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Meeting of the General Definitory with the Presidents of the OFM Conferences

General Curia, 19th – 23rd November 2024

From the 19th to 23rd November, the annual meeting between the General Definitory and the Presidents of the OFM Conferences was held at the General Curia.

On Tuesday the 19th November, the friars, moderated by the General Definitors, Br. Konrad Cholewa and Br. César Kulkamp, had the opportunity to share the experiences they had lived in their Conference over the past year, touching on topics such as the Mat Chapter and the Meeting of the Lay Brothers, and describing the strengths and challenges of their realities.

This was followed by the presentation of the Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, focused on the verification of the work of the General Definitory in the middle of the six-year period and on the prospects for the next General Chapter, which will be held in 2027. Br. Massimo thus illustrated some points that will be deepened and shared with everyone in a Letter to the Order that will be published on the 8th December on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception.



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The sharing in language groups was then returned in the plenary session before the celebration of the Eucharist, presided over by Br. José Alirio Urbina, President of the Bolivarian Conference, who focused on the importance of the synodal journey of listening to the Word of the Lord, to go out to meet our brothers and sisters towards the peripheries.

The following day, in the Mass presided by Br. Marko Mrše, President of SLAS, invited everyone to “multiply the gifts received from God”, as narrated in the Gospel of the day (Lk 19:11-28), and to give themselves for the whole world, as taught by St. Francis.

Subsequently, the Definitor General, Br. Cesare Vaiani, presented the “*Synthesis of the responses to the Questionnaire on the Conferences*”, which was then the subject of the work in the language groups. The morning ended with a plenary moderated by Br. Massimo Fusarelli which focused on the 2027 General Chapter: specifically, proposals were made on the place of the celebration, duration and methodology. In the afternoon, Br. Cesare also shared a reflection on the structure of the Conferences starting from the SSGG, specifically from art. 201.

On Thursday, the 21st November, the morning celebration was presided over by Br. Aidan McGrath, President of the ESC, who in his homily recalled

the 800th anniversary of the arrival of the first friars in England, celebrated last September, but also the 400th anniversary of the foundation of the College of St. Isidor in Rome. *If you look at the numbers of friars of yesterday and today, you could live these centenaries with a veil of sadness*, said Fr. Aidan, but recalling the words of the former Minister General Br. Giacomo Bini (*«it is certain that it is the Lord who calls whom He wants, how He wants and when He wants»*) he invited everyone not to be discouraged, but to welcome the gifts that the Lord offers and to entrust themselves more to Divine Providence.

The day’s meetings were an opportunity to update those present on some of the Order’s international events to be held in 2025: Br. Juan Isidro Aldana Maldonado spoke about the Chapter of Mats, Br. Sergiusz Bałdyga of the Order’s Plenary Council and Br. Darko Tepert, Secretary General for Formation and Studies, of the Meeting of Lay Brothers. In the afternoon, the latter dealt with the theme of collaboration in the Conferences in Initial and Ongoing Formation, followed by updates on the *Ratio Evangelizationis* (by Br. Francisco Gómez Vargas, Secretary General for Missions and Evangelization), on the Protocol for New Missionaries (Br. Dennis Tayo, General Animator for the Missions), and on Educational Pastoral Care (Br. Joaquín Echeverry, General Definitor).

General Curia Agenda



☑ Up until the 6th December, the Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, will be in Bolivia for the fraternal visit to the Missionary Province of St. Anthony. On the 7th December he will participate in the Consistory in the Vatican for the creation of new cardinals. From the 12th to the 15th he will be in Soria (Spain) for the fraternal visit to the Monasteries of the Poor Clares. On the 16th December in Rome he will meet the brothers of the Gabriele Maria Allegra Fraternity for the Christmas greeting, while on the 17th he will greet the Fraternity of St. Isidore.

☑ On the 5th December, Br. Konrad Cholewa, General Definitor, will be at St. Anthony’s International College in Rome for the annual meeting with the student friars of the SLAN and SLAS Conferences. On the 10th and 11th he will be in Lviv (Ukraine) for the Ongoing Formation of the Guardians and Superiors of the Province of St. Micha-

el the Archangel in Ukraine and the meeting with the Provincial Definitory.

☑ From the 6th to 12th December, Br. Darko Tepert, Secretary General for Formation and Studies, will be at the Studium Biblicum in Hong Kong for the general visit.

