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**Easter Message of the Minister General, 2025**  
*The prayer of Jesus and our prayer*

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

As we approach Holy Week, I wish to dwell on a central element in the passion, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus – his prayer.

The Gospels testify that Jesus prayed throughout his life, seeking spaces of intimacy with the Father. He prayed in the Temple with the apostles, and he prayed before important undertakings. His whole existence was imbued by prayer, and he invites us to enter into this mystery with him.

Jesus always prayed, even in the dark hours of his passion. On Palm Sunday, along with the crowds, he blessed the Father. During the Last Supper, he gives thanks for the gifts of bread and wine. In Gethsemane, his prayer becomes so intense that he sheds blood in his desire to do the Father’s will. On the cross, he prays entrusting himself to the Father and forgiving his aggressors. In the silence of Holy Saturday, he remains completely handed over to the Father. *“I have ris-*

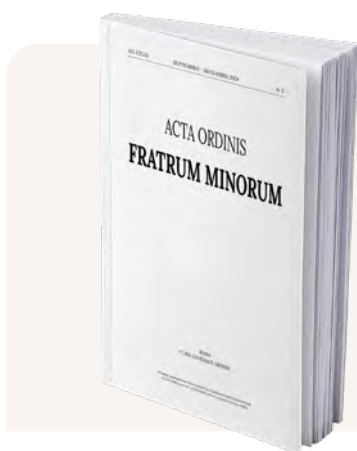


en, and I am with you still. You have laid your hand upon me.” The Entrance Antiphon for Easter morning shows us Jesus praying to the Father at the hour of the Resurrection, with the voice of a man who has suffered, weighed down by the days of his passion. And now “*he is always alive to intercede on their behalf*” (Heb 7:25). With our gaze fixed on Jesus, let us remember that the source of prayer is already within us: it is the Spirit of the Crucified & Risen One and His holy operation (cf. LR 10:8). In Him, we can respond to the innate human orientation towards God that reveals itself more clearly in silence. We must start afresh from God, start afresh from Him who is in us – and prayer is necessary for this journey. It is not easy to remain faithful

to it, especially at this complicated time in history. Often, our prayer becomes mechanical, losing vital contact with daily life. It is precisely our personal prayer – meditation, silence, prayerful reading of the Word – that suffers most. Are we not tempted to abandon it, excusing ourselves because of our busyness? But when personal prayer weakens, the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours and the Eucharist also becomes impoverished, the affections of our hearts do not pulse and remembrance of God fades.

Read the full text of the Message:

[Italiano](#) - [English](#) - [Español](#) - [Deutsch](#) - [Français](#)  
[Hrvatski](#) - [Polski](#) - [Português](#)



## ACTA ORDINIS FRATRUM MINORUM 2024/3

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[An. CXLIII - Septembris - Decembris 2024 - N.3](#)

## General Curia Agenda



- ☑ From the 20th-25th April, Br. Ignacio Ceja Jimenez, Vicar General, will be in Morocco to preside over the Chapter of the Custody of the Holy Protomartyrs of the Order.
- ☑ On the 21st and 22nd April, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General, will be in Zadar (Croatia) for the Opening of the Chapter of the Province of St. Jerome; on the 23rd he will be in Verona (Italy) for the pre-Chapter meeting with the Friars of the Province of St. Anthony; from the 24th-26th he will be in Taormina (Italy) for the Franciscan Jubilee of Youth and the Meeting of Families; from the 28th April 28-2nd May, he will be in Assisi for the International Convention of Lay Brothers. On the 3rd May he will participate in Camerino (Marche, Italy) in the Federal Day of the Monasteries of the Poor Clare Sisters on the Fifth Centenary of the death of St. Camilla Battista Varano.
- ☑ From the 21st-24th April, Br. Cesare Vaiani, Definito-  
r General, will participate in the Chapter of the Province of the Most Holy Martyrs of Morocco (Portugal). Afterwards, in Italy, he will participate on the 28th and 29th April 28, in the Chapter of the Province of Seven Holy Martyrs of Calabria; on the 1st and 2nd May at the Chapter of the Province of The Most Holy Name of Jesus and on the 6th May at the Chapter of the Province of the Immaculate Conception.
- ☑ From the 21st-25th April, Br. Konrad Cholewa, General Definito-  
r, will participate in the Provincial Chapter of the Province of St. Jerome (Croatia); on the 5th May to that of the Province of the Assumption of the BVM (Poland).
- ☑ From the 28th April-2nd May Br. Jimmy Zammit, General Definito-  
r, will participate in the meeting of the Anglophone Conference (ESC) in Malta.
- ☑ The Tempo Forte will take place at the General Curia from the 5th-10th May.

