



INDEX

Chapter and Erection of the new Province of St. Clare..... 1
 General Curia Agenda 2
 Opening of the Pardon of Assisi 2025 3
 Meeting of the General Definitory with the General Visitators 4
 Audite Sorelle 6
 Reflections by Br. Massimo – July 2025..... 7
 Meeting between the Minister General and the Brazilian university educators of the FAE 8
 Saint Beatrice da Silva 8
 Centenary of St. Francis’ Easter 2026..... 9
 Chapter of the Custody of the Holy Land..... 10
 Chapter of the “Immaculate Conception” Custody in Venezuela 11
 Chapter of Our Lady of the Angels Foundation 11
 Provincial Chapter of the Province of the Incarnate Word 12
 Chapter of the Province of the Immaculate Conception (USA) 12
 Final Document of the Lay Brothers’ Meeting 13
 International Conference of OFM fundraisers 13
 Letter to the Moderators of Ongoing Formation..... 14
 New Forms, invitation to the meeting in Popping (Austria) 14
 News from the Province of San Antonio de Padua.... 15
 Solemn Profession in the Province of St. Paul the Apostle in Colombia 16
 OFS Elective Chapter in Hungary 17
 Franciscan Bookmark 17
 The Historical Archives of the Curia General 18
 Life in the Order..... 20

Chapter and Erection of the new Province of St. Clare
Mozambique, Br. Evódio João elected Minister Provincial

From the 24th-29th July, 2025, the friars of the Custody of St. Clare, in Mozambique, met for the Custodial Chapter and the erection of the new Province at the Convent of the Franciscan Sisters of Our Lady of Victories, in Maputo.

With the motto “*Together with Francis and Clare: Pilgrims of Hope towards the Province*”, the Chapter reflected on the life of the Franciscans in Mozambique in the next three years (2025-2028), defined the objectives for the transition from Custody to Province and elected the new Government.. All the friars of Mozambique participated, 51 in all, from 14 communities scattered throughout the country and abroad.

The Chapter was presided over by Br. Isidro Pereira Lamelas, Delegate of the Minister General: at the opening of the work, he urged the friars to consider the specific themes of Franciscan life: prayer and devotion, formation, economic sustainability and fraternal journey. The second day was dedicated to reports from the various sectors of the Custody’s activities. The



Instrumentum Laboris, presented by Br. Jorge Alberto Bender, gathered the fruits of the work of the communities in preparation for the Chapter. In the afternoon, Br. Adelino Manuel Langa, bursar of the Custody, presented the economic situation, human resources, properties and the future of the Custody.

On the 26th July, the memorial of Saints Joachim and Anne, opened with a Eucharistic Celebration presided over by the Custos, Br. Lage Nhampoca Luís Afonso, who focused on the importance of grandparents, ancestors who preceded us. After the prayer, the Chapter members resumed their work with the presentation of the Reports of the Secretariats of Mission and Evangelization, Formation and Studies, Assistants of the Poor Clares and of the Secular Franciscan Order. In preparation for the birth of the new Province, the friars examined



the Particular Statutes of the Province. The Chapter members also outlined guidelines and policies for the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Adults, committing themselves to developing a new culture that contributes to promoting the dignity of every person. All of this aims to make our communities and missions safe and free from any abuse.

With sorrow and hope in the Resurrection, the members of the Chapter joined the Archdiocese of Maputo in praying for the eternal rest of Father Dionísio Simbe, of the clergy of Maputo, and for his return today to the Father's House.

On the fourth day, the friars gave thanks to the Lord for the jubilees of their brothers: Br. Guilherme on his 50th anniversary of priestly ordination; Br. Lucas Francisco Gololombe and Br. Amaral on their 50th anniversary of religious profession; Br. Abel Francisco Mouzinho dos Remédios and Br. Domingos Pedro Simbe on their 25th anniversary.

The Capitulars were joined by Br. Sipehelele Paulus Gwanisheni, Definitor General and Envoy of the Minister General, Msgr. Adriano Langa, OFM, Bishop emeritus of Inhambane; Br. Gilberto Lage Teixeira, a missionary in Mozambique for over 60 years, now back in Portugal; Br. Thomas Macamure, of the Autonomous Custody of the Good Shepherd of Zimbabwe; and Br. Ermelindo Francisco Bambi, of the Immaculate Mother of God Foundation of Angola.

General Curia Agenda



- ☑ Up until the 8th August, Br. Sipehelele Gwanisheni, Definitor General, will be in South Sudan for the canonical visit to the "St. Francis" Foundation; from the 9th to 23rd he will be in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, in the "Incarnate Word" Province.
- ☑ Up until the 15th August, Br. Joaquín Echeverry, Definitor General, will be in the "St. Michael the Archangel" Province, in Indonesia, to meet with brothers and professors from the OFM colleges and the Franciscan Family.
- ☑ From the 19th-23rd August, Br. John Wong, Definitor General, together with the General Treasurer, Br. Joel Sulse, will visit the mission in Thailand (Bangkok and Ubon Ratchathani). From the 25th to 28th Br. John will be in Hong Kong to participate

in the meeting of the East Asian Conference (EAC), which will also be attended by the President of the Conference of South Asia, Australia and Oceania (SAAOC), Br. Derrick Yap. From the 29th August until the 2nd September he will be in Taipei (Taiwan) for a post-chapter visit to the "BVM Queen of China" Province. On the 4th and 5th September he will be in Seoul (South Korea) for the inaugural Mass of the Meeting of the Young Friars of the EAC.

- ☑ On the 3rd September, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General, will participate at the Mass for the opening of the XXVI International Marian Mariological Congress in the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore.
- ☑ From the 7th to 11th September the General Definitor will meet to review the past year.



