to the General Secretariat of the Franciscan Missions in the United States.
- From 12-16 April Br Daniel Rodriguez Blanco, director of the JPIC Office, participates at the meeting with the Province of Portugal and local Committee to continue the preparations for World Youth Day 2023.
- From 15-17 April Br Massimo and Br John visit the Province of San Pedro Bautista (Luzon, Philippines).
- From 12-17 April Br Pedro Zitha, General Assistant for the SFO/YouFra Office, participates at the national SFO Chapter and meeting with the Conference of Spiritual Assistants of the Philippines.

encing that "what seemed bitter to me was changed into sweetness of mind and body" (2Test 3).

Will not that inner source of sweetness now enables him to celebrate Easter with the leper first and then with so many others? The smell of limitation and death has opened him to the sweetness of new life: it is Easter!

The path is marked out for us, and the way is irreversible.

Celebrating Easter means not turning our gaze away from human reality in its contradictory bright and dark aspects: the desire to love and to generate full life together with wars, the suffering of the common home, earthquakes, wounds to dialogue and fraternity between people, groups, nations, families, in our Church itself and also in our Fraternity.

How can we fail to recognize the Easter that erupts from these "underworlds" since the grace of the Risen One makes all things new and enables us to remain even in the face of the scandal of evil, which often seems to win out? In this Centenary of the Rule, a covenant of life, we enthusiastically welcome the call to witness the hope of the Gospel with life and word in the "underworld" and the cracks of light of this difficult time, always loved by God.

In Greccio, Francis listened to the Gospel again, as he wanted to see with others the hardship and poverty in which the Son of God was born. The one who remained with us in the meagre appearance of bread. The spirit of the Gospel is of the little ones and the poor, free from temptations of power and possessions, enabled to build with patience, and, together with others, oases of fraternity and hope.

Here we learn to listen and walk together with many. Here is an Easter path for us today so that the treasure of the Gospel lived as brothers and sisters may permeate this time afflicted by so

much violence and longing for true peace.

All this becomes possible if we recognize that we live in an age in which we are walking as "spiritual seekers", believers in the Crucified and Risen One and inflamed by the fire of Easter on the world's paths. My best wishes then become the joyful offering of a few steps of life:

- The Lenten desert has called us to wrestle closely with the word of God, with ourselves and our hunger, and with the lives of so many forgotten people: let us continue on this path of light!

- Easter breaks through and overcomes the disenchantment of the disillusioned. Let us allow it to explode in our fears as the promise and beginning of true peace, even in times of war and various "earthquakes"!

- Let us step out of our too many comfort zones and finally reach out to the other(s) to learn how to weep and smile on the streets teeming with people of all kinds and recognize in them the features of the face of the Living One. Let us dare to become more of an "Outgoing Order"!

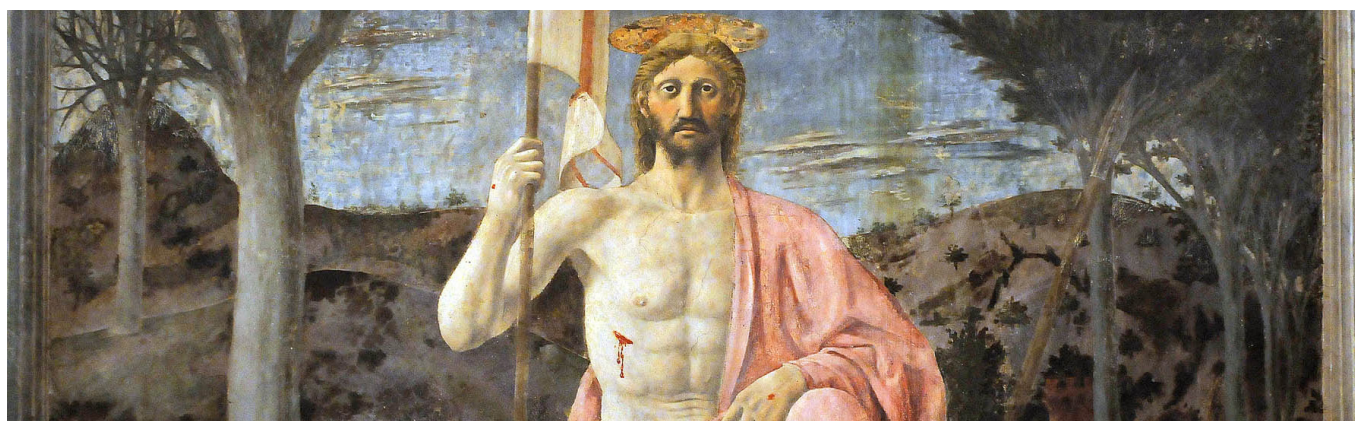
- Let us be sent further by the angels of Easter morning to seek the Risen Christ among the living and not among the dead: let us proclaim him to all in praise and the invitation to conversion!