☑ On the 8th December, Br. Ignacio Ceja, Vicar General and Br. John Wong, General Delegate for the Istanbul Guardianship will be present in the official Rite of the Opening of the Doors and the Divine Liturgy with the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople and the Metropolitan Bartholomew of Smyrna in the Church of St. Mary in Izmir.

☑ From the 10th-14th December, Br. John Wong, General Delegate for the Sri Lanka Foundation will be in Kandy, Sri Lanka to spend time with the friars and participate in the Ongoing Formation in the Foundation.

On the last day of meetings, the General Treasurer Br. Joel Sulse presented the 2025 budget, which was then discussed in the language groups and was later approved in the plenary assembly. Br. Massimo Fusarelli presided over the concluding Mass of the meeting. In his homily he emphasized the importance of listening and, starting from the liturgy of the day (Rev 10:8-11/Ps 118/Lk 19:45-48), he questioned ev-

eryone about the “sweetness” and “bitterness” of being Friars Minor today: “*Becoming men of listening, in the bitterness and sweetness of the word received and proclaimed, is a central part of our vocation and mission as Ministers and servants of fraternity*”, said the Minister General.

[Read the homily of the Minister General](#)

Government of the Order



Reflections by Br. Massimo November 2024



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The city of Rome is preparing for Jubilee 2025 and the first pilgrims are Romans and visitors, forced to look for an open road between one construction site and another. The city is preparing to receive over 30 million presences, which Pope Francis calls “pilgrims of hope”.

In the last two months I have encountered many pilgrims of hope.

Crossing Mexico, I could see how pilgrims of hope are first of all the many migrants from South America to Central America trying to reach their hoped-for destination, the United States. A painful pilgrimage, often with broken hopes, because death stops many. There are also the “pilgrims” among the too many phenomena of social insecurity. At the same time, I was struck by the welcome and joy of that people. I wonder: what to learn from them, what step to take with them as pilgrims of hope?

I then went to Chile, where society, the Church and even religious life were very deeply hurt by the abuse scandals. I participated in the Chapter of Mats of our brothers and I saw the concrete steps of hope in a brotherhood that restarts the journey, that tries to look beyond and open up to the mission. I learn that even from the deepest wounds a step of hope can come.

After a few days, I found myself in the Czech Republic and Poland, post-communist societies in profound change. The Czech Republic is very secularized and Poland is experiencing a difficult transition. Pilgrims of hope means here not closing yourself in the nostalgia of the past, but living the present with passion and looking forward. I have encountered not a few signs of this new beginning, even among our brothers.

My pilgrimage continued between Ireland, Croatia and Bosnia, very different countries, but united by a past in which faith had to face clandestinity and martyrdom. These peoples, who today face completely new situations in different ways. Ireland is a post-secular society, where the Church is a minority, looking for a new way to express faith. Our friars, now few, have developed a life project adapted to their reality: a few essential points, but animated by the hope of those who look ahead.

In Zagreb I was able to inaugurate with the friars the Kaptol convent, which rose after the earthquake, an important meeting point for the city, a light hope for the future. Crossing into Bosnia

then, I saw the reality of depopulation, of reduction especially of Catholics. I was touched by the tenacity of these people, bound to their land and of our friars to their people. Here too pilgrims of hope means looking forward, overcoming the many fences, seeking reconciliation and building the future, even if it will be very small.

I return to Rome, I still come across the construction sites that fill the city, but I know that a different path is possible. I learn it from so many people in the world, pilgrims of hope.

Tempo Forte



Ordo Fratrum Minorum



Secretarius Generalis

**The Communiqué
of the General Definitory
relating to Tempo Forte
for November 2024**
has been published.

[Italiano](#) – [English](#) – [Español](#)

CAPITULA
OFM



Chapters

Chapter of the Custody of the Sacred Heart, Brazil

Brodowski/São Paulo, 18-22 November 2024



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From November 18 to 22 at Brodowski, São Paulo, in Brazil, the Chapter of the Custody of the Sacred Heart was held.

In the presence of the Visitor General, Br. Luís Augusto Ferreira Lessa, the friar capitulars had the opportunity to discuss and reflect on various issues, then to vote for the “guidelines” that will steer the work of the new government.