The Capitulars concluded the day with the prayer of the Cantic of the Creatures by St. Francis, which this year celebrates the eighth century since its composition.

On the 28th July, the Capitulars elected the new Government that will lead the Province for the next 6 years:

Provincial Minister: Br. Evódio João

Provincial Vicario: Br. Jorge Alberto Bender

Definitori provinciali: Br. Miguel dos Santos Benjamin, Br. Tendai Samuel Chirara, Br. Hilávio Rodrigues Mepina, Br. Jaime Eugénio Jemuce.

We wish the new Province and Br. Evodio, former Director of the Communications Office of the General Curia, a good journey and good service for the Order and for the brothers of Mozambique!

Government of the Order



Opening of the Pardon of Assisi 2025 *In the year of the Centenary of the Cantic of the Creatures*



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On the 1st August, at Our Lady of the Angels -*Santa Maria degli Angeli*, the Minister General OFM, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, presided over the Eucharist with which the Pardon of Assisi officially opened, which until midnight on the 2nd August will allow

the faithful to gain the plenary indulgence in all parish and Franciscan churches throughout the world.

Br. Massimo, who has just returned from the Holy Land and the Democratic Republic of Con-

go, “two lands wounded by war”, he himself said, starting from the *Cantic of the Creatures* he focused on the close relationship between God, creation, reconciliation, forgiveness and peace. “Forgiveness is a voluntary decision that frees one from resentment and resentment. But Francis goes further: it is the main way to recompose that original harmony willed by the Creator, as a way of integral reconciliation,” said the Minister General, continuing: “*The Pardon of Assisi reminds us that it is not enough to confess individual sins; We are called to recognize our responsibility in the fractures that wound our common home.*”

Not only Francis as a model, but also Mary: “*His Magnificat has strong reflections of justice: he*

overthrew the powerful from their thrones, he exalted the humble; he has filled the hungry with goods. *Her motherhood embraces all of creation,*” emphasized Br. Massimo, recalling how the Pardon of Assisi is “*the invitation to live that integral peace that Francis dreamed of, where reconciliation with God is intertwined with fraternal reconcili-*

ation and care for our common home.”

In the afternoon, the 43rd Franciscan March arrived at the Porziuncola, this year focused on the theme “*You are our certain hope*”. Unlike previous years, when the March arrived at Our Lady of the Angels-Santa Maria degli Angeli on the 2nd August

this year the arrival has been brought forward to the 1st August to allow pilgrims to reach Rome and thus participate in the great Jubilee of Youth.

The celebrations of the Pardon continued until the 4th August.

[Read the homily of Br. Massimo Fusarelli \(Italian\)](#)

Meeting of the General Definitory with the General Visitors General Curia, 21st -25th July 2025



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From the 21st to 25th July, at the General Curia, the General Definitory met with the General Visitors who in the coming months will lead the Canonical Visitation and will then preside over the Provincial and Custodial Chapters in various OFM Entities scattered throughout the world.

On the first day of the meeting, after a brief presentation of the participants, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General of the Order, spoke with a report entitled: “Pilgrims of hope: the Visitor General as a companion on the journey”. Recalling the Holy Year that we are all experiencing, which spurs us to educate to hope, he invited the Visitors to help their brothers and sisters to “rediscover the reasons for hope, verifying and supporting formation courses for a renewed motivation to fraternal life

in mission”. Br. Massimo, as he has done on other occasions in the past, recalled the importance of meeting and listening, emphasizing the importance of prayer and the Eucharist at the center of the life of the fraternity. The Minister General also referred to the recent Chapter of Mats, recalling the importance that was given to the presence of the laity and the Franciscan Family in the communities, and to synodality in ways of life.

Afterwards, the Visitors worked on the dynamics of dialogue suggested by the Minister’s report.

In the afternoon, the Definitory General Br. John Wong spoke on the theme “The Visitor’s Service in Guiding the Chapter to Think as an Order: Themes from the CPO & Chapter of Mats,” which was fol-

lowed by a dialogue on how to help think as an Order in a synodal style.

The day ended with the celebration of the Eucharist presided over by Br. Ignacio Ceja, Vicar General, who in his homily, taking up the passage from Exodus from the liturgy of the day (Ex 14:5-18) recalled how, in the face of fear, we must always trust in God. "It seems to me that, in the spirit of St. Francis, this is also the mission of the Visitor: it is not just a matter of going to make an investigation into the situation of an Entity and then reproaching it with the report and making it understand where to correct itself. No, we are called to bring the Good News even during the Visit. The ministry that has been entrusted to you to carry out among your brothers and sisters is also a service of evangelization."

On the 22nd July, Br. Claudio Durighetto and Br. Chryzostom Fryc (respectively Procurator General and Deputy) explained the contents and practice of the Visitation, the designation of the candidates, the interim report and then the modalities of the Chapter, the elections, the Report to the Chapter, the Chapter Congress and the Final Report. This will be followed by a buzz session and the opportunity to ask questions and present individual cases in plenary.

In the afternoon, Br. Joel Esplana Sulse and Br. Saulo Duarte (General Treasurer and Vice) dealt with the theme "Suggestions for the economic aspect of the Visitation and Presentation of the form", while the Secretary General, Br. Antonio Iacona, spoke about the Acts (practical information) and the Timeline of the Visit, Chapter and Congress.



On Wednesday, 23rd July, the Visitors General had the opportunity to get to know the Offices and Secretariats of the General Curia, while in the after-

noon they had individual talks with the Minister General and the Zone Definitor.



On the morning of the 24th, accompanied by the Definitor General, Br. Joaquin Echeverry, the Visitors passed through the Holy Door of St. Peter's Basilica.

