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Meeting of the Safeguarding Delegates of the Southern European Conference

Rome, General Curia, 23-26 June 2025

On 23rd June, the Office for the Safeguarding of Minors and Vulnerable Adults welcomed the Safeguarding Delegates of the Southern European Conference to the General Curia for a face-to-face meeting which offered the opportunity to share what is being done to fulfil Mandate 9 of the General Chapter of 2021.

It was a rich moment for the Director of Safeguarding, Br. Iurii Semko, and the Secretary of the Office, Br. Joseph Condren, to meet and get to know better those whose collaboration is so fundamental to the promotion of a culture of Safeguarding in our Order.

Spread over two days, the Delegates shared their experiences as well as receiving input on the workings of the





Safeguarding Office, including the development of Safeguarding Policies in the Entities and what stages the policy goes through after it arrives initially in the Curia, until it is finally sent on to the General Definitory to receive the *nihil obstat*.

A glimpse of the future was offered when two of ten areas of the Universal Guidelines Framework from the Pontifical Commission for the Safeguarding of Minors were shared with the Delegates to indicate the revisions that will be necessary when policies are updated to conform with developing Church standards.

The second day began with a sweeping introduction to the roots of Safeguarding in Franciscan Spirituality, delivered by Br. Albert Schmucki, Definitory General and President of the International Safeguarding Commission of the Order. There followed a sharing by the Safeguarding Delegate from the Province of Ireland, Mary Tallon, who shared her experience of collaborating with the friars in this challenging field. In the afternoon, a very thorough and all-encompassing treatment of the topic of Safeguarding was given by the Minister General whose support is so

critical to the growth of a culture of Safeguarding everywhere in our Order.

They were two demanding days with a great deal of input. But they were also days of fraternal celebration. There were special treats on the Tuesday on the Solemnity of the Birth of St John the Baptist, and on Wednesday for the celebration of the memory of San Massimo di Torino, the *onomastico* of Br. Massimo. The presence of our brothers from the Iberian Peninsula as well as those from the Provinces of Italy enriched those occasions.

As we parted company on Wednesday morning, all could return to our work of service with a deeper sense of fraternity from the personal encounters and the input received during this meeting.

Watch the [Photos on Flickr](#)



General Curia Agenda



- ☑ The Tempo Forte will be held at the General Curia until the 18th July.
- ☑ On the 20th July, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General, will be in Foligno (Italy) for the closing of the Centenary of the Monastery of St. Lucy; on the 22nd July, in Rome, he will participate in the General Chapter of the Angeline Franciscan Sisters. Together with Br Ignacio Ceja, Vicar General. He will be in Jerusalem on the 27th and 28th of July for the Chapter of the Custody of the Holy Land. On the 30th and 31st July he will be in Lubumbashi (Democratic Republic of Congo) for the inauguration of the Province of St.

Anthony of Padua. The 1st and 2nd of August he will be at Our Lady of the Angels Santa Maria degli Angeli for the Feast of the Pardon of Assisi.

- ☑ From 27th to the 31st of July, Br John Wong, General Definitory, will make a post-Chapter visit to the Guardianate in Istanbul (Turkey), accompanied by the Financial Delegate, Br Saulo Duarte. From 1st August to 7th August, Br. John will be visiting Sri Lanka accompanied by SAAOC President Br. Derrick Yap.
- ☑ From the 21st-25th of July, the General Definitory will meet the Visitors General at the Curia.

News from the Entities



Twenty-nine friars participate in the Under Ten Meeting *Friary of St. Francis, in São Paulo (Brazil)*



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From the 30th June to 2nd July 2025, the meeting of friars with up to 10 years of Solemn Profession, Under Ten, of the Province of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Brazil took place in the historic Convent of St. Francis, located in the center of the city of São Paulo, Brazil. Twenty-nine friars, from all the states of the provincial territory and also from Angola, participated in this important moment of revision of the life and ongoing formation of being a Friar Minor.