# Government of the Order



## Croatia, regional meetings with the General Definitor *Province of Saints Cyril and Methodius*



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From the 24th-28th March 24, regional meetings of the friars of the Franciscan Province of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Croatia were held. The meetings took place in Osijek (Tvrdža), Zagreb (Siget), Linz (Austria) and Novi Sad (Serbia). All the meetings were attended by Br. Konrad Cholewa, Definitor General, in charge of the Slavic zone. Br. Darko Tepert, member of the Province and Secretary General for Formation and Studies, also took part in the meetings in Zagreb and Osijek. The main theme of these meetings concerned reflection on the priorities of the Province of Saints Cyril and Methodius. After the friars, in their local chapters, discussed it on the basis of the letter and the materials prepared by the Minister Provincial, these meetings were the second stage in the process of discernment and choice of priority places of action and the main activities to which the friars wish to devote themselves most.

The priorities will have to be definitively chosen by the Provincial Chapter of 2026; before then, a session of the Plenary Council of the Province will be held on the same theme, during which all the proposals that emerged from the work of the local Chapters of all the friaries in the area and from the regional meetings will be concretized. Before each meeting, the Minister Provincial offered a brief summary of the reflections conducted so far, also recalling the letters and messages of the Minister General that encourage us to choose the priorities of life in presence and action.

Subsequently, the Secretary of the Province presented the reflections and proposals that emerged from the reports received from the local Chapters. Finally, the floor was passed to Br. Konrad, who first conveyed the greetings of the Minister

General to the friars, and then encouraged dialogue starting from the Gospel passage that tells of a man intent on building a tower (Lk 14:28) and a king preparing for war (Lk 14:31): both calculate their own forces and evaluate whether they are able to complete the projects undertaken. In this way, the Definitor General encouraged the friars to be wise people, who do not look only at the past, but who, by observing the past, evaluate the reality of the present and also look to the future. Those present then wondered about what skills they have to realize the Franciscan charism in today's Croatia. Fr. Konrad emphasized that there will not be answers to all the questions that the look at the future suggests, but that this does not mean that we are not responsible for that future. For this reason, he urged the friars to think positively, to choose the priorities of life, to nourish hope, but also to have the courage to cut what can no longer be sustained, to improve the life and action of the friars elsewhere. In the discussion, the friars expressed their questions and reflections raised by the ongoing process of restructuring the Province.

In his conclusion, the Definitor General highlighted how the lack of the necessary forces to maintain all the current presences is already evident, emphasizing the importance of taking responsibility for decisions now, without postponing to the future. If that happens, said Br. Konrad, in ten years someone else will have to make much more radical decisions – and he cited some of the Order's provinces that are already facing similar difficulties. He then encouraged the friars not to adapt their forces to the structures, but to modify the structures according to their strengths, so that it is clear that the priority is life in fraternity and common action in the apostolate and pastoral care. On the occasion of the meeting in Zagreb, a session of the Provincial Definitory was also held at which were present, in addition to Br. Konrad, Br. Domagoj Runje, Delegate of the Minister General for the process of restructuring the Provinces based in Zadar and Zagreb in Croatia, and Br. Tomislav Šanko, Minister Provincial of the Province of St. Jerome in Dalmatia and Istria.