The afternoon was dedicated to the theme of Protection: Br. Albert Schmucki (Definitor General and President of the International Commission for Protection) introduced the theme by illustrating mandate 9 of the 2021 General Chapter; afterwards, Br. Iurii Semko and Br. Joe Condren (Director and Secretary of the Guardianship Office) presented the report entitled "How to verify the situation of Guardianship in the Entity during the Visit canonical".

On Friday, the 25th July, Br. Wanderley Gomes de Figueiredo and Br. Saulo Duarte addressed the theme of listening ("Listening to create meaningful communication") and conflict management in the service of the Visit and the Chapter.

After the plenary meeting to verify the meeting, the General Visitors and the friars of the Curia celebrated the Eucharist presided over by Br. Massimo Fusarelli. In his homily, recalling the liturgical feast of St. James the Apostle and the episode narrated in the Gospel (Mt 20:20-28), the Minister General focused on the mother of James and John who asks the Lord for a place of prestige for her children, in accordance with the request, "demonstrating that they have not entered into the logic of Jesus, which is that of the Cross. When we risk transforming service into the search for positions, authority into power and domination, Francis reminds us that we are far from the way of the Cross, our only glory," said Br. Massimo. The chalice of

which Jesus speaks is not that “of triumph, but of the gift of self. It is the chalice that leads to the Cross, passing through daily service, listening, understanding, sometimes misunderstanding and rejection: brother visitors, you too are called to drink this cup.” Moreover, following in the footsteps of St. James, the Minister urged the friars to go to the extreme ends of the Order to meet the brothers, not to check up on them, but in a spirit of communion: “Do not go to judge, but to listen. Not to impose, but to accompany. Not to extinguish, but to ignite the hope that feeds even in difficulties”.

“Dear visitors, return to your Provinces carrying in your hearts the chalice that St. James was the first to drink among the apostles. It is not a bitter chalice, but the chalice of the Eucharist: the one that transforms the gift of self into new life for all,” concluded Br. Massimo

Read the homily of Br. Ignacio Ceja:
[Italiano](#) – [English](#) – [Español](#)

Read the homily of Br. Massimo Fusarelli:
[Italiano](#) – [English](#) – [Español](#)

The meeting was attended by: Br. Jorge Iván González Silva, OFM, Br. Nestor Inacio Schwerz, OFM, Br. Matus Pavol Racek, OFM, Br. Wanderley Carvalho Do Couto, OFM, Br. João Carlos Karling, OFM, Br. Wanderley Gomes de Figueiredo, OFM, Br. Cristobal de Jesús Díaz Martínez, OFM, Br. Martin Lütticke, OFM, Br. Paul Nguyen Dinh Vinh, OFM, Br. Alberto Pisapia, OFM, Br. Georges Massinelli, OFM, Br. Stephen O’Kane, OFM, Br. Jorge Arturo Luna Villalobos, OFM, Br. Tomaz Hočevár, OFM, Br. Giampaolo Possenti, OFM, Br. Mario Wilson Ramos Novoa, OFM, Br. Raymundo Caballero, OFM, Br. Szaboles Orbán, OFM, Br. Maggiorino Stoppa, OFM



Audite Sorelle



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The Letter of the Ministers General of the First Order on the occasion of the Solemnity of St. Clare and the VIII Centenary of the Canticle *Audite, Poverelle*

Download the Letter:

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

Reflections by Br. Massimo – July 2025

Certain hope in the darkness of history



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sources in French and from there in other languages. Extreme suffering, instead of destroying the Franciscan spiritual tradition, purified and revived it.

What is the value for us today? In a world that is plunging towards new barbarities - wars, persecutions, slavery - the testimony of Brother Louis Paraire and the other martyrs reminds us that Christian hope is not vague optimism, but certainty based on Christ's victory over death.

When they sang the Cantic in that sealed wagon, they were not doing spiritual aesthetics but were performing an act of evangelical resistance to evil. They affirmed that "all creatures" - even those suffering, in agony - participate in the beauty of God and no ideology of death can erase this truth.

In the Jubilee of Hope, Br Louis Paraire and his companions become intercessors for all those who - there are many even today - are going through insurmountable trials. Their witness assures us that, even in the darkest moments, Christian hope remains "certain and reliable". Because it is founded on the fidelity of God who never abandons his children, not even on death trains.

The particular grace of this recognition reminds us that Christianity is not an easy philosophy, but a resurrection force that resists evil and that no earthly power will ever be able to extinguish definitively.

On Friday, the 20th June, Pope Leo XIV approved the recognition of the martyrdom of a group of Friars Minor, including Friar Louis Paraire, who died on the 26th April, 1945 on the infernal death train. It is the recognition of a witness that crossed the abyss of Nazi evil to emerge as a light of Christian fraternity.

The story that the Church honours today was told by Eloi Leclerc, a friar minor who survived the concentration camps of Buchenwald and Dachau. During the transport on an open-top train that traveled from Buchenwald to Dachau for 28 days, something miraculous happened: some friars, taken by supernatural grace, began to sing the Cantic of the Creatures of St. Francis in almost imperceptible voices.

Amongst those dying friars was Friar Louis Paraire, whose death is now recognized as martyrdom. Above all, there was Eloi Leclerc who, hav-

ing survived, bore witness throughout his life to that "certain hope" that sustained them in the darkness. His testimony lives on in the famous "The wisdom of a poor man".

If there was a certain hope in that hell, then everything changes. The testimony of these friars shows that not even the Nazi death machine could extinguish the song of creation. As Leclerc wrote: "in the middle of hell something burst in from heaven".

The temporal coincidence makes this recognition providential: we are in the centenary of the Cantic of the Creatures - the same cantic that resounded between the sheets of the train of death - and in the Jubilee of Hope. Is it not a sign that God also writes history through coincidences?