The brothers also elected the new custodial government: Br. Fernando Aparecido dos Santos was confirmed as Custos; Br. Lucas Lisi Rodrigues was voted as Custodial Vicar and, elected as Councilors were Br. Eduardo Augusto Schiehl, Br. Antônio

Carlos Marchioni, Br. Valmir Ramos, and Br. Israel Costa Cardoso.

At the end of the chapter, during the concluding eucharistic celebration, Br. André Felipe Pereira Martins and Br. José Carlos Costa Santos renewed their temporary vows. May God, through the intercession of the Seraphic Father St. Francis, bless this new custodial government so that the elected brothers may be faithful and persevering in their ministry undertaken on behalf of the brothers.

With the contribution of the Communication Office of the Custody



Chapters of Mats



Chapter of Mats of the Province of San Antonio (Brazil)

Lagoa Seca, Paraíba, 14th-17th November



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Franciscan spirituality shone in days of profound celebration in the Chapter of Mats of the Franciscan Province of St. Anthony of Brazil. From the 14th-17th November, the friary of Ipuarana, in Lagoa Seca, Paraíba, hosted a meeting where faith, fraternity and the charism of St. Francis were intertwined in an embrace of light and hope.

Over 80 participants – including friars, lay people and nuns – from all the territories of the Province, gathered for moments of reflection, celebration and sharing, in a meeting that intertwines the Franciscan charism with the contemporary challenges of a society in continuous transformation. The meeting was guided by the theme of synodality, a call that transcends borders and inspires a common journey, with a focus on strengthening the mission of the Franciscan Province of St. Anthony of Brazil.

The Roots of the Mat Chapter

Msgr. Beto Breis Pereira OFM, Bishop of Maceió, who was present at the Chapter, reflected on the profound relationship between synodality and fraternity in the Franciscan tradition. *“The Franciscan movement has in fact marked the synodal experiment. St. Francis insisted that the Chapters be held at Pentecost, since the Holy Spirit is the Minister General of the Society. Foreasmuch as Pope Francis tells us, without the Holy Spirit there is no synodality,”* he stressed.

“The Chapter of Mats is designed as a special time of living together, sharing life and reinvigorating our fraternal love and spirituality,” explained Fr. Wellington Buarque, Secretary of the Chapter. *“Unlike other Franciscan chapters, this one does not have an elective character, but promotes a space for encounter and spiritual renewal.”*

Reflections and dialogues on the Franciscan mission

This meeting began on Thursday the 14th November 2024, when the various pilgrims arrived at the friary of Ipuarana, founded in 1940 as an Apostolic College and which has formed generations of Friars Minor who work in the different realities of the Northeast of Brazil.

The next day, the meeting began with the Eucharistic celebration, presided over by Msgr. Beto Breis, who reflected on the joy of Franciscan spirituality that is born from the encounter, from the synodality reflected in this Chapter. *“Synodality, in Franciscan life, is manifested in our being fraternities in mission, itinerant fraternities. There is no opposition or tension between fraternity and mission; on the contrary, they complement each other. After all, fraternity is the first and most credible proclamation of the Gospel, and it is through the Gospel that evangelization takes place,”* he stressed.

In the afternoon, the participants divided into thematic groups to discuss how friars, lay people, nuns and postulants can contribute to strengthening the Franciscan mission in the context of Northeastern Brazil. In the evening, a panel discussion moderated by Br. Wellington brought together Franciscan leaders such as Br. Rogério Lopes, Br. Gilmar Nascimento, Helmir Soares (Secretary of the national OFS) and Sr. Maria Beatriz of the Conceptionist Sisters. The debate highlighted the importance of dialogue with young people and the synergy between different states of life, seeking to expand the Franciscan charism.

Presences that inspire and strengthen

The Conceptionist and Poor Clare sisters marked the encounter with their contemplative spirituality. Their witness reminds us that mission is born of hearts turned to God, nourished by prayer. Sister Anna Beatriz, OSC shared her experience: *“It is exciting to realize the beauty of our Franciscan Family, where we share fraternal relationships, experiences, prayers and mission with our brothers. Our prayer sustains the mission. She is the one who gives us the certainty and security that our family will always succeed in its mission, thanks to its constant intercession.”*

The OFS was well represented at this meeting: Helmir Soares, from Trindade Pernambuco, said that to his fraternity the OFS will bring “joy, fraternity and, above all, the commitment to live in communion with the Franciscan Family”.