## Franciscan Centenaries

### Canticle of the Creatures Photograph Contest Open to all photographers worldwide, until the 4th May, 2025



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Up until the 4<sup>th</sup> May, 2025, photographers from all over the world will be able to participate free of charge in the photograph contest on the Canticle of the Creatures, promoted by Trieste Photo Days in collaboration with the OFM Fraternitas Foundation, the Faculty of Philosophy of the Pontifical University *Antonianum*, JPIC Italy-Albania and with the co-organization of the Municipality of Assisi. The competition invites you to follow the spirit of the Canticle of St. Francis of Assisi, in its Eighth Cente-

nary, praising creatures through photography, highlighting both their beauty and virtue, and the negative effects of human abuse when the relationship with nature becomes domination rather than harmony. Celebrating the Canticle through photography means recognizing the beauty of each creature, but also the deep imprint that man leaves on nature. Photographers from all over the world, emerging and established artists are invited to participate, who can contribute individual photos, projects and portfolios inspired by the themes of the Canticle of the Creatures, such as water, fire, forgiveness, death and the relationship between humanity and nature. The selected works will be part of a photographic volume and will be exhibited in various exhibitions in different Italian cities, including Assisi (Palazzo Frumentario) and Trieste (Trieste Photo Days, from the 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> October 2025).

For more information and regulations:  
[www.exhibitaround.com](http://www.exhibitaround.com)



## Chapters

### Chapter of the Province of the Holy Cross Ljubljana (Slovenia), 31st March – 4th April 2025



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From the 31<sup>st</sup> March-4<sup>th</sup> April, 2025, the Provincial Chapter of the Province of the Holy Cross (Slove-

nia) of the OFM was held in Ljubljana. The Visitor and President of the Chapter was Br. Stipo Kljajić, of the Province of the Holy Cross (Bosnia-Argentina).

On the second day of the Chapter, the elections of the new Provincial Definitory were held: Br. Christian Gostečnik was elected Minister Provincial; Br. Miran Špelič Vicar; Br. Pepi Lebreht, Br. Krizostom Komar, Br. Bogdan Knavs, Br. Janez Papa and Br. Tomaž Hočever were elected as Definitors.

We entrust these friars and the whole Province to the grace of the Lord, and we wish His abundant blessing upon all for the journey of the Provincial Fraternity.

**Chapter of the Custody of St. Francis of Assisi**  
*Guinea-Bissau, 23rd-29th March 2025*



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day, Br. Michael Daniels was elected as Vicar and Br. André Nama Nama, Br. Jorge Imbaná and Br. Laurentino Okika Gomes as Councilors.

The Chapter received the visit of the Bishop of Braga (Portugal), the Diocesan Administrator of Bafatá, Fr. Lucio Brentegani, and the Vicar General of the Diocese of Bissau, Fr. Davide Sciocco. Everything was experienced with a deep sense of fraternity, full of sharing, acceptance, clarity arrived at regarding some tensions and commitment to the future.

From the 23rd-29th March 23, 2025, the Custody of “St. Francis of Assisi” of Guinea Bissau celebrated its Custodial Chapter in the fraternity of Brá, at the parish of St. John the Baptist. Hosted in the Franciscan-style parish hall, the Chapter was presided over by Br. Mario Favretto, Delegate of the Minister General, and had as its theme Lord, what do you want me to do? On the 26th March, elections were held: Br. Armando Cosa was reconfirmed as Custos, while, the following

At the conclusion of the Custodial Chapter, a Mass of thanksgiving was celebrated presided over by Bishop Emeritus Msgr. José Cãmnete, in the presence of the president of the Chapter, the 31 Chapter members, novices and parishioners of Brá, including representatives of the OFS, the Franciscan Youth, the Franciscan Sisters of Christ the King. The “Sursum Corda” choir of the Parish of St. John the Baptist animated the liturgy.

**Provincial Chapter of the Holy Spirit**  
**Province in Canada**  
*31st March – 4th April 2025*



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Their dialogue among the friars was the heart of the meeting.

The Chapter which begun by the election of the Minister Provincial and the Vicar Provincial was concluded by electing New Provincial Definitors. During the chapter the friars elected the following: Br. Jean-Pierre Ducharme - New Minister Provincial; Br. Guylain Prince - Vicar Provincial; Br. Michael Perras, Br. Manoj Xalxo, Br. Daniel Gurnick and Br. A. Joseph – Provincial Definitors.