Leclerc's experience proved decisive for the rediscovery of Franciscan sources. It is shown that he was an important piece for the drafting of Franciscan

Meeting between the Minister General and the Brazilian university educators of the FAE

*Franciscan spirituality as a response
to contemporary educational challenges*



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On the 11th July, 2025, a meeting was held at the General Curia of the Friars Minor in Rome between the Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, the Definitor General, Br. César Külkamp, and 27 members (24 lay educators and 3 friars) of the FAE - University Center of the Franciscan Province of the Immaculate Conception of Brazil. The Brazilian delegation is in Italy for an intensive course in Franciscan spirituality in the places of our charism: Assisi, La Verna, Valle Santa di Rieti and Rome.

Read more on www.ofm.org.



Saint Beatrice da Silva



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The Letter of the Minister General to the Sisters of the Order of the Most Holy Conception on the Solemnity of St. Beatrice da Silva 2025 has been published.

Download the Letter: [Italiano](#) - [Español](#) - [Português](#)

Franciscan Centenaries



Centenary of St. Francis' Easter 2026 Invitation of the Franciscan Family to organise events



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In view of the Centenary of St. Francis' Easter that we will experience in 2026, the General Committee of the Franciscan Family invites all national Franciscan Families to organize public events of various kinds to bring the Poor man of Assisi-*Poverello* to the streets and squares of the world, thus evangelizing through the spirituality of the Seraphic Father.

The Committee, through a letter addressed to all Franciscan Families, gives suggestions on how to organize an event and what to concretely devise even with a pinch of creativity.

Some practical tips:

- To set up a committee involving representatives of the entire local Franciscan Family to collaborate together;
- Decide on the type of event to be held and its duration;
- To set up an economic group for the budget and coverage of costs;
- Create a Communication Office to spread the event in the local media.

Amongst the objectives to be achieved is that of making Francis known to those who have not yet

“encountered” him in their lives: a beautiful opportunity for the Franciscan Family to make its own contribution to evangelization as an outgoing Church.

The theme suggested by the Ministers General of the Franciscan Family is “Francis, man of peace, brother of all”, but each national Franciscan Family can evaluate other themes, considered more suitable for its own reality. The [Guidelines](#) of the Conference of the Franciscan Family and the [Charismatic Nuclei](#) provided by the General Committee in 2022 can be of help. It is important to start working on this project a long time in advance, so that you can create good relationships between the members of the Committee and the other service groups, contact the people you want to get involved or the institutions to get the chosen locations, as well as to be prepared for the success of the event. Contributions (articles, photos, short videos) on the events held will be published on the <http://centenarifrancescani.org> website.

For more information download:

Letter from the General Committee of the Franciscan Family:

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

[Practical guide to organizing an event](#)

[FAQ](#)





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Chapter of the Custody of the Holy Land

The new Custody Government is completed



Sunday 27 July saw the start of the Chapter of the Custody of the Holy Land, an appointment that attracts friars and delegates from all over the region and represents a moment of particular importance in the life of the Custody.

In a Jerusalem wounded by violence, but still alive with hope, the Franciscan community gathers to entrust its steps to God and renew its commitment to peace, service and evangelical witness in the Holy Places.

The work began in the church of the friary of the Most Holy Saviour with the solemn Eucharistic celebration presided over by Br. Massimo Fusarelli, OFM Minister General, who in his homily emphasised that listening to the Word and prayer are the fundamental tools for all the friars, who are called to rediscover the deep root of their vocation to be «instruments of peace and reconciliation» in a context that, today, needs them more than ever.

At the end of the celebration, a solemn procession was held to the Chapter House, where the roll-call took place. In attendance were the incoming Custos of the Holy Land, [Br. Francesco Ielpo](#), and the outgoing Custos, Br. Francesco Patton, together with the Visitor General, Br. Alojzy Warot, and the Vicar General of the Order, Br. Ignacio Ceja.

The official opening of the Chapter was marked by the proclamation of some fundamental texts of Franciscan spirituality: Chapter X of the Regula Bullata and the Testament of St. Francis. Following

these readings, the Visitor General solemnly declared the Chapter open.

Afterwards, the letter sent by Pope Leo XIV was read out, in which the Holy Father expressed his closeness and secular support to the Custody of the Holy Land, as a living presence of the Franciscan Order in the heart of the Middle East.

The official announcement of the appointments of the Custodial Vicar and the Discretos of the Holy Land was made in the afternoon. Br. Ulises Zarza was appointed Custodial Vicar. The elected Discretos are: Br. John Kwesi Bohma, Br. Rodrigo Machado Soares, Br. Raimondo Girgis, Br. Zachus Drazek and Br. Piermarco Luciano.

On the second day of the Custodial Chapter, the assembly gratefully welcomed the contribution of the outgoing Custos, Br. Francesco Patton, who provided a detailed overview of his nine years of service of the Custody. In sincere and grateful words, he thanked the brothers for their shared journey and reflected on his experience of serving the Holy Places and the local Christian community with clarity and depth. Both he and the Visitor General emphasised the immense spiritual value of the Franciscan mission in the Holy Land, encouraging the friars to embrace their vocation with joy and responsibility in this unique and often complex context.

Source: www.custodia.org

Chapter of the “Immaculate Conception” Custody in Venezuela 18th -22nd, July 2025



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From the 18th -22nd, July, 2025, the Ordinary Custodial Chapter of the “Immaculate Conception” Custody of Venezuela was held. The fraternal meeting took place in an atmosphere of prayer, discernment and communion, under the motto: *“Friars Minor, walking in hope.”*



animated by fraternity, service to the poorest, vocation promotion and evangelical hope.