With the blessing of St Francis, I sincerely wish everyone an Easter of life in and through the reality of humanity today, which so many of us share in different parts of the world.

Your brother and servant

Br Massimo Fusarelli, OFM
Minister General

CELEBRATING EASTER MEANS NOT TURNING OUR GAZE AWAY FROM HUMAN REALITY IN ITS CONTRADICTIONARY BRIGHT AND DARK ASPECTS



GENERAL JPIC OFFICE

MEETING OF THE MEDITERRANEAN FRANCISCAN NETWORK COORDINATION COMMITTEE

From 22 to 24 March, the Coordination Committee of the Franciscan Network of the Mediterranean meeting, organized by the General Office for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC), was held at the General Curia in Rome.



Br Ignacio Ceja Jiménez, Vicar General, welcomed the participants with a message of hope and realism: "This meeting takes place a few days after the 10th anniversary of the pontificate of Pope Francis, who chose this name so as not to forget the poor. His first trip outside Rome was to Lampedusa to denounce the world's culture of indifference towards migrants and the poor. The 2021 General Chapter of the Order wanted to emphasize how we friars must let ourselves be challenged by the challenges of today. Our task is to develop this Franciscan Network of the Mediterranean and encourage projects concerning migrants: it must not be a commitment only of some "special" brothers and sisters. It must be part of our Franciscan evangelizing mission. We must all become aware of this issue".

The conference was attended by representatives of the Mediterranean NGO Saving Humans, Sr. Miriam Oyarzo, FMSC,

working in Turkey; Br. Fabio L'amour, OFM, working in Morocco; Pedro Fernández, OFS, from Valencia (Spain); Br. John Luke, OFM, from Greece; Br. Francesco Zecca, OFM, from the OIKOS Project; Br. Markus Heinze, OFM, Executive Director of Franciscans International.

The Franciscan Network of the Mediterranean was born in 2019 in Malta on the 8th centenary of the meeting of St Francis with Sultan Malik al-Kamil, and encouraged by the Minister General at the time, Brother Michael Perry.

Br Daniel Rodríguez Blanco, Director of the General Office of JPIC, commented on the event: "The objective of this meeting was to reactivate the Franciscan Network of the Mediterranean. We did it with great enthusiasm and hope. We have a program that we have already begun to develop with the three



MEDITERRANEAN FRANCISCAN NETWORK

The Network wants to make the Franciscan presence in the Mediterranean fruitful, promoting the culture of encounter, dialogue and fraternity and triggering practical projects. The Friars Minor, who are present in all the Mediterranean countries, accepting the invitation of Pope Francis to listen to the cry that comes from the waters of the mare nostrum, intend to launch practical processes to transform the Mediterranean into a Common Home, following the paradigm of integral ecology.

This objective will be achieved by the Friars Minor through the Office of Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation, in collaboration with the Pontifical Antonianum University, the Pontifical International Marian Academy, the Muslim-Christian Marian Commission and other partners.

www.retefrancescanamediterraneo.org

components of the Network, namely Migrants and Refugees, Youth, Dialogue and Peace. We want to be like a grain of sand in the great Mediterranean".

During the conference, there were many ideas to take up the Committee's journey and plan future meetings. Br Daniel retraced the "history" of the Committee in 14 stages, starting in 2018 when those in charge of the Evangelizing Mission and JPIC of COMPI (Conference of Minister Provincials of Italy and Albania) proposed to the General Curia to create a Mediterranean Franciscan Network, to coordinate all the Franciscan entities in the Mediterranean area. Since then, the journey has had its ups and downs (also due to the pandemic), but in 2021 the General Chapter emphasized the importance of this Network in its Mandate: "The Minister General and his Definitory, in collaboration with the JPIC Office and the SGME, must continue to implement the Franciscan Network of the Mediterranean and the Franciscan Network for Migrants in Latin America, and will continue to promote and accompany similar projects and processes in favour of migrants in Africa, Asia and all the border areas of the Order".

The Network is engaged in three major areas (Migrants, Dialogue and Youth) that are interconnected. Br John Luke, an Englishman from Sheffield and now a friar of the Custody of the Holy Land working on the island of Rhodes (Greece), tells us: "I remember a Syrian boy of about four years old: he arrived as a migrant in Rhodes with his father and brother, while his mother and sister died under the bombs. We are talking about migration, but also about future young people who bear great wounds".

The theme of "healing inner wounds" was touched on several times by the participants: Br Francesco Zecca recalled how in Ukraine, a Capuchin friar and a Conventual friar use theatre to heal the wounds of war victims; Sr Miriam Oyarzo, FMSC, stressed the importance of "animating and promoting a culture of peace, dialogue and healing".