A call to a new beginning

On Saturday the 16th November, the activities were guided by the theme *“Brothers, let’s start over!”*, led by Br. Aloísio Fragoso and Br. Marconi Lins. In plenary sessions and smaller groups, participants reflected on the challenges and possibilities for the Franciscan mission in times of change, making renewed commitments to the Franciscan charism.

On Sunday the 17th November, the meeting concluded with the celebration of Mass, presided over by the Minister Provincial, Br. Rogério Lopes, and with a moment of evaluation and synthesis for future actions at the international level. At the end of this fraternal experience of Mount Tabor, Br. Rogério shared his prayer to *“look to the past with gratitude, to the present with gratitude and to the future with hope. It is important that what has been discussed and reflected on returns to our fraternities through all of us, motivated. The Kingdom of God is being realized, starting from our commitment.”*

Article by Leticia Florêncio, Provincial Communication Service

Revision by Br. Lorrane Clementino, OFM

Acta Ordinis



ACTA ORDINIS

FRATrum MINORUM

CURIA GENERALIS OFM



The latest edition of *Acta Ordinis Fratrum Minorum* is available for download:

[An. CXLIII – MAII - AUGUSTI 2024 - N. 2](#)



Franciscan Centenaries

In the name of the Canticle

Poetic celebration for the 800th anniversary of the work of St. Francis



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From the 2nd -4th December, a group of internationally renowned poets gathered in Rome, the Vatican and Assisi to honour the 800th anniversary of St. Francis’ *“Canticle of the Creatures”*.

The event, entitled *“In the name of the Canticle”*, was organized and promoted by the Dicastery for Culture and Education of the Holy See, in collaboration with the National Committee (of Italy) for the Celebration of the Eighth Centenary of the Death of St. Francis.

The meeting took place in four different moments. On the 2nd December, at the Dicastery for Culture

in the Vatican, the poets reflected on poetry as a tool to promote peace and brotherhood, exploring the relevance of the Canticle. In the afternoon, in the evocative setting of the church of San Francesco a Ripa in Rome, the poets shared, in a public reading, the works inspired by the Franciscan values of harmony with nature, offering an experience of profound poetic reflection.

The following day the poets went on pilgrimage to Assisi, where they visited the symbolic places of the life of St. Francis (Sacred Convent and Porzi-

uncola), inspired by their beauty, landscapes and spiritual heritage that gave rise to the Canticle.

The event concluded on the 4th December at the publishing fair of Rome “Più Libri Più Liberi” (meaning “More books, more freedom”): the authors shared the experience of the previous days with the public, offering a space for open dialogue that revealed how much the Canticle of the Creatures is, 800 years later, a text that still inspires today with its message of universal love and respect for every creature.

The Closing of the Centenary of the Stigmata In the Province of St. Francis of Quito- Ecuador



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On the 15th of November, the Province of Ft. Francis of Quito, in Ecuador closed the 800 years Jubilee celebrations of the stigmata of St. Francis. There was a competition on Franciscan film that was promoted by Pastoral Education Institute. The activity brought together seven Franciscan Educational Institutions that exist in the country. The event was hosted by the fraternity of Loja. 36 students and 6 were hosted. It was a moment of great jubilation, creativity and show of many talents.

Through short films, our students conveyed to us an outstanding message of St. Francis on mount La Verna and showed us how the cinema is one of the useful means in the desire of communicating the Gospel values and the charisma of St. Francis to the new generation.

Br. José Duván Delgado Ruiz, OFM



Photos of the nativity scenes of the OFM Fraternities



Please send photographs of the **Nativity Scenes** made in your fraternities **by the 22nd December** to comgen@ofm.org to be published in the special issue of Fraternitas on the 24th December, 2024.

Please do not forget to write the name, the city and the town of the Fraternity!



Animation of the Order

Intermediate General Chapter of the OFS Rome, 9th-17th November 2024



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From November the 9th to 17th, 2024 at the *Seraphicum* College of the Conventual Friars Minor, in Rome, the International Council of the Secular Franciscan Order (CIOFS) celebrated, with the participation of 66 capitulars and 16 observers, the Mid-Term Chapter of the OFS, whose theme was “*You are love*”.