The Chapter had a letter from the Zonal Definitor General, Br. César Külkamp, who on behalf of the Minister General expressed his fraternal communion and closeness to the brothers and sisters of Venezuela. In his message, he highlighted the admirable testimony of the friars who serve with dedication through parishes, radios, medical dispensaries, educational works and soup kitchens for the poor.

Br. Cesar also pointed out as a sign of hope that the Lord continues to give brothers to the Custody, who are in the different stages of formation. He also invited the Custody to draw closer to the Bolivarian Franciscan Conference for greater collaboration in formation and mission.

During the Chapter, the new Custodial Government was elected for the triennium 2025–2028: Br. Antonio Reyes, OFM – Custos, and as Councilors Br. Alex Arias, OFM, Br. Joselito Ramírez, OFM, Br. Luis Balza, OFM, Br. José Gregorio Carías, OFM.

The friars concluded the Chapter by renewing their commitment to walk together as “Friars Minor” in the style of St. Francis, attentive to the signs of the Spirit in the midst of the current challenges of the country and of the Church.

The Custody of the Immaculate Conception, inspired by the Holy Gospel and the Franciscan charism, continues its mission in Venezuelan lands

We ask all the friras of the Order for their fraternal closeness and their prayers for this portion of the Franciscan Family.

Chapter of Our Lady of the Angels Foundation Central African Republic, 16th-19th July 2025



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From the 16th to 19th July 2025, the Chapter of Our Lady of the Angels Foundation of the Central African Republic was held at the Bimbo fraternity. The fraternal meeting was presided over by the Minister Provincial of the Province of St. Benedict the African (Democratic Republic of Congo), Br. José Nzau Nzau, OFM, on whom the Foundation depends.



On this occasion, a message was received from the Visitor General urging us to be faithful wit-

nesses of Christ in the country, in particular through the protection of the Order’s patrimony and life. The following were elected to

the Chapter: Br. Jérôme Lusiak, OFM, President of the Foundation; Br. Martial Ngbalet, OFM, Vice President.

Provincial Chapter of the Province of the Incarnate Word Abidjan (Ivory Coast), 7th -11th July



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From the 7th- 11th July, 2025, the Friars of the Province of the Incarnate Word met in Provincial Chapter at the Theology Student House in Abidjan (Ivory Coast). The event opened with an inaugural Mass presided over by the outgoing Minister Provincial, Br. Virgile Agbessi. In his homily, he exhorted the Chapter Friars with these words: “Let yourselves be guided by the Holy Spirit to live this Chapter in trust and mutual listening.” After the celebration, the opening rite continued in the chapter house with the report of the Visitor General, Br. Laurentino Okica. This inaugural session was held on Tuesday the 8th July. At the end of the day, refreshments were organized as a fraternal and sharing evening. This assembly responded to a threefold objective:

- Evaluate the challenges and opportunities of the Province,
- Tracing the Franciscan future in West Africa,
- To strengthen fraternal communion in fidelity to our charism.

Speaking to the assembled assembly, Br. Laurentino, President of the Chapter, emphasized: “The Chapter is a time of community discernment, following the example of the first Christian community gathered at Pentecost.” The following days were dedicated to the study of the reports of the Provincial Commissions and secretariats. The culminating moment on Friday, the 11th July was the resignation ceremony of Br. Virgile Agbessi, after nine years of service (two consecutive terms).

A new Provincial government

In the framework of the restructuring of the Province, the Minister General Br. Massimo Fusarelli and his Definitory have appointed: Br. Nicodemus Kolani as Provincial Minister; Br. Abel Niandoh as Provincial Vicario. The Provincial Definitory is completed by Br. Didier Koublanou, Br. Marie Delphin Kuwuezou, Br. Jean-Benjamin Yavo and Br. Florentin Kouna. During a solemn ceremony, the new government took the oath, and all the capitulars renewed their obedience to the new Provincial minister. The closing of the Chapter continued in joy and prayer, inaugurating an era of renewal for the Province. We wish Br. Nicodème and his team a fruitful mandate at the service of the Franciscan fraternity and mission in West Africa.

With the contribution of Br. Alexis Kossi Bomda Mensah

Chapter of the Province of the Immaculate Conception (USA)

June 23-26, 2025



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On June 23, 2025, 40 brothers of the Province of the Immaculate Conception, New York, USA, assembled at the Saint Francis Centre for Religious Studies, Caledon, Ontario, Canada, for

the Provincial Chapter. Br. Guillermino Lancaster-Jones C., OFM, Visitor General, presided. The theme of the Chapter was “Fraternity in Mission” and centered on the challenges for the future of

the Province. During the Chapter, the following were elected to ministerial leadership: Br. Patrick Boyle, Minister Provincial; Br. Robert Campagna, Vicar Provincial; Br. Orlando Ruiz, Br. Pierre Farrugia, Br. Michael Della Penna, Br. Jose Alvin Te, and Br. Rohwin Pais were elected to the Provincial Definitory.

The Chapter concluded on Thursday, June 26.

Animation of the Order



Final Document of the Lay Brothers' Meeting

Santa Maria degli Angeli-Our Lady of the Angels, 28th April- 2nd May, 2025



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The Final Document of the International Meeting of the Lay Brothers, held at Our Lady of the Angels-Santa Maria degli Angeli from the 28th April- 2nd May, 2025, has been published.

The Document is accompanied by a Letter from the Minister General inviting it to be read “not simply as a text to be archived, but as a stimulus for fraternal discussion”

in the Provinces and Custodies”.

Download the Document:
[Italiano](#) - [English](#) - [Español](#)
[Deutsch](#) - [Français](#) - [Hrvatski](#) - [Polski](#) - [Português](#)

International Conference of OFM fundraisers

Fraternity and the Future of Fundraising



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In late June, the first International Fundraising Conference of the Order of Friars Minor was held at the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, Arizona (USA).