On the evening of Monday, the 30th June, the friars were welcomed in a moment of prayer led by the Moderator of Ongoing Formation, Br. Rodrigo da Silva Santos, the Vicar of the local Fraternity, Br. Edvaldo Batista Soares, and the Animator of Formation for Holy Orders, Br. Ivo Müller.

On Tuesday, the 1st July, the Minister Provincial, Br. Paulo Roberto Pereira, presided over the Eucharistic Celebration. He expressed his joy at the presence of the friars in this symbolic space: "In the 350 years of our Province, we gather in this historic place to remember the

encounter between past and future. Our Province, in all ages, has been built up by young and experienced friars who, together, have travelled paths of courage and hope, seeking to respond faithfully to the challenges of every time. This is why we are gathered here".

Also in the same morning, the friars participated in a formation held by Wellington Heleno da Silva, a specialist in psychoanalytic psychotherapy. The theme was: "A look at oneself: becoming autonomous". Wellington addressed the potentialities, favours and desires typical of the first years after Solemn Profession, as well as the dangers and risks of this period. Reflecting on the human and psychic dimension, he emphasized the importance of the personal process of maturation of each friar in self-care. The identity of the Friar Minor is formed in the concrete experience of the fraternities and in the various services rendered to the Province.

In the afternoon, Br. Rodrigo da Silva Santos presented a reflection on "Identity and belonging of the religious" within the Order of Friars Minor. He highlighted that identification with



the Franciscan vocation is a continuous and demanding journey, but which, if well lived, leads to fullness and fulfilment. “The Order seeks to recognize in each friar the actualization of his charism, and the friar, in turn, seeks to live the charismatic identity of the Institution. This is how the Religious Profession is made. This Franciscan identity has a concrete face and is always in tune with the project of the Order and the Province,” he said. And he concluded: “The sanctification of the Order takes place through fraternities that reflect this desire and struggle for holiness – a gift that becomes an offering to the world.”

Afterwards, the Minister Provincial, Br. Paulo, led a moment of reflection with the friars starting from some intuitions and perceptions. He recalled that fraternities must always be spaces of welcome and mutual care: “Fraternity is the ideal place for life to be healed,” he said. He also reiterated that “legalism is not what orients our way of life. It can delimit some things, but the essential thing is the spirit that ani-

mates our way of life”. He concluded emphatically: “It is not about what we will be, but about what we already are. Indeed, do not forget: we are friars, we are brothers – and this gives foundation and meaning to all the other things we can be and do.”

On Wednesday, the 2nd July, the day began with the recitation of Lauds. The Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by Br. Ivo Müller and concelebrated by Br. Rodrigo. In his homily, Br. Ivo conveyed words of encouragement and hope: “In prayer, in the Word of God, in fraternal coexistence and in the practice of charity, we find the best remedies to remain firm in our mission as friars and minors.”

After breakfast, the friars participated in the last moment of the meeting, which was also animated by Br. Ivo. Initially, they gathered in groups of three members to share concrete experiences that they are living in their fraternities and services. Then, there was a common sharing, in which many were able to express the joys and difficulties of this phase of Franciscan life. Br. Ivo also shared his recent personal experiences and made a summary of the journey made during the meeting.

United by the same spirit and the same mission, the friars returned to their fraternities strengthened by the strength of the Lord, who accompanies and sustains each friar in his vocation and service. A mission with the certainty of research and the desire for this great shared project of the Order and the Province.

Br. João Manoel Zechinatto, OFM



First anniversary of the autonomous custody of Our Lady of Kibeho
1st July 2024 – 2025



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On 1st July 2024 the Autonomous Custody of Our Lady of Kibeho in Burundi and Rwanda was proclaimed, in the presence of the Vicar General, Br. Ignacio Ceja Jiménez, with the former Definitor General for Africa, Br. Victor Luis Quematcha, together with the Visitor and General Delegate, Br. Teofil Czarniak and the former Provincial Minister of the Mother Province of Saint Francis of Nairobi, Br. Fredrick Owor.