Among the challenges facing the Committee is a "change of mentality": Br Ignacio Ceja Jiménez spoke of this in his welcome address, and many pointed it out. "We must have a single vision", said Pedro Fernández, OFS, born in Andalucía but "migrated" to Valencia, where as a lawyer, he offers his service to migrants free of charge. "We must not disperse or divide but unite and work together in the three directions".

Br Fabio L'Amour, a Brazilian working in Morocco, said: "We must have a new vision, a new way of working. Let us think of the future, of those who will have to give continuity to this work after us".

Br Markus Heinze, OFM, Executive Director of Franciscans International, emphasized the importance of mapping the different Franciscan entities working in this field in the Mediterranean: "We must connect with all the Franciscan identities working in the area, we must network and understand how to do it".

"THE MEDITERRANEAN IS PRECISELY THE SEA OF MESTIZAJE - IF WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND MESTIZAJE, WE WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND THE MEDITERRANEAN - A SEA GEOGRAPHICALLY CLOSED TO THE OCEANS, BUT CULTURALLY ALWAYS OPEN TO ENCOUNTER, DIALOGUE AND MUTUAL ENCULTURATION"
(POPE FRANCIS)

The project concerning Migrants and Refugees aims to involve all the Franciscan entities of the Mediterranean within the Network to propose a meeting for them to define a joint project, also at the financial level.

For the Dialogue and Peace area, it is proposed to animate, promote, connect, communicate and dialogue with the other Franciscans (friars and sisters) who already have the task in the various dialogue commissions:

the need to bring the message of Peace through a methodology specific to the Mediterranean Network, for example through music, culture, meetings and cultural exchanges, is emphasized.

In the context of Youth, they are to be the "leaven of change for a new humanism in the Mediterranean, to make it a Common Home". Therefore, the Network will support OIKOS courses for young people, in particular in associated universities; a tour in different Mediterranean cities from September 2023 to September 2024, promoted by Giovanni Caccamo and the Andrea Bocelli Foundation, will be carried out; the setting up of youth groups (inclusive and interreligious) will be supported; and the Network will be present at WYD Lisbon as part of JPIC activities (July - August 2023).



OFM WORLD

Franciscan College of Fray Damian Gonzalez, Colombia



Inter-obedience retreat of Brothers from the first Order in Cuba



Monthly meeting of families in the Parish of Villach-St. Nikolai, Austria



School Santa Chiara in Djiri, Congo Brazzaville



Fr. Romualdo in Konotop, Ukraine, on the border with Russia



Spiritual meeting with Brothers from El Salvador

TRIGGERING A DIFFERENT CULTURE OF ENCOUNTER, OF INTEGRAL ECOLOGY, OF DEVELOPMENT INTERVIEW WITH FRIAR FRANCESCO ZECCA

During the meeting of the Coordination Committee of the Franciscan Network of the Mediterranean, we interviewed Br Francesco Zecca, OFM, of the Oikos Project and JPIC coordinator of COMPI (Conference of Minister Provincials of Italy and Albania).

Br Francesco, tell us about Oikos. Why the choice of Taranto?

Oikos originated in Taranto, in our friary, in an environmentally and socially wounded city. From there we want to start again and trigger a process on integral ecology not only for the city of Taranto, but for the whole Mediterranean. For five years now we have been collaborating with the Pontifical Antonianum University, the Taranto Chamber of Commerce, a group of entrepreneurs and a group of young lay people who have been working on civil economy for 10 years: this has triggered a process on integral ecology that can be a model for other contexts. From a place that has been socially, environmentally

and economically wounded and "violated", an alternative proposal for a different economy, a different culture, which is not only for the city but for the entire Mediterranean, can be launched. In 2026 the Mediterranean Games will be held in Taranto: this is a good opportunity to trigger a different culture and a different way of thinking.

Doesn't the industrial model of the Ilva steelworks seem obsolete in the 21st century?

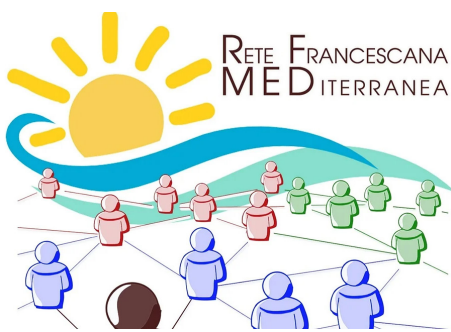
Ilva continues to produce, but not at the same pace as in the past: while it used to produce 8 million tons of steel a year, it now produces three million, so it is in



underproduction, not least because the process is still ongoing, and some plants have been seized. It is a very complex situation, because we are talking about an industry that is two and a half times the size of the city, redundancies are continuing, and many workers are already laid off. There is a social problem as well as an environmental one, but there is a city that is trying to give alternatives to big industry. Big industry in the 20th century was presented as the miracle of southern Italy, but it turned out to be a big bluff, because it did not enhance the territory, on the contrary! Suffice it to think how the city has lost its link with its sea. We must therefore re-establish this link with the sea, recover the entrepreneurial capacity in young people that has been destroyed, and make paths to enhance the territory, culture, and the story of small business.