The meeting, a brainchild of Br. Massimo Fusarelli, Minister General of the OFM, was sponsored by the Order's three partner fundraising organizations: General Secretariat of Franciscan Missions, led by Br. Andrew Brophy, OFM, U.S.A.; Franziskaner-Helfen, led by Br. Matthias Maier, OFM, Germany; and Fondazione OFM Fraternitas, led by Br. Franco Mirri, OFM, Italy; the three partners asked the Development office of the Province of Our Lady Of Guadalupe (USA) to organize the event, and Br. David Convertino, OFM and Mr. Peter Mazzei began the conference planning process last year.

The conference, an immersive experience for learning, collaborating, and building networks to promote the mission of solidarity and compassion, was attended by OFM fundraisers dedicated to supporting Franciscan projects.

Br. David Convertino, OFM, Executive Director of Franciscan Friars Charities, opened the weeklong conference with three compelling questions: “Will you be bold this week? Will you open your heart to new ideas? Will you leave this conference ready to change lives? Because somewhere in the world, a child is waiting. A friar is waiting. A mission is waiting. And we are the ones who will make the difference.”

The conference's first presenter, Br. Bill Short, OFM, kicked things off by talking about how the origins and spirituality of Franciscan fundraising make it unique - how the world's first Franciscan fundraiser, St. Francis of Assisi, who begged for stones to repair the Church of San Damiano, relied on the Lord's generosity shown through the hospitality and alms offered by others. Br. Bill left attendees with a compelling thought: “We are not called to repeat the gestures of Francis and his early followers. To do so would require us to pretend to live in the Middle Ages. We are asked to do something more difficult: to express through concrete examples in our own day the same kind of loving care toward others that inspired Francis. We look to the same source that inspired him in the 13th century, the Gospel of Christ, but our way

of expressing it in our actions will be very different in our 21st century society.” The conference then explored 21st century ideas and methods by which the Order can effectively express its loving care and raise funds for those in need. [...]

Next came the conference’s featured address by Br. Massimo Fusarelli titled, “Our Cloister is the World.” Br. Massimo championed Franciscan fraternity as the best and only way to navigate an evolving and challenging fundraising landscape - that raising funds isn’t just about collecting money to care for the poor; it’s an act of fraternity that engages the world from as many local ministries as possible. “Let us continue, then, to develop a renewed creative fidelity, capable of responding

to the challenges of our time with the same spirit as St. Francis of Assisi. Let us remain open to the universal, attentive to the peripheries, bold in our proclamation and denunciation, rooted in spirituality and projected towards an encounter with all. Let us go beyond the horizon of our habits, to grasp the signs of the Spirit calling us to new forms of presence”, said the Minister General. [...]

Read the full text of the article on www.ofm.org

[Read the address by the Minister General](#)

By Bryan Reilly, Content Manager

Photo by Br Octavio Duran

Letter to the Moderators of Ongoing Formation Third Letter on Formation and Studies



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Following the Letter on Formation sent to Ministers and Custodes and the one addressed to the Secretaries of Formation and Studies of the Entities, we publish the third letter in the series, this time addressed to the Moderators of Ongoing Formation and written by Br. Darko Tepert, General Secretary for Formation and Studies. Over the next two years, the series will be completed with further

letters addressed to the Animators of Vocations and the Masters of Postulancy, Novitiate, and Temporary Profession. It is hoped that these letters, always agreed upon with the General Definitory, will offer encouragement and important insights for the formation process.

Download the Letter:
[Italiano](#) - [English](#) - [Español](#)

New Forms, invitation to the meeting in Puppung (Austria) November 23 - 27, 2025



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“We should always have a group of us who are willing to leave home and comfort to embrace a Franciscan life which is centered first and foremost on the spirit of prayer and devotion, making life in fraternity their hallmark.

Such men offer an important witness to the world by living in simple structures, truly present among the poor,” writes Br. Massimo Fusarelli in his Letter to all the friars of the Order.

The Minister General thus describes the New Forms of Franciscan life and evangelization.

With this appeal, we invite all the friars of Europe who are already living, or who are simply interested in these “new forms”, to the meeting to be held November 23-27, 2025, in Puppung, Austria. This friary was also born as a new form of life, inspired by prayer, simplicity and hospitality.

Present with us will be Minister General and Minister Provincial from Austria, Br. Fritz Wenigwieser.

Together we will share the life experience of Puppung, reflect on how to live these new forms



today, and explore the future prospects of the “new forms”.

The meeting is meant to be an opportunity to be inspired, renewing in joy our journey and the life of our fraternities. More detailed information about the program will be sent to the Ministers.

For further information and registration: Br. Fer van der Reijken fervdreijken@gmail.com

We look forward to spending this time together!

Brothers Fer, Bernard, Jacopo, Gabriele, Andraž and Francisco Gomez Vargas, Commission for the New Forms

News from the Entities



News from the Province of San Antonio de Padua *Philippines, two Grace-filled months concluded*



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The Province of San Antonio de Padua (Philippines) recently concluded a grace-filled two months marked by meaningful celebrations, ordinations, profession of vows, and ongoing formation activities.

Ordination and Feast of the Titular Saint

On June 12, Br. Jaymar C. Escoltor, OFM was ordained to the priesthood by Most Rev. Marvyn A. Maceda, OFS, D.D., Bishop of the Diocese of San Jose de Antique. The ordination was held at San Vicente Ferrer Parish, where family, friends, friars, and parishioners gathered in prayerful sup-

port. The following day, June 13, on the Solemnity of St. Anthony of Padua, the Province celebrated its titular feast at the Provincial House. The Mass was presided over by Br. Jaymar with Br. Mark Anthony Zarate, OFM, delivering the homily. The celebration was graced by friars, benefactors, and friends of the community.