For that occasion, this year, 1st July 2025, in the Custodial House: Busozi- Kivumu/Rwanda, all the brothers from Burundi and Rwanda came together to celebrate the first anniversary of canonical erection. It was also the good moment to share the experiences of the fraternities, pastoral activities and to project together the future of the Custody.

Extraordinary Assembly of the Franciscan Immaculate Mother of God Foundation
Angola, a focus on the creation of a new Custody



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The Franciscan Immaculate Mother of God Foundation of Angola (FIMDA) held an Extraordinary Assembly marked by moments of prayer, reflection and strategic planning. The meeting, held at the Fraternity of St. Francis, in Palanca, began on the 26th June 2025 with a Eucharistic celebration in the chapel of the Foundation's headquarters,

presided over by the Provincial Minister, Br. Paulo Roberto Pereira, who stressed the importance of obedience to God, as taught in the Gospel of Matthew (Mt 7:21-29). 16 friars from various fraternities participated in this assembly, strengthening the spirit of fraternity and evangelizing mission.



During the morning, the president of the Foundation, Br. Ivair Bueno de Carvalho, presented the current situation of the entity and the Council's prospects for the creation of a new Custody, an important step to strengthen the Franciscan presence in Angolan lands. Br. Marco António dos Santos then presented the guidelines for formation until 2025, followed by discussions and contributions from the participants.

In the afternoon, the plenary sessions addressed issues essential to the mission of the Foundation. The Plan of Evangelization was presented by Br. Santana Sebastião Cafunda, while Br. José Morais Cambolo dealt with the guidelines for the economic and financial administration of the fraternities.

On the second day, the 27th June, the Assembly celebrated the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus with a Mass presided over by the Definitor General, Br. César Kulkamp, OFM, in communion with the Poor Clare Sisters of the local monastery, who were celebrating the titular of their monastery. After the celebration, the friars reflected on the preparatory process for the possible elevation of the Foundation to the status of Custody, discussing

central issues such as the will to create structure, its purposes and priorities. This moment was directed by the General Definitor.

Br. Paulo thanked Br. Jeferson Marx for his presence and work in the formation of the postulants in the Fraternity of the Portiuncola and announced the friar's return to Brazil. In addition, the Minister Provincial justified his absence from the priestly ordination of the brothers that will take place on August 2 of this year (Br. Domingos Kakanda Soma, Br. Elias Hebo Luís, Br. Evaristo Seque Joaquim and Br. José João Ganga), wishing them a fruitful ministry. Br. César expressed his gratitude for the welcome and reinforced the commitment of the General Government to support the growth of the Foundation, aligning itself with the Franciscan identity of Friars Minor.



The Assembly stood out for the spirit of hope and the commitment of all those present to strengthen the Franciscan mission in Angola, with a view to the creation of a new Custody that will contribute to the strengthening of the vocation and service to the most needy and excluded in our society.

FIMDA Assembly Communication Team

LIFE in the Order



Priestly Ordinations

28th June, Seraphic Province of St Francis of Assisi (Italy)

Br. Alessandro Giacomo Brustenghi, Br. Giuseppe Gioia, Br. Rosario Giunta

22nd June, Prov. of Ireland

Br. Philip McMahon

21st June, Prov. Sts. Cyril and Methodius (Croatia)

Br. Antonio Tkalac, Br. Davor Palić

21st June, St. Jerome Custody (Croatia)

Br. Benjamin Milković

15th giugno, Prov. S. Francesco Stimmatizzato (Italy)

Br. Martino Chiaramonte

22nd May, St. Anthony Missionary Province (Bolivia)

Br. Itamar Pessoa Guzmán



Deceased Brothers

† 5th July: Br. Andreas Meinhardt, Prov. St. Elizabeth (Germany); Br. José Bertoldi, Prov. Immaculate Conception (Brazil); Br. Claude Lenehan, Prov. Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA)

† 4th July: Br Hermann Borg, Prov. St.