Each day the celebration of Mass emphasized a specific aspect of it. On the first day, in the celebration presided over by the General Spiritual Assistant Br. Stefan Acatrinei, OFM Conv, the focus was on the “*joy of encounter*”.

On the second day, the General Spiritual Assistant Br. Carlos Ginés Campos Julve, TOR led the reflection on the theme “we come with our brothers and sisters”.

On the third day, the Minister General of the Capuchin Friars, Fr. Roberto Genuin, OFM Cap, presided over the theme of “*the memory of our deceased brothers and sisters*”.

On the fourth day, Br. Fernando Ventura, OFM Cap, dealt with the theme of the *family*, whilst on

the fifth day the celebration was held in the Shrine of La Verna and the general spiritual assistant, Br. Pedro Zitha, OFM, who presided over it, dealt with the theme “*The 800 years of the Stigmata. Centenary 2024*”.

On the sixth day it was the turn of the Minister General of the TOR, Br. Amando Trujillo Cano, who spoke about the “*Care of our common home*”, while on the seventh day the Minister General of the Friars Conventual, Br. Carlo Trovarelli, spoke about the 750th Centenary of St. Bonaventure. On the eighth day, “*commitment*” was discussed, a theme also addressed by the OFM Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, who in his homily at the celebration he presided over also addressed three words offered by the liturgy of the day: Truth, Love and Prayer.

The Chapter ended on the feast day of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, of which the TOR Minister General, Fr. Amando Trujillo Cano, spoke.

During the working sessions, the Chapter members approved the Chapter Regulations and the work programme. The Chapter members also approved, with a specific vote, the final draft of the International Statutes of the Secular Franciscan Order (OFS) that had previously been sent to the national fraternities. The Chapter members also had the joy of reflecting on the *Instrumentum Laboris* “*You are love*” ([see the responses received from the national fraternities of the OFS to this theme](#)).

On the penultimate day, the capitulars voted and approved the budget for the next three years. Representatives of some fraternities, such as those of Argentina, Brazil, Croatia and Portugal, shared the projects that have developed their national fraternities. The capitulars then had the opportunity to listen to the members of the “*Table for Peace, Disarmament and Nuclear Conversion*” of the OFS of Lazio, who shared their knowledge and concerns regarding the vastness of the atomic arsenal present in the world. They pointed out that, unfortu-



nately, the Christian world is also in possession of these weapons of mass destruction, which in their opinion should be transformed into an instrument of peace and progress. The first tools to be used are prayer, which changes the hearts of men and women, and commitment to building peace, for the good of all humanity.

The last session of the Chapter was dedicated to the evaluation and decisions on the questions that

will guide the life of the International Fraternity in the next three years and that will have to be implemented by the Presidency of CIOFS.

[Read the homily of the Minister General](#)

[Read the programme of work and the responses to the Instrumentum laboris](#)

With the contribution of Br. Pedro Zitha, OFM

News from the Entities



The Plenary Council of the Province of St. Thomas the Apostle, India Madapurachal, Kerala, November 11-15



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The Plenary Council of the Province of St. Thomas the Apostle, India, took place from 11 November to 15 November at Assisivanam in Madapurachal, Kerala. Mandated by the Provincial Chapter of 2022, the event gathered brothers from different fraternities to celebrate their brotherhood, reflect on their shared mission, and discuss key policies that will shape the life and mission of the friars in the Province.

Br. Naveen George, Secretary of the Plenary Council, played a pivotal role in organizing the event. His meticulous planning ensured that all details were addressed, and the schedule was designed to meet the needs of the gathering. His dedication and leadership were evident in the efficient execution of the event.

In his inaugural address, Br. Xavier Durairaj, Minister Provincial, invited the friars to reflect on the theme "From the Wounds, New Life," inspired by the 800th anniversary of the stigmata of St. Francis. He called on the friars to embrace renewal with vigor and enthusiasm, encouraging them to begin anew with a deep sense of purpose and commitment to their mission. During the homily at the inaugural Eucharist, Br. Saji Mathew, Vicar Provincial, emphasized the importance of brotherhood, urging the friars to be attentive and sensitive to one another's needs and to extend support to uplift each other in their journey. The Plenary Council was further graced by the presence of Br. Wilson Paul, President of the Dependent Founda-



tion of St. Francis of Assisi, and Br. Santosh Ekka, Custos of the Dependent Custody of St. Mary Mother of God (both on Indian soil), together with their delegates.