It is often said that "you either die of hunger, or you die of pollution". What do you think of this combination?

Unfortunately, for many years Ilva was the only source of work for thousands of people. When I talk about the need to trigger a new entrepreneurial mentality, I am talking about precisely this: if



business generates income but is not attentive to life, it is not real business. The risk is that we continue with old industrial policies, which are not those of integral ecology. This is why we need to start from Taranto to say that we need a different vision, which does not only concern that city: it is a global problem on how to connect enterprise, society, environment and health, on how to hold things together.

er. It is a problem of integral ecology, of a different outlook and culture.

The meeting of the Franciscan Mediterranean Network takes place a few weeks after the tragedy of the migrants in Cutro (KR, Italy). My personal impression is that today we are more moved by the photo of an abandoned kitten than by such tragedies. What is your impression? When Pope Francis was elected, the first trip he made was to Lampedusa, a few days after a tragedy at sea. There he spoke of the globalization of indifference, which is a tragedy: I believe that it is a cultural problem that needs to be tackled seriously, we need to change the model of thinking that envisages first-division lives and second-division lives, lives that are not worthy of mourning, that can die and that cannot even be mourned, that are reduced to being a code or a number. What the Pope has triggered over the last 10 years with his journeys in the Mediterranean, with the document on human brotherhood, with the two encyclicals, *Laudato si'* and *Fratelli Tutti*, and thus with the construction of the Mediterranean as a "Common Home", can become the hallmark of all this: how to transform these waters of death into waters of brotherhood.

How do the Franciscans respond to this appeal?

We Franciscans are present in almost all the countries of the Mediterranean, but we need to move from a local commitment to a more global vision that connects all the groups involved. This means working together, changing structures that perhaps no longer respond to today's needs. History asks us to do this: in 10 years, 25,000 people have died in the Mediterranean: this cannot leave us indifferent, it must challenge us and trigger pathways that are not just assistance to those people, but must help deactivate processes that are criminal. We must promote the language of peace, of dialogue, of fraternity.

You are not alone in this process.

No, there has been a lot of work and collaboration also with Muslims. A few days ago, here in Rome an energy community agreement was signed between the General Curia of Rome, the Grand Mosque and the Pontifical Antonianum University, but behind it there is a lot of collaborative work also with the Pontifical Marian Academy. The role of Mary, who connects and unites Christians and Muslims, tells us that the role of women can also be thought of differently. Indeed, Mary is the gateway to rethinking the role of women, which is one of the tragedies of so many countries in the Middle East or North Africa.

The Oikos Project ("home" in Greek) involves universities, businesses, monasteries, youth, culture, to truly make the Mediterranean a "common home".

It is important to trigger networks between all these entities: with the monasteries of the Poor Clares, who have a contemplative look at reality, we are creating a network of Marian shrines throughout the Mediterranean, to trigger networks of peace dialogue in even complicated places like Lebanon. We are working on how to create groups of young people educated in the "common home" through a musical tour in 10 Mediterranean cities, with the collaboration of Giovanni Caccamo. A group of young people has already been set up in Taranto, which is training on how to convert the classical enterprise into a new enterprise from the perspective of integral ecology: profit should not be the end, but the means to achieve the welfare of the community. We are collaborating with universities, at PUA there is already a diploma in Integral Ecology. It would be nice one day to have a change of mentality and, for example, to offer young people the possibility of a Mediterranean Erasmus, which would change the vision of the Mediterranean from a frontier, from a sea of death to a place of encounter and fruitful mutual exchange.

“IN SANCTITY OF LIFE AND KNOWLEDGE OF FAITH”

30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONFIRMATION OF THE CULT OF BLESSED DUNS SCOTUS

On 20 March 1993, Pope John Paul II confirmed the cult *ab immemorabili* paid to John Duns Scotus. On the 30th anniversary of this confirmation, the Minister General, Br Massimo Fusarelli, wrote a letter entitled "In the Sanctity of Life and Knowledge of Faith. The ever-timely testimony of Blessed John Duns Scotus". He recalls "some essential characteristics and the message that he never ceases to address to us so many centuries after his brief and intense existence as a friar minor, a passionate seeker of the mystery of God, a teacher and disciple of Incarnate Wisdom".