Elizabeth (Germany); Br. Kristian Jan Cholewa, Prov. Our Lady of the Angels (Poland)

† 29th June: Br. Oscar O'Leary, Prov. of Ireland; Br. Slavko Soldo, Prov. of the Assumption of the BVM (Bosnia-Herzegovina)

† 27th June: Br. Guido Iaccarino, Prov. of the Immaculate Conception (Italy)

† 26th June: Br. Earl Benz, Prov. of Guadalupe (USA)

† 25th June: Br. Dietmar Ruß, Prov. of St Elisabeth (Germany)

† 24th June: Br. Agostinho Vieira Xavier, Prov. St Anthony of Padua (Brazil)

† 21st June: Br. Karl Maderner, Prov. of St Leopold (Austria)

† 27th May: Br. Marcin Kordowisko, Prov. Our Lady of the Angels (Poland)

† 13th April: Br. Aluísio Domingos de Barros, Prov. St. Anthony of Padua (Brazil)

Information received from the General Secretariat



Mission concluded in the Diocese of Cruzeiro do Sul (Amazonas)

*The protagonists are the friars of the Conference
of Brazil and Southern Cone*



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For the first time in its history, the Conference of Friars Minor of Brazil and the Southern Cone carried out a mission involving friars from the twelve Entities that compose it: nine in Brazil, two in Argentina-Paraguay and one in Chile, between June 18 and 30.



The site chosen was the Brazilian Amazon, in the Diocese of Cruzeiro do Sul, in the state of Acre, in the far northwest of Brazil. A total of 18 friars participated, most of them Secretaries of Evangelization and Mission of their respective Entities, in addition to other invited friars and the current President of the Conference, Br. Fernando Aparecido dos Santos, Custos of the Custody of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, based in Franca, in the interior of the state of São Paulo. Cruzeiro do Sul is the second most populous city in the state of Acre.

The group arrived on the eve of the Corpus Christi holiday and was welcomed by the Diocesan Bishop, Msgr. Flávio Giovaneli. Already in the first days, the friars were able to know a little of the reality of the municipality that is the seat of the Diocese. The city stands out for its steep slopes and the large number of motorcycles that circulate through its streets. The presence of rivers is also notable and, in the flood season, some areas are flooded. For this reason, many houses are already built on stilts, small wooden logs that keep the house suspended from the ground. In these periods, the inhabitants of these regions must exchange motorcycles, cars and bicycles for canoes.

On Friday, the 20th June, the Franciscans were divided into small teams to be able to experience different realities. They met riverside communities and indigenous tribes, as well as collaborating in the formation of leaders, liturgical celebrations and the administration of the sacraments. In addition to all the work in the territory, the missionaries also shared moments of fraternal and enriching coexistence with the Bishop and several priests of the local clergy, cultivating a spirit of mutual ecclesial belonging and a sense of collaboration.

The programme was quite intense and also included formative meetings in various areas, visits to schools, hospitals and other health centers, participation in the novenas of different communities, presence on the radio and other media of the Diocese, as well as moments of walking and recreation to get to know some tourist spots in the region.

Activities aimed at youth were also carried out: there were specific meetings for this age group, an evangelization activity in the public square and a Franciscan Walk that marked the closure of the Mission.

The impact of the different activities on social networks and the active participation of young people linked to the Pastoral Care of Communication were also notable characteristics of this missionary time.

In the homily of the closing Mass, celebrated at the end of the Franciscan Walk, in the mother church of the Parish of Our Lady of the Apparition, on the 29th June, the Solemnity of St. Peter and St. Paul, Br. Fernando Aparecido dos Santos highlighted the good fruits that were already being harvested from the missionary experience: "As Franciscans, Friars Minor, with our joyful, simple and committed presence, we desire to be witnesses of the Kingdom even in the most remote but no less important places. Because hope is not an illusion, it is a decision. It is seeing the invisible, trusting in the improbable, insisting on the good. With you we learned even more to sow and reap this hope with patience and faith, obeying even the courses

and times of the rivers, their riches. [...] One thing you can be sure of: for us, the fruits have already begun to sprout because of all that this meant in our lives, and will mean for our entities and for our Conference in Brazil and the Southern Cone,” he said.