A total of 60 friars gathered for the event, uniting in prayer and Eucharistic celebrations. These sacred moments strengthened their faith and deepened their sense of brotherhood. The jubilarians were honored for their years of service and dedication, along with the newly ordained friars who have embarked on the path of ministry as friar priests.

Br. Joy Sebastian also delivered an important session on the friars' responsibility to protect minors and vulnerable adults. He highlighted the

obligation to provide a safe environment within the friaries, institutions, and parishes, stressing the vital duty of the friars to safeguard those entrusted to their care. Among the key decisions, the friars approved several important policies, including the policy for sending friars for specialized studies, an updated safeguarding policy for minors and vulnerable adults, and a policy for financial management within the Province. These policies will serve as a basis for the con-

tinued growth and mission of the Province in India. The host fraternity, Assisivanam, is home to student friars studying philosophy. Br. Johnson MV, the Guardian of Assisivanam, along with the fraternity and particularly the student friars, worked tirelessly for the fruitful celebration of the Plenary Council. The youthful and vibrant presence of the student friars created an atmosphere that joyfully celebrated the Franciscan vocation!

30 years of the Franciscan School “Nativity of the Lord” Novosibirsk, Russia



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The Franciscan Catholic School “Nativity of the Lord” in Novosibirsk was opened in 1994: this year, therefore, we celebrate 30 years since its foundation with various initiatives involving the local Church and Bishop, students, former students, teachers and parents. In the whole Russian territory, there are only two Catholic schools: this one of the Friars Minor and a Gymnasium in Tomsk, of the Society of Jesus.

1994 - 2024

30 years have passed. The first alumni have formed their families and are keen to send their children to our Franciscan Catholic school. There are more than three hundred former students and they often come to visit us: they are the messengers of our school. We already have our dead: Anna and Nikita.

At first, the school was attended by mostly Russian children who were for the most part Orthodox and a few Catholics. Now, because of immigration from the countries of the South, it is also frequented by Muslims. The programmes are standard in Russian elementary schools. Enriched by music, singing and the hour of Religion. Religion is based on biblical themes, sacred icons, the names of God in the Qur’an, and the Ten Commandments. In the four-

th class we answer the question “*who is Jesus?*”. That is why we read the Gospel of Mark and the more than 35 parables and 20 miracles performed by Jesus. Every day we pray and, in addition to the prayer of the “*Our Father*”, we sing and recite the “*Canticle of the Creatures*” of St. Francis.

For 30 years the school has been supported by many benefactors to whom our grateful memory goes. At the moment the school is attended by 57 boys and girls. By law, since our environments are limited, we cannot have more than 60. For 30 years we have sown the good seed and we have met many people. We thank the Lord and all our friends.

Br. Corrado Trabucchi

Director of the Franciscan School “Nativity of the Lord” in Novosibirsk, Russian Federation

Solemn Professions



13th November, Province of St. Francis Stigmatized (Italy)

Br. Piergavino Piras

19th October, Prov. Immaculate Conception (Brazil)

Br. Franklin Costa, Fr. Gabriel Alves

17th September, Custody of St. Anthony (Singapore-Brunei-Malaysia)

Br. Marvin Voo

Information received from the General Secretariat

First Provincial Parish Assembly in the Philippines

Cebu, 12th-14th November, Prov. St. Anthony of Padua



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The first Provincial Parish Pastoral Assembly of the Province of St. Anthony of Padua in the Philippines was held from the 12th-14th November, 2024 at the Franciscan Retirement Community in Tungekop, Minglanilla, Cebu.

The friars who serve in the parish pastoral ministry gathered to reflect on the theme “*Sent to evangelize in fraternity and minority in the parish*”.

The Coordinator of Parish Pastoral Ministry, Br. Mark Anthony Zarate, OFM, moderated this important event. He undertook a series of synodal conversations with parishes under the care of the Province to prepare for the Assembly. During these visits, he collected valuable data, insights and reflections from the parish communities, which formed the content and direction of the Assembly. This groundwork ensured that the Assembly faced real challenges and opportunities within pastoral ministry. Inspired by the spirit of synodality, the Assembly process mirrored a synodal conversation, emphasizing a solemn and prayerful approach to emphasizing the seriousness of the encounter and invoking the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Adding depth to the assembly was a talk by Br. Junar Dela Victoria, JCD, OFS, a priest from Davao City. His presentation highlighted updates on Church documents regarding parish ministry and offered insights into practical experiences of synodality in the parish context. His contributions provided a solid basis for the friars’ discussions, encouraging them to view their ministry through the lens of ecclesial communion and mission.