The Provincial Chapter of the Holy Spirit Province in Canada started officially began on 31<sup>st</sup> March by submitting the seal of the Province to Br. Jimmy Zammit, the Definitor General and President of the Chapter. The theme of the Chapter was “Together for the Mission”. For the first time the collaborators, friends and other members from the Franciscan family were invited to the chapter.

We pray for our brothers and for their new ministry for the service of the fraternity!





## Animation of the Order

### Meeting of the Franciscan Network of the Mediterranean in Greece *Rhodes, 31st March - 4th April 2025*



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From the 31<sup>st</sup> March-4<sup>th</sup> April, 2025, the Coordinating Committee of the Franciscan Network of the Mediterranean (RFMed) held its annual meeting at the Franciscan friary in Rhodes, Greece.

The Greek Mediterranean island is not only a tourist destination during the European summer but also a passageway for many migrants and refugees from Asia Minor and Africa.

The Franciscan fraternity in Rhodes belongs to the Custody of the Holy Land and, in addition to serving the only Catholic parish with its churches on the islands of Rhodes and Kos, also seeks to offer various types of assistance to people in irregular migration transit. Amongst the aid is a bag of food

distributed to the poor, migrants, and refugees every Tuesday in commemoration of Saint Anthony.

Br. John Luke Gregory, OFM, parish priest and guardian of the friary, acknowledges the lack of institutions that assist migration in the area. Therefore, he asserts, the little they can do is greatly appreciated by the recipients.

Amidst this situation and mindful of other realities, the RFMed brothers and sisters expressed their concern about the rearmament in many European countries and the winds of war and conflict currently being experienced or foreseen in the Mediterranean. They also reaffirmed the opportunities offered by the Franciscan family's countless presences in the region and the challenge of continuing to build the network to offer more regional responses to migration, peace, and youth.

During the sessions, the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi was present, as the poor man of Assisi - "Poverello" carried out his mission during times of crusades and religious and intercultural conflicts. Based on this memory, it is necessary to "*maintain the hope that another Mediterranean is possible because we Franciscans are pilgrims of hope,*" stated one of the participants.

### Antonianum Magazine turns 100 *A century of Franciscan research and reporting*



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This year marks the centenary of the prestigious *Antonianum* Magazine, one of the most important academic publications of the Order of Friars Minor. The first issue was published in January of 1926, the result of a project born in May 1925 under the pontificate of Pius XI.

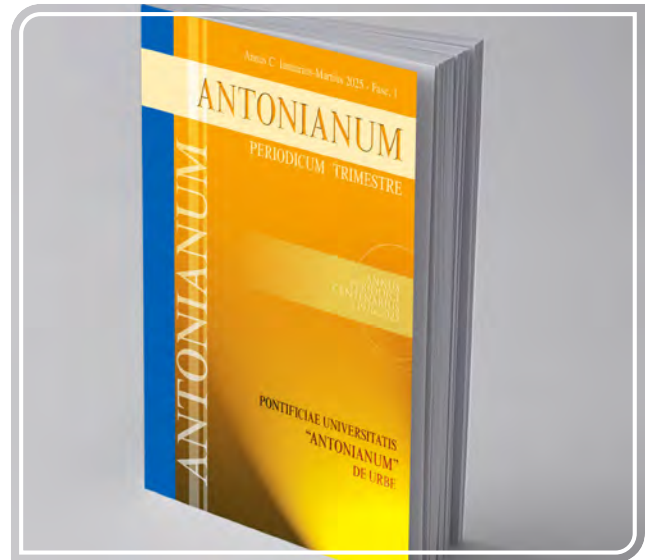
The Magazine was the brainchild of then Minister General of the Order, Fr. Bernardino Klumper, who envisioned a publication with the primary purpose of offering a space to unify the scholarly work being done by friars scattered

around the world. Initially conceived of as a tool only for the fraternity of Friars Minor, the Magazine evolved in a short time to become a point of reference for the larger academic community.