Read the Minister General's Letter: [English](#) - [Italiano](#) - [Español](#) - [Hrvatski](#) - [Polski](#) - [Français](#) - [Português](#) - [Deutsch](#)

To understand the relevance of Blessed John Duns Scotus in our days, the Order's Communications Office interviewed Br Josip Percan, OFM, President of the Scotist Commission. We publish an excerpt of the interview.



In his letter, the Minister General writes that he was present in the Vatican Basilica when the announcement of the confirmation of the cult was made and recalls "the almost incredulous joy of that hour, especially on the part of those among us who had studied so much and made the new Blessed known". What do you remember from that day?

I was among the youngest at the time. I remember the special entrance into the basilica: I do not know which corridors we passed through. We were taken to our reserved seats, and from there,



we joined the solemn vespers, during which there was the reading of the confirmation of the cult of Blessed John Duns Scotus.

"This great Franciscan philosopher and theologian, who was born between the end of 1265 and the beginning of 1266 in Duns (Scotland) and died on 8 November 1308 in Cologne (Germany), was immediately the object of considerable esteem and veneration," the letter reads. Why did we have to wait almost seven centuries to confirm the cult?

From the beginning, Duns Scotus was considered a saint, so he had so many followers right from the start, but there were ups and downs over the centuries. For example, there was the so-called "humanization" in the Renaissance, and the ancient past, especially the Middle Ages, was regarded as something to be locked away in the cellar. So much so that even studies in the Order and the Church began to suffer from this secularization of culture. Thus, Scotus

remained renowned and studied above all as a philosopher, a man of culture, and not as a teacher of spirituality and a theologian. During the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, further secularization occurred, in which society positioned itself almost as an enemy of the Church. This was also felt in the tradition of our Order. Finally, towards the end of the 19th century, thanks to Pope Leo XIII, there was a "reawakening" of scholastic studies, which led to the establishment of various schools, institutes, and universities, in which Scotus was again intensively studied. That is why, after a long wait, a great dream came true.

Scotus and the new generation of friars
Unlike other authors, Scotus does not leave you indifferent: if you can overcome the language difficulties, once translated, it becomes exciting. Therefore, I think it would be essential to make him known to the new generations of friars: it is like putting a seedling

in the ground and seeing how it grows. We must disseminate and teach Scotus' thought to young people not as a speculative doctrine but as a spiritual path.

Haecceitas: the methodology of the Principle of Individuation in Scotus.

Scotus did not have great language skills or technical or scientific tools to define things. However, as great mathematicians do, certain elements are first found with mathematical calculations and then discovered. Well, Scotus's Principle of Individuation is comparable to a completed calculation.

According to Scotus, there is something in the specific person that cannot be common to all, and it is precisely this (in Latin *haec*, hence *haecceitas*) thing that causes a given thing to be itself and not another. He cannot fully define the concept, but he has opened up a vast field for those who want to investigate it in philosophy, sociology, and anthropology. Today's society, at least western society, is based on this: Scotus, in his thinking, had already identified it in his time. This demonstrates his greatness, not only as a philosopher and not even as a theologian, but as a master of spirituality.

Scotus and evangelisation

Evangelization by friars minor cannot just be preaching but must be a witness of life. Scotus, together with St Bonaventure, is one of our tradition's most beautiful and sublime sources: his thought is captivating, you feel it is yours, and after having "known" him, you can deal with those topics in your own language. I really thank the Minister General for the attention he has dedicated to Scotism. From my memory, in about half a century, there has never been a letter from the General Curia as stimulating as the one written by Br Massimo Fusarelli.

MARCH 2023

REFLECTIONS BY BR MASSIMO



On 13 March, we commemorated ten years of Pope Francis' Pontificate. With the prayer and good wishes that the Order extended to the Holy Father, this anniversary is an opportunity to grasp his message for us, Friars Minor.

The choice of the name, which resonates as a memory and prophecy of the Christian experience of St Francis, which carries within it an evangelical impetus of continual newness, is not insignificant.

In its naked clarity, the Gospel is at the heart of Pope Francis' Christian proclamation. This immediate contact with the Gospel word recalls the *sine glossa* and sends us back to the heart of our life as friars minor, as the Centenary of the Rule helps us remember and revive this year.

We were struck from the start by the immediately clear lan-

guage of Pope Francis. How can we not think of the language of St Francis, always accompanied by gestures, poetic touches, and song? Thus, God's jester could reach hearts and move them to a change of life.

The link with life and real history, in which the poor and excluded are the privileged focus, with our common home and peace, are vital for Pope Francis. St Francis went from doing something for the poor to living with the poor as a sign of God's humble love.

Here we find ourselves entirely in tune with and challenged by the Pope's thinking, to whom we renew the promise of our obedience and reverence and constant prayer for him.