The friars’ conversations were characterized by mutual respect, active listening, and openness to the movement of the Spirit. Their significant discussions culminated in a well-thought-out post-assembly statement reflecting their commitment to evangelizing through fraternity and minority. This statement will serve as a guiding document for their continued mission in parish ministry. The success of this Assembly not only strengthened the collective determination of the friars to serve, but also affirmed their role in promoting synodal and inclusive pastoral care, embodying the Franciscan charism in their respective parishes.

Communications Office of the Province of St. Anthony of Padua

Deceased Brothers



† 14th November: Br. Vincent De Paul Cushing, Prov. Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA); Br. Anselm Kalbert, Prov. St. Elizabeth (Germany); Br. João Dias Vicente, Prov. Protomartyrs of Morocco (Portugal)

† 13th November: Br. Mario di Lella, Prov. Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA)

† 6th Novembre: Br. Cletus Noone, Province of Ireland

† 19th October: Br. Roberto del Carmen Fernández Bermudez, Prov. Our Lady of Guadalupe (Nicaragua)

Information received from the General Secretariat



Br. Samuel Ferreira de Lima OFM appointed Bishop Auxiliary Bishop of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Manaus (Brazil)



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On Monday, the 25th November, the Franciscan Province of the Immaculate Conception of Brazil has the pleasant satisfaction of announcing that one of its members, Br. Samuel Ferreira de Lima OFM, currently Master of Novices in Rodeio, in the State of Santa Catarina, has been appointed Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Manaus (AM) by Pope Francis. He will collaborate in the ministry of Cardinal Leonardo Ulrich Steiner OFM, archbishop of the same city.

Br. Samuel was born on the 28th May, 1967 in the city of Rio de Janeiro (RJ). He is the son of Edite Oliveira de Lima and Francisco Ferreira de Lima, who currently reside in São João de Meriti, in the same state. He began his religious formation in 1987, becoming a novice in 1988 and professing religious vows for the first time on the 10th January, 1989. He therefore has 35 years of religious life in the Order of Friars Minor. On the 27th January 1996 he was ordained a priest by Msgr. Paulo Evaristo Arns OFM in the city of São João de Meriti, reaching 28 years of priestly ministry to date. After completing his theological studies, Br. Samuel volunteered as a missionary in Angola, where he worked both in the parish mission and in the formation of vocations for the nascent Franciscan Foundation of the Immaculate Mother of God of Angola, dependent on the Province of the Immaculate Conception. He dedicated 11 years of his religious life and his ordained ministry to the service of the Angolan people and since then the passion and missionary affection for that country have never left him, remaining in his heart and mind.

He returned to Brazil at the end of 2006 and served in the formation of the Postulancy in Guaratinguetá

(SP). In 2010 he arrived in Rodeio as Master of Novices, a service he rendered to the Province for 9 years, followed by a three-year period in another formative stage. In 2022 he resumed his role as formator in the Novitiate. Many friars had him as a teacher, enriched by his spirituality, vocation and passion for a life consecrated to God.



Now, Br. Samuel receives a new mission entrusted to him by the Church. Just as he gave his “yes” to service at the beginning of his formation – a “yes” renewed day by day – today he is asked again to collaborate in the leadership of the Church in Manaus. We have no doubt that he will contribute significantly to the ecclesial journey, uniting himself as brother and pastor with the faithful who will welcome him. We are sure that he will bring with him the Franciscan charism and enrich this new service with our spirituality. We believe that he will love people where they are and proclaim to them the Good News of the Kingdom, the same Gospel that he has chosen as his Way of Life.

May Brother Samuel be truly blessed in his episcopal ministry and, through the intercession of our Seraphic Father St. Francis, may he learn from the people of Manauara to be a good and holy bishop: prophetic in word and deed, paternal in listening and counsel, fraternal and companion on the journey towards the Father!

Br. Rodrigo da Silva Santos

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