The first editorial team, led by Professor Livarius Oligier as editor-in-chief, included illustrious scholars such as Bertrand Kurtscheid for Canon Law, Zacharias Van de Woestyne for Speculative Philosophy, and Domenico Franzè as editor-in-chief. The journal immediately stood out from the rest for its multidisciplinary approach,

dealing not only with theological and Biblical concerns, but also with philosophical, moral, mystical, Canonical, patristical, and ecclesial topics.

The linguistic choices made were also innovative and visionary. While maintaining Latin as the main language, the journal opened itself up to contributions from the most widespread modern languages such as English, French, German, Spanish and Italian. This international openness, together with the willingness to publish contributions from scholars external to the Order, has allowed the Antonianum Magazine to maintain its academic excellence and relevance to the present day.



## Formation Meeting for Secretaries of Provinces and Custodies *Franciscan Conference of Brazil and the Southern Cone*



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In order to deepen the knowledge of the OFM database system and to better understand the legal and canonical procedures pertinent to the Provincial and Custodial Secretariats, the Secretaries of the Provinces and Custodies of the Francis-



can Conference of Brazil and Southern Cone (CFByCS) met with the OFM Secretary General, Br. Antonio Maria Iacona, OFM, to receive training and guidance.

The meeting took place in St Anthony of Arredondo, Córdoba, Argentina, from the 25th-29th March, 2025, simultaneously with the II General Assembly of the CFByCS, and was attended by the 12 friars who exercise this office in the Provinces and Custodies that make up the Conference.

The Secretary General gave an overview of how the OFM database is structured and gave guidance on how to manage it correctly, emphasizing what is

the competence of local entities and what is the competence of the General Curia. There was also a formative moment with our brother friar Br. Claudio Durighetto, OFM, Procurator General of the OFM, who helped us in all the doubts we had about the

juridical and canonical processes organized by the Provincial and Custodial Secretaries.

We thank God for the gift of being able to serve the Order through the Office of the Provincial or Custodial Secretary and we thank the availability of our brother Br. Antonio who spared no effort to be with us on this occasion favoured by the CFByCS.

*Br. Alef Henrique Pavini, OFM*

*Secretary of the Franciscan Custody of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (Brazil)*



## The Conference of Brazil and the Southern Cone celebrates the 2nd Enlarged Assembly

*Friars Minor, Pilgrims of Hope*



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The 2nd Enlarged Assembly of the Conference of Friars Minor of Brazil and the Southern Cone brought together 82 friars from twelve entities of the Order of Friars Minor present in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Paraguay. The meeting took place with the motto “Friars Minor, Pilgrims of Hope”, the meeting brought to Argentina the Ministers and Custodians of the participating entities, as well as the friars responsible for the Evangelization and Mission Services, Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, Educational Pastoral Care and also for Formation and Studies, Ongoing Formation and Vocation Animation Service. This year the Secretaries of all entities have also been summoned. Present and accompanied throughout the meeting were the Definitor General for Latin America, Br. César Kulkamp, and the Secretary General, Br. Antonio Maria Iacona, who came from Rome, Italy.

In addition to being a special occasion for the meeting between the friars involved in the various services, the Assembly is a moment of prayer, reflection, reporting on the activities carried out and presenting proposals and plans for the future. In a first moment of sharing and presentation, each entity had the opportunity to present its evangelizing mission through the analysis of strengths, weaknesses, and challenges. An opportunity to nurture hope through the exchange of experiences, shar-

ing joys and concerns. Amongst the common challenges identified, the numerical decrease, the economic sustainability of fraternities and mission, downsizing and restructuring, the accompaniment of entities and the question of the weakening of the sense of mission and the sense of belonging to the fraternity were highlighted.

Speaking via videoconference directly from Rome, the Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, stressed that “Latin America, with all its challenges, continues to be a land of hope for the Church and the Order,” where the Franciscan charism “can flourish with its own characteristics, contributing to the worldwide mosaic of our fraternity.” The Minister encouraged the friars to be attentive to the appeals of the present moment, taking into account the Jubilee 2025 and the Eighth Centenary of the Canticle of the Creatures.

Recalling the Order’s journey, the Minister also presented some concrete paths for strengthening the Conference: To promote more interprovincial collaboration; Simplifying structures; Renewing Formation; Listening to the new generations; Strengthening the social dimension of the Charism and Revitalizing Franciscan synodality.