On 18 March, the Poor Clare Sisters of Spain and Portugal, Presidents of Federations, and other Sisters, met in Madrid with the Assistants. The theme was the path to revise the Constitutions, which is now underway. It was an opportunity to motivate the journey and share, in particular, the genesis and reasons for the revision process. In addition, we will share the charismatic grounds for the association of a monastery to the First Order and the aspects of our Franciscan-Clarian spirituality to be strengthened in contact with today's Church and world.

Expressing the loving care and special solicitude for the sisters, which St Francis promised Clare and her sisters, is a gift and a commitment, always relevant, also expressed in this meeting.

INITIAL AND ONGOING FORMATION

HOW TO LIVE THE FRANCISCAN CHARISM IN EUROPE TODAY

During the UFME (Union of Friars Minor of Europe) Assembly, which took place in Medjugorje (Bosnia-Herzegovina) from 27 February to 3 March, Br Darko Tepert, Secretary General for Formation and Studies, presented his report on Initial and Ongoing Formation in the Conferences in Europe. It was a careful and proactive analysis of the current situation of vocations and professions on the continent.



The statistics are clear: in the last ten years, Europe has seen a decline in vocations in all the Conferences, undoubtedly due to the low birth rate and the strong secularization of Europe. Elements that can hardly be changed in the short term, but "the factor we can focus on is our form of life and mission," said Br Darko. "We have to ask ourselves what we can do to make our life and mission more attractive, knowing that attraction is not a fruit of our commitments or planning, but that it is the fruit of God's call, lived within the context of the Franciscan charism. Therefore, we must ask ourselves how to live the Franciscan charism today in Europe, how to be friars minor - brothers and minors, the least of all".

The General Secretary of the GSFS then spoke about the importance of listening to the Spirit in Ongoing Formation: "Ongoing Formation should start precisely from listening to the Spirit and should seek to answer current questions to truly involve the friars. For this purpose, as the Ratio formationis franciscanae also notes, Formation should also be conceived on an

experiential level. If ongoing Formation remains limited to lectures and talks at an exclusively intellectual level and does not aim at change, improvement of life and mission, it will remain fruitless or of little fruit".

Collaboration between European Conferences can significantly help the friars in their formation, according to Br Darko: "Collaboration between Conferences in Europe can open new perspectives for the friars, offering, for example, Ongoing Formation courses for other Provinces and other Conferences. In this way, we can perhaps hope to exchange new ideas of life and mission. [...] We need an openness to the reality of life of the people, especially those in the peripheries. Some entities have experience of what is called the Franciscan year: this type of experience can be had among the poor, among migrants, in the new forms of life and mission (according to the document *Ite, nuntiate...*), in the missions. Of course, not all entities will be able to offer all these experiences, but at the level of UFME, the opportunities will be greater".

DECEASED BROTHERS *

- 24 March: Br. Joseph Anderlohr – Prov. St. John Baptist (USA)
- 21 March: Most Reverend Fernand Joseph Cheri, Auxiliary Bishop of New Orleans (USA)
- 15 March: Br. John Boyd-Boland – Prov. Holy Spirit (Australia)
- 5 March: Br. Nedjeljko Norac Kevo - Prov. SS. Redentore (Croatia)

* Info received by the General Secretary

BR MASSIMO AND BR FABIO IN MADRID AND TOLEDO
MEETING WITH THE POOR CLARE SISTERS AND THE CONCEPTIONIST SISTERS OF SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

On 18 March, the Minister General, Br Massimo Fusarelli, accompanied by the General Delegate pro Monialibus, Br Fábio Cesar Gomes, met a group of about 120 Poor Clare Sisters belonging to the Confederation of St Clare of Spain and Portugal in Madrid.

In his speech, the Minister spoke about the genesis and primary reasons for revising the General Constitutions of the Order of the Poor Clare Sisters, followed by a fraternal and clarifying dialogue.

From Madrid, the Minister and Delegate left for Toledo where, on Sunday 19th, they celebrated Mass in the Mother House of the Order of the Immaculate Conception (Conceptionist Sisters) and venerated the body of their foundress, St Beatriz da Silva.

Afterwards, during lunch with about 30 Sisters from the local



community and other communities, the Minister answered several questions.

Br. Fábio Cesar Gomes, General Delegate pro Monialibus

BISHOP OF TEMUCO (CHILE)
MSGR. JORGE ENRIQUE CONCHA CAYUQUEO

Pope Francis has appointed Msgr. Jorge Enrique Concha Cayuqueo, O.F.M., currently Bishop of Osorno, as Bishop of Temuco (Chile). Mons. Concha Cayuqueo, O.F.M., was born on June 8, 1958 in Carahue, in the diocese of Temuco. After completing his philosophical and theological studies at the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, he obtained a doctorate in social sciences at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. On 23 December 1983 he made his solemn profession in the Franciscan Order of Friars Minor for the Province of Chile and received priestly ordination on 20 December 1986.