Annual Retreat and Jubilee Celebration

From July 7–11, the friars of the Province gathered for their annual retreat at the Franciscan Retirement Community. This year’s retreat centered on the theme: “The 8th Centenary of the Cantic of St. Francis of Assisi: Biblical and Theological Reflection.” The facilitators were Br. Cristino R. Pine and Br. Prisco A. Cajés. The retreat concluded with a celebration honoring this year’s Jubilarians: Br. Ferdinand L. Mercado – 40 years as a Religious; Br. Rey D. Canonoy and Br. Gregorio A. Monte – 25 years as a Religious; Br. Renee C. Dean and Br. Elson M. Singzon – 25 years as a Priest.

Initial Formation Gatherings and Vows

In the area of formation, formands from different houses came together at the Novitiate House for their annual summer fraternal gathering. Given the geographical distances between forma-



tion houses, this gathering aimed to strengthen fraternity through sessions, mutual sharing, and community-building activities. It concluded with a thanksgiving night for benefactors of the Novitiate Community. During the gathering, three brothers were officially received into the Novitiate Formation on July 17:

Br. Patrick Dadang, Br. Edmond Delda, Br. Kent Bryan Montes.

On July 21, four brothers professed their Temporary Vows in the Order of Friars Minor: Br. Terence

Visbal, Br. Kyle Resma Castañares, Br. Ian Roy Lucaban Delastrico, Br. Jake Baluca Goles.

Solemn Profession of Vows

Finally, on July 22, Br. Jayfee C. Fraga and Br. Joseph D. Lapanan made their Solemn Profession of Vows, fully committing themselves to the Gospel way of life in the spirit of St. Francis of Assisi. The Province gives thanks to God for these blessings and continues to walk forward in fraternity and mission, inspired by the life of St. Francis and guided by the Holy Spirit.

Solemn Profession in the Province of St. Paul the Apostle in Colombia

The Covenant of Eternal Love with the Lord by Br. Richard



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On the 6th July, 2025, the Friars Minor of the Franciscan Province of St. Paul the Apostle in Colombia, in the context of celebrating the VIII Centenary of the Cantic of the Creatures, experienced a moment of grace and joy by celebrating the Solemn Profession of their son and brother, Br. Richard Galindo Pantoja, OFM. The celebration took place together with the Poor Clares of the Monastery of St. Clare in Montenegro - Quindío, and with the friars of both Provinces of Colombia, family and friends of Br. Richard and other faithful of the People of God.

The Eucharist was presided over by the Minister Provincial, Br. Richard Paúl Cortés López, OFM who, in his homily, emphasized the significance of the Franciscan vocation assumed through the

definitive commitment of the friar, a journey that involves absolute generosity and total dedication to walk the path of the Gospel, built with the brothers, and which requires a firm commitment and permanent openness to the grace of the Lord who always remains faithful. “Dear Brother Richard - said the Minister Provincial - today you seal a pact of eternal love with the Lord. Embrace the Franciscan life with all its demands and promises. It is not an easy journey, but it is a journey of profound freedom and true joy. You join a family of siblings who will accompany you, support you and love you... your YES is our YES, your dedication is our hope”.

The entire Order of Friars Minor, and within it our Province of St. Paul the Apostle in Colombia, is filled with immense joy for this brother who has perpetually adhered to the Lord in our way of life, and we pray to the Lord of the harvest that he will continue to call many others to be willing to live the adventure of the Gospel as brothers and sisters of everything and everyone.

May the Almighty and Supreme Good sustain and bring to fruition the vocation of our brother Richard; we entrust him to the maternal care of the Immaculate Virgin Mary and to the intercession of our Seraphic Fathers Francis and St Clare of Assisi.

To the praise and glory of the Most Holy Trinity!

Br. Diego Andrés Martínez Forero, OFM



OFS Elective Chapter in Hungary
Imre Daniel was confirmed as the National Minister



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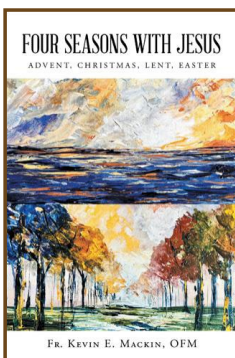


The OFS National Elective Chapter in Hungary was held from the 10th-13th July 2025, at the Temesvári Pelbárt Franciscan Secondary School of the Friars Minor in Esztergom. It was presided over by Noemi

Paola Riccardi, OFS, Presidential Councilor delegated by Tibor Kauser, OFS General Minister, and by Br. Pedro Zitha, OFM, representing the Conference of General Spiritual Assistants (CAS).

During the meeting, the new National Council was elected: Imre Daniel, OFS, was re-elected Minister and Adrienn Bogнар, OFS, was re-elected International Councilor.

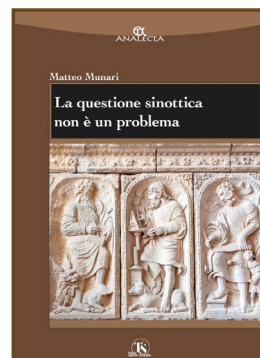
Franciscan Bookmark



Four Seasons with Jesus. Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter

by Br. Kevin E. Mackin
OFM

West Bow Press



La questione sinottica non è un problema

di Fr. Matteo Munari,
OFM

TS Edizioni

General Curia

The Historical Archives of the Curia General

A journey through the history of the Order through the documents of the Minister General



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Brief History of the Archive

Visiting the Historical Archives located in the Curia General is a bit like traveling through space and time, following the traces left by so many Franciscan friars, the Church and the Pontiffs who have succeeded one another in the course of history. Voluntary traces, because they respond to a task to be performed, but also a lot of information sent “involuntarily” and which is still the subject of research by scholars from all over the world.