The Secretary General for Formation and Studies, Br. Darko Tepert, the Secretary General for Mis-

sion and Evangelization, Br. Francisco Gómez, and the Heads of the General Offices for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation, Br. Daniel Rodríguez Blanco, and for the Protection of Minors, Br. Yuri Senko, also addressed a message by videoconference to the assembled assembly.

In the meeting regarding the sector on animation, the various services met to evaluate the path of the three-year period and plan future steps. They also

chose the animators to coordinate the progress of the Conference over the next three years. The following friars have been elected for conference services for the next three years: Br. Fernando Aparecidos dos Santos (Holy Heart Custody, Braziel) President, Br. Lino Miranda (Prov. Holy Trinity - Chile) Vice-President and Br. Rogerio Lopes (Prov. San Antonio - Brazil) Secretary.

Read more about [www.ofm.org](http://www.ofm.org)

## An “Iftar” is celebrated in Bornova, Smyrna

*A traditional dinner offered by the friars to our Muslim friends*



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It has been a long standing tradition for our friars to offer our Muslim friends an iftar (a dinner celebrating the end of a fasting period) in the garden of our house in Bornova, in the province of Smyrna, in Turkey. On this most recent occasion, the entire community of friars from Istanbul also participated. We took advantage of the opportunity to also hold a fraternal chapter.

This celebration is always eagerly anticipated by our friends, especially by the authorities of the district of the city of Bornova. Thus, the Governor participated together with many officials of his cabinet, some military au-

thorities, the mayor of our district of Erzene, and other officials from the cultural sector, along with several priests of the Archdiocese.

We are happy to report that this event was a big success! It is so important because it is a chance for we Catholics, along with other Christians, to offer the gift of an iftar to our friends and acquaintances. Our table is humbly opened up, providing an opportunity for fraternal sharing as we weave closer ties within this country that has welcomed us.

*Br. Adrian E. Loza, OFM*



## Franciscan Bookmark



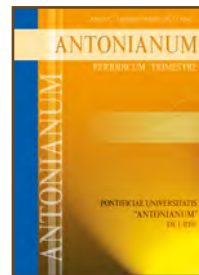
Bonaventura  
autore spirituale



A cura di Marco Guida OFM e Daniele Solvi

Edizioni del Galluzzo

Antonianum. Annus Periodici Centenarius 1926-2025



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La Custodia di Terra Santa. Una storia lunga 800 anni



Fr. Narcyz Stanislaw Klimas, OFM

Edizioni Terra Santa

# News *from the Entities*



## Solemn professions

*25th March, Prov. Sacred Heart of Jesus (Italy)*

**Br. Filippo Di Maio,**  
**Br. Michele Pressano**



## Priestly Ordinations

*2nd March, Custody of St. Clare (Mozambique)*  
Fr. Manuel José Luís de Lápiz Simbo

*1st March, Province of St. Anthony (Italy)*  
Fr. Christian Vallarsa

*25th January, Prov. Our Lady of Guadeloupe (Central America and the Caribbean)*  
Fr. Felipe Miranda Castillo

*25th January, Prov. St. Francis of Quito (Ecuador)*  
Fr. Evaristo Zambrano Párraga

*4th January, Prov. St. Michael the Archangel (Italy)*  
Br. Gianfranco Rella

† 29th March: Br. Antoine Collot, Prov. Blessed John Duns Scotus (Belgium)

† 28th March: Br. Fernando Alvarado Flores, Prov. St Philip of Jesús (Mexico)

† 27th March: Br. Gisbert Preuß, Br. Hans-Josef Klauck, Prov. St. Elizabeth (Germany)

† 26th March: Br. Ermanno Piccionne, Seraphic Province of St. Francis of Assisi (Italy); Br. Luka Tomašević, Province of the Most Holy Redeemer (Croatia); Br. Edward-Marc Arambasich, Prov. of Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA)

† 13th March: Br. Adelward van Hemert, Prov. The Holy Martyrs of Gorcum (Netherlands)

† 25th February: Br. Stjepan Knežević, Prov. of The Holy Cross (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