He has carried out various services: Master of the Friars in temporary profession; Provincial Secretary for Formation and Studies; parish vicar in various parishes; Guardian of the San Felipe de Jesús House of Formation in Santiago;

Holy Land Commissioner in Chile; Provincial Minister of the Franciscan Province of the Holy Trinity of Chile and President of the Conference of Provincial Ministers of the Southern Cone (Argentina, Paraguay and Chile) and First Vice President of the Conference of Religious in Chile.

On 14 July 2015 he was appointed titular bishop of Carpi and auxiliary of the archdiocese of Santiago de Chile. He received episcopal consecration the following 25 December.

On 11 June 2018 he was appointed ap-



ostolic administrator sede vacante et ad nutum Sanctae Sedis of Osorno and on 5 February 2020 he was appointed bishop of that See.

To Msgr. Jorge Enrique Concha the Order's best wishes and prayers that his ministry to the particular Church of Temuco will bear copious fruits of good.

BR MASSIMO AND BR KONRAD IN POLAND

VISIT OF THE PROVINCE OF ST. MARY OF THE ANGELS

From 20 to 25 March, Br Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General, and Br Konrad Cholewa, Definitor General, visited the Province of St Mary of the Angels, Poland, for the 400th anniversary of the foundation of the Province.



The visit was full of meetings and events that allowed the Minister to get to know all the friars of the Province, to discuss with them the mission of the Friars Minor in Poland, the Franciscan vocation, the challenges and the path to be taken together in fraternity and minority. The Minister also met the friars in initial formation and the formators, to whom he dedicated these words: "Our vocation is not something given to us entirely at the beginning and which we only have to preserve: it is a sprout that grows and develops, and that we must cultivate with care, until our last day, in that journey of formation that is truly ongoing [...] Formation to minority calls in the same way for a fraternity that chooses a style of minority practically, with choices of simple living and sharing with people, of attention to pastoral approaches where we are present and active as brothers and minors more than as ecclesiastical officials."

The visit culminated with the solemn celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Province, presided over by Archbishop Marek Jędraszewski, Metropolitan of Krakow, in Krakow Cathedral. After the Mass, Br Massimo addressed these words to those present: "St John Paul II, son of this land and this Church, who was present in this ancient and venerable Cathedral, told

us religious that we have not only a glorious history to tell, but a future to write with our lives. These words are more appropriate than ever as we celebrate 400 years of life and activity of the Friars Minor of the Franciscan Province of St. Mary of the Angels. Different historical events have kept the spark of St. Francis' charism alive among you to this day [...] What remains of that fire today? The gift that the Holy Spirit has given to each of us, to the brothers and sisters who today respond to the gift of the Lord's call and the search for a dynamic fidelity to the gift received. My wish is that this flame will not be extinguished and will always find new reasons to be kindled".

The Minister Provincial, Br Jacek Koman, said he was honoured to have had, among the various guests who had come to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Province, the Minister General: "He is the successor of St Francis, so it was like having the presence of St Francis among us!"

At the end of the visit, the Minister General commented: "Anniversaries of this kind do not serve only to recall the past history of the Province, but serve to look at today and the future, to renew our Franciscan spirit and identity, to go forward with hope and God's blessing in the spirit of St Francis".

ACTA ORDINIS FRATRUM MINORUM 2022

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ACTA ORDINIS
FRATRUM MINORUMVEL AD ORDINEM QUOQUO MODO PERTINENTIA
LIBRO ET AUTORETATE

FR. MASSIMO FUSARELLI

TUTIORI USQUE FR. MIN. MINISTRI GENERALI

IN COMMODO PRESENTI RELIGIOSORUM SIBI SUBDITORUM
IN LUCEM EDITA

THE ANTONIANUM SIGNS AN ENERGY AGREEMENT WITH THE ISLAMIC CENTRE OF ITALY
ITALY'S FIRST INTERFAITH AND ENERGY AGREEMENT

On Monday, 13 March, in Rome, during the "Energy for Peace. Making Energy for Peace" conference, the Pontifical Antonianum University (PUA) and the Islamic Cultural Centre of Italy - Grand Mosque of Rome signed Italy's first interreligious and energy agreement. The document expresses the desire to 'implement a shared energy community project between the PUA and the Islamic Cultural Centre of Italy as the first example of profound collaboration and synergy between their communities'.

With this agreement, photovoltaic panels will be installed to produce 50 kilowatts at the General House of the Friars Minor, 120 at the Antonianum and 250 at the Mosque.