The missions of the Conference in Cruzeiro do Sul were born from a dream that was built on the basis of much dialogue and integration, always in a spirit of prayer and discernment. In addition to Msgr. Flávio and Br. Fernando, Br. Edgar Alves

Pereira, of the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus, Secretary of Evangelization of the Conference until March of this year, and Father Benedito Ferreira, Bursar of the Diocese of Cruzeiro do Sul, were also part of the organizing committee.

The mission was concluded in loco. However, due to the intense demonstrations on both sides, both from the friars and from the people of Cruzeiro do Sul, many fruits are yet to come.

Br. Gustavo Wayand Medella, OFM

Franciscan Centenaries



Discussion on the Canticle of the Creatures Faculty of Theology of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile



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In the context of the 800th anniversary of the Canticle of the Creatures, written by St. Francis of Assisi, on Wednesday, the 18th June 2025, an important discussion was held at the Faculty of Theology of the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile. The event was a propitious space to reflect on the spiritual, theological, artistic and ecological validity of this work of St. Francis, as well as its connection with the current challenges posed by the encyclical *Laudato Si'*.

ogy of the UC, and had the special participation of the Mission Country Choir of the UC Pastoral, a project that seeks to transmit the message of Christ through song.

On the above, Br Julio Campos, OFM, Provincial Animator of JPIC, said that “it is a moment to strengthen a look of justice towards creation, it is a time to seek conciliation in forgiveness and peace among those who have moved away. To celebrate

Nature as a source of faith

Considered the first poem in the Italian language and one of the most profound expressions of praise for creation in the Christian tradition, the Canticle of the Creatures is a composition that has inspired for centuries, a spirituality that recognizes brotherhood with all creation, and one of the sources that inspired Pope Francis for his encyclical letter *Laudato Si'* on the care of the Common Home published 10 years ago.

In this line, the discussion on the 800 years of the Canticle of the Creatures gathered great expectation among the attendees. “It is an opportunity for the Franciscan Order to make current a message that our family has spread for decades as care for the Common Home. We are clear that the social crisis is also an environmental crisis. It is a single crisis that today has devastating consequences in the climate, in the forced migratory movement, amongst other consequences, where perhaps the



The discussion was organized by the Order of Friars Minor of Chile and the Faculty of Theol-

the Canticle is to promote an ecological spirituality, as Pope Francis says.”

hardest is the difficulty in ensuring food for entire populations afflicted by war, lack of water and internal conflicts,” said Brother Julio Campos, OFM.

Joint work

For the Provincial Animator of JPIC, the alliance achieved with the UC Faculty of Theology to develop the conversation was relevant. “It is a space to manifest this story in a different environment of the Franciscan parishes and schools and to complement the research and reflection in the academy with the intention of St. Francis of Assisi manifested in the canticle of Brother Sun,” he said.

Br Ronald Villalobos, OFM, Provincial Animator of the Pastoral Care of Vocations, was responsible for presenting the Cantic of Brother



Sun from a historical, literary, spiritual and theological perspective.

Then the icon “San Francisco” was presented, a work in ‘egg tempera’ with gold leaf by the UC Theology academic, Federico Aguirre, which will tour

the country soon as part of the activities for the 800th anniversary of the Cantic of the Creatures. “The icon present in this act of commemoration is also to reaffirm our dialogue from integral aesthetics.

The beauty of God present in creation, manifested in the beauty of this icon and in St. Francis’ conviction about a universal cosmic fraternity, with a world in which we are all brothers and sisters, because we are all creatures of God,” said Brother Julio.