† 22nd February: Br. John Joseph Pierce, Prov. of Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA)

*Information received from the General Secretariat*



## Fratelli Defunti

† 1st April: Br. Gerardo Moore, Prov. Our Lady of Guadeloupe (Central America and the Caribbean)



## Inter-Vocational Meeting of Temporary Professed Croatian-Speakers *Visoko (Bosnia and Herzegovina), 21st -23rd March 2025*



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The meeting of the Franciscan temporary professed of all the obediences of the Croatian-speaking area took place from the 21st to 23rd March 2025 in Visoko (Bosnia and Herzegovina), in the Province of the Holy Cross - Argentine Bosnia. On behalf of the Province, the organization was supervised by Br. Danijel Nikolić, OFM, formator of the temporarily professed.

The meeting was attended by friars of different obediences: the Friars Minor from the Provinces of the Holy Cross and the Assumption of Mary (Bosnia and Herzegovina), and of St. Cyril and Methodius and St. Jerome (Croatia); the Conventual Friars of the Province of St. Jerome and the Capuchin Friars of the Province of St. Leopold

Bogdan Mandić. In total, the meeting was attended by 50 temporary professed, 6 formators and 5 Provincial Ministers.

The goal was to foster connection between the temporarily professed and to reflect together on life according to the Canticle of the Creatures. The meeting was enriched by a special programme that included in particular the common liturgy of Lauds, devotions, the celebration of Mass, being together in fraternity and various sports activities. The Eighth Centenary of the composition of the Canticle of the Creatures emphasized the importance of admiration for God's creatures and praising God, their Creator, as highlighted by Br. Danijel Nikolić in his speech. Through the common activities, the participants had the opportunity to reflect on Francis' legacy and to deepen their spirituality. The communion that was created between the friars, as well as the joy in fraternal harmony, achieved the purpose of the meeting: a strong spiritual connection was created.

This gathering was an example of an authentic Franciscan fraternity, in which the friars of different obediences and Provinces, despite their differences, celebrated their love of God together, reflected on Francis' vocation and joy, and mutually enriched each other in faith and spiritual communion.



## Franciscan Family in Rwanda *A committee to work together as one family*



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On March 22, 2025, the Franciscan family in Rwanda made a historic decision for its experience up to that time: to unite and work collaboratively as one family, dedicated to living out and promoting the Franciscan spirit in their lives and communities. During a significant gathering, a new committee was elected to lead and coordinate their collective efforts.

Dr. Valens Hafashimana, OFS, was elected as the President, bringing his expertise and commitment to guide the team in achieving their shared vision. Fr. Théoneste Twahirwa, OFM, the Custodian of the Autonomous Custody of Our Lady of Kibeho, was elected Vice President, offering his deep spiritual insights and leadership. The team also includes Kemayire Pierre, Mission de la Croix Glorieuse, as Secretary; Sr. Liberata Kayitesi, ISM, as Treasurer;

and Counselors Fr. Nsabimana Daicolas, OFM, Fr. Kizito Ngomanzungu, OFM, and Sr. Donata Uwitonze, Sr. Franciscaine du Règne de Jésus Christ.

This newly formed committee is tasked with fostering unity among all Franciscan branches in Rwanda and developing initiatives that reflect the values of St. Francis of Assisi, including peace, justice, care for creation, and service to the marginalized. In 2025, they will strengthen collaboration through leadership meetings, joint training sessions (including training of trainers), and the creation of a committee and newsletter dedicated to justice and peace. They are also committed to resolving family conflicts, educating children in human, spiritual, and pastoral maturity, and creating a solidarity fund to support shared goals and initiatives focused on family care and youth engagement. The Franciscan family will prioritize spiritual well-being through retreats, recollections, and celebrating St. Francis's Easter in 2026, reaffirming their commitment to living out Franciscan values in both social and spiritual contexts.

Through this united effort, the Franciscans in Rwanda aim to strengthen their spiritual mission and create impactful programs addressing social, environmental, and spiritual challenges, embodying the Franciscan charism in meaningful and practical ways.

## Happy **Easter Triduum** to one and all!



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Ordo Fratrum Minorum  
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