The agreement was signed for the PUA by Br Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General and Grand Chancellor, and Br Augustin Hernández Vidales, Rector; for the Islamic Centre of Italy by Dr Nader Akkad, Imam, and Dr Abdellah Reouane, Secretary General.

The importance of the document goes beyond energy or economic needs. During the conference, Br John Puodziunas, General Bursar of the Order, explained: "We started this project about six years ago; we started the process, and twice we were rejected for various reasons, both by the Antonianum and the General Curia. One of the values guiding us in this area is relationship: we are not doing things alone. We are working with



someone else, with other people. It's not just about financial benefits; it's about mission orientation and mission effectiveness, not just financial efficiency. So, mission effectiveness is only visible in the act of signing this agreement together".

The document emphasizes the importance of "inviting all people with faith in God and faith in human brotherhood in their hearts to unite and work together, so that it may become a first tangible opportunity for Italy, in particular for the city community of Rome". Imam Nader also highlighted the importance of this agreement: "This is a momentous signing: it is no small thing to produce energy and donate it. Our action also becomes a model for other Muslim communities worldwide".

Br. Augustin, Rector of the PUA, also explained that "the signing is part of the development of the Licence in Integral Ecology at the PUA; we wanted to sign it on 13 March, the 10th anniversary of Pope Francis' election".

BR MASSIMO'S WORDS ON THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF POPE FRANCIS' PONTIFICATE
TEN YEARS WITH... FRANCIS

On the 10th anniversary of Jorge Mario Bergoglio's election to the papacy, the Minister General of the OFM, Br Massimo Fusarelli, shared a brief reflection on Pope Francis and these ten years of his pontificate.

"The Order of Friars Minor joins in the joy of many on the tenth anniversary of Pope Francis' pontificate. On 13 March 2013,



we were the first to be struck by the bold choice of St Francis' name. Over these years, we have recognised more and more in the magisterium of Pope Francis' gestures and words the traces of the Christian vision of the Poverello of Assisi: the centrality of the Gospel, love for the little ones and the poor, fraternity as social friendship in a time of war and inequality, reverence for creation, our common home.

The Minister General with the General Definitory, on the 800th anniversary of the Rule, with 'Brother Francis promises obedience and reverence to the Lord Pope Honorius and his canonically elected successors and to the Roman Church' (LR 1:2) and remembers Pope Francis in prayer of praise and intercession for his intentions."

FRANCISCAN CENTENARY 2023: THE 800TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RULE OF ST FRANCIS

No member of the Franciscan Family professes his own Rule privately, because he is called to live the Gospel in fraternity. It is important to remember that Francis composed the Later Rule at a time in his life when he was dealing with a lot of tension and crises at the fraternal level, but he never renounced the prophetic vision of living as a brother to all and he invites us to do the same ([Guidelines for celebrating the centenaries of the Franciscan family: 2023-2026](#)).



GENERAL CURIA
AUTOMATION OFFICE

The Automation Office, as it is called in the General Curia, is similar to what businesses call the "IT Department", where IT stands for Information Technology.

In a world that for decades now has been unable to do without electronic and computer tools - for work, certainly not for salvation -, the Office in which the Minister General has asked me to serve since January 2022 is primarily concerned with ensuring the normal functioning of computers, printers, applications, etc. In short, everything needed to serve, in turn, both the Government of the Order and the Provinces and Custodies that, for various reasons, contact the Curia.

Among the tasks of the Automation Office is also to provide support to those who serve in the various Offices or in collaboration with them - mainly friars from the various Entities of the Order, but also employees and external collaborators - both for the use of equipment and applications themselves and to facilitate and make their work more efficient, where, and as much as possible. Indeed, this aspect of the work will diminish as the new generations of friars, so-called "digital natives", arrive at the Curia.

Another task delegated to this office is managing and updating various databases. This includes the Schematismus and Directiones Domorum, where we find basic information which helps the various Offices, as well as the Entities of the Order, know "who we are" and "where we are". (Those in the Order, or have been at least for some time, and the Houses, i.e. the presence of the Friars Minor in each territory). It then extracts the Statistics published in Acta and requested by the Holy See at the beginning of each year.

In addition to the briefly described work, there is less obvious but no less important work. It concerns:

- cybersecurity, set up on various levels and necessary to ensure - also for legal reasons - that the data managed in the Curia is not inappropriately disclosed,
- continuous maintenance and updating of hardware and software,
- backup management, to be prepared for the recovery of information in case of need.

In short, I think it can be said that this is the work of the Office, which relies on a Director chosen by the General Definitory from among the friars who have at least a working knowledge of the above issues. He is assisted by a technical consultant whose expertise guarantees continuity and professionalism even as the friars change in their service in the Curia.

Br Pasquale Berardinetti - Director of the Automation Office
In the photo, Br. Pasquale with Engineer Bonito, technical consultant for many years in the Curia.