Pardon of Assisi

2 AUGUST 2025 WWW.OFM.ORG



**“The cry of the creatures”,
exhibition by the artist Gino Covili**

*Sanctuary of San Damiano,
5th July – 12th October 2025*



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From the 5th July -12th October, the Sanctuary of San Damiano, in Assisi, will host the exhibition of the artist Gino Covili entitled “The cry of the creatures”, an event in the context of the celebrations for the 800th anniversary of the Canticum of the Creatures of St. Francis.

The cultural project is the result of the collaboration between the Covili family, closely linked to the sanctuary of San Damiano since when, in the 1990s of the twentieth century, Gino Covili started the pictorial cycle dedicated to the figure of St. Francis, and the fraternity of the Friars Minor of San Damiano, in particular to the guardian Br. Mauro Botti. For the scientific advice and the drafting of the texts, we thank Br. Saul Tambini, head of the cultural heritage of the Seraphic Province of St. Francis, and Dr. Donatella Vaccari, art historian and curator of the Porziuncola Museum.

The artist Gino Covili, a master in translating the complexity of the human condition and love for creation onto canvas, offers a visual reading that is intimately connected with Franciscan values. His works are not mere illustrations, but powerful expressions that convey messages of faith, hope and harmony, revealing their timeless relevance: a path to reflect on the indissoluble bond between humanity, nature and the divine, through the sensitive gaze of a great artist and the spirituality of the poor man-*Poverello* of Assisi.

The exhibition is sponsored by the Sanctuary of San Damiano and the National Committee for the Celebration of the Eighth Centenary of the Death of St. Francis of Assisi.

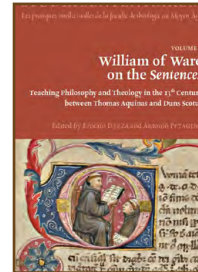
For further details on the exhibition and the inaugural event: [Gino Covili – The cry of the Creatures](#).



**Franciscan
Bookmark**



William of Ware on the Sentences
Teaching Philosophy and Theology in the
13th Century between Thomas Aquinas
and Duns Scotus.



Edito da
**Ernesto Dezza
OFM, Antonio
Petagine**

Brepols

Lectura super Iohannem.
Collectio Oliviana



Pietro di
Giovanni Olivi

Quaracchi

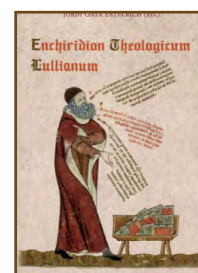
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stigmathe di san Francesco



A cura di
Filippo Sedda

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A cura di Jordi
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traduzioni
in italiano di
Simone Sari e
Letizia Staccioli
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Episcopal Ordination of Br. Victor Luis Quematcha, OFM 28 June 2025, Diocese of Bafatá, Guinea Bissau



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On the 28th June 2025, Br. Victor Luis Quematcha, OFM was ordained bishop for the diocese of Bafatá, in Guinea Bissau.

The celebration took place at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Grace and was presided over by the Apostolic Nuncio, Msgr. Waldemar Stanislaw Sommeratag. Msgr. Victor is the second bishop of this diocese since its creation some 25 years ago.

There were about ten bishops and more than 100 priests and numerous religious. The Fran-

ciscan presence included the Minister provincial and friars from the Province of St. Anthony's in Northern Italy, other friars from Portugal, Brazil, some brothers from the Custody of Guinea Bissau, from the Province of the Incarnate Word (Togo and Ivory Coast), from the Provinces of Democratic Republic of Congo and representatives from the General Curia.

The celebration was filled with jubilation and animated with vibrant music as hundreds of faithful, interreligious repre-

sentatives and civil leaders participated in the occasion. The diocese of Bafatá has waited for its shepherd for four years. It was indeed an occasion of jubilation, where young and old gathered to witness the event.

On the following day, 29th June 2025, the new bishop took possession of the Cathedral on the feast of St Peter and Paul. Many came back for that celebration despite the scorching heat of the day.

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