The Historical Archive is not the place where all the Order’s documentation is kept; it is properly the Archive of the Minister General of the Order and of the various bodies dependent on him, such as the General Secretariat, the Public Prosecutor’s Office, the Secretariat for the Missions and Evangelization, and the Secretary for Formation and Studies.

The Reports of the Provincial Ministers and Visitors, the correspondence addressed personally to the Minister General, the Secretariats and the Offices of the Curia arrive in the Archives of the Curia General. Currently, three Archives function in the Curia, separate but at the same time connected to each other: the current one (the last 15 years, in the Protocol Office); the deposit Archive (the last 20 years, in the General Secretariat) and the Historical Archive (until 1990).

The history of the Archive began in the seventeenth century. In the brief *Cum nuper* (1612) of Pope Paul V, the need for the creation of a “Central Archive of the Church” emerged. In the General Chapter of the Order in 1621, this was the starting point for the creation of a general archive, which would go beyond the local archives of the individual Provinces. Already in 1619 the Minister General, Br. Benigno da Genova, had invited the Franciscan Provinces to send to the Irish friar Luca Wadding (1588-1657) documents and codices in their possession in order to be able to use them in the course of preparing a History of the Franciscan Order. In 1625 Wadding – to whom the Historical Archives of the Curia General was dedicated in 2007 – began the publication of the *Annales Ordinis Minorum*: it then became necessary to create an Archive where all documents of public interest to the Order could be preserved and catalogued.

The General Chapter of Rome in 1651 then decided to create two General Archives, one for each of the two Families that made up the Order at the time: for the *Cismontana* Family (Italy and almost all of Europe) in the convent of Aracoeli, in Rome; for the *Ultramontana* family (Spain and overseas: America, Asia) in the friary of St. Francis the Great, in Madrid. The events of history strongly marked the fate of both: the Madrid Archive disappeared completely in the revolution of 1820, whilst that of Rome suffered heavy damage during the French occupation of 1798: on the 11th February, the army occupied the Aracoeli, the friars had to flee and returned only on the 13th July, 1799, finding only the walls and nothing more.

From 1884 onwards, with the transfer of the General Curia from Aracoeli to Sant’Antonio in Via Merulana, the Archive began to be reassembled. In 1947, with the inauguration of the new General Curia in Via di Santa Maria Mediatrice, the Archive was also transferred and still resides here.

The structure of the Archive

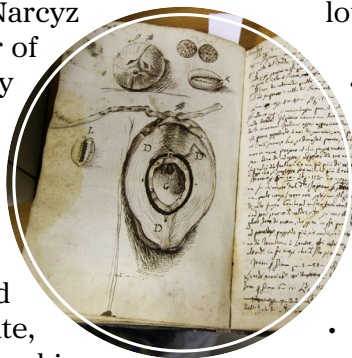
Upon entering, you are welcomed into the study room, which every year receives hundreds of scholars – friars, religious, lay researchers, professors and doctoral students – from all over the world. The object of their research is not always religious: some, for example, through documents can reconstruct the evolution of their native language; others are interested in urban planning or architecture in certain parts of the world; still others are looking for... the typical diet of the friars in a given historical and geographical context!

The walls of the room are occupied by bookcases and on the walls you can find, amongst other things, the portrait of Br. Luca Wadding and the papal bulls of Pius XII that decreed, in chronological order, St. Francis patron saint of Italy (1939), St. Anthony doctor of the Church (1946) and St. Clare patron saint of television and telecommunications (1958). Proceeding into the next room, we go towards the actual archive, which according to the regulations in force for optimal document conservation is an air-conditioned, dehumidified environment, with a regular fire-fighting system and metal shelving. Here there is also a very precise scanner for the digitization of documents: by making digital consultation possible, the quality of the paper originals is protected by avoiding their deterioration.

Cataloguing of the material

The first major and important cataloguing of the material was the work of Br. Pedro Gil Muñoz, of the Province of the Immaculate Conception in Spain and Director of the Historical Archives for about 20 years, until 2013.

Currently, an equally important cataloguing is being carried out by Br. Narcyz Klimas: 25 volumes of unpublished documents, often handwritten, of the Holy Land and the Commissariats of the Holy Land from 1848 onwards, of which Br. Narcyz (who from 1998 to 2013 was director of the Historical Archives of the Custody of the Holy Land) is taking care of the *register*. Letters, reports, communications sent to the Minister General over the decades and that no one had ever analyzed and cataloged before. The documents are classified by Offices (Secretariat, Procuratorate, Missions, Minister General...), geographical and chronological subdivision. There are also



Funds, two of which are particularly important: the Panisperna Fund, from the Poor Clares of San Lorenzo in Panisperna (Rome), which contains the oldest document kept in the Archive, dating back to 1120, and the Hankow Fund (China), received in 1949 and containing documents from 1700 to 1840.



Also preserved are various Franciscan magazines, of the Provinces and of the Curia (*Acta Ordinis*, for example) and the Collections of particular Ministers General (for example the Bini Fund).

Some particular documents

The Archive does not only collect paper documents, but materials of different kinds that over the centuries have served the Order for different uses: in fact, the seals of the Order (from 1600 to today), photographs, microfilms, plates for engraving holy cards, parchments of the Order or concerning the Order are kept.

Amongst the most evocative and peculiar materials we mention:

- the travel diary of Br. Matteo Ripa, a missionary in China at the beginning of 1710, containing the written and drawn chronicle (also in colour) of what he lived and saw day by day;
- a document from the Turkish-Ottoman period of the Holy Land listing the religious groups present on the site at the time, but difficult to interpret because it was written in Turkish with the Arabic alphabet;
- a colour map of the Quaracchi Convent in Florence;

Fraternitas

- a 1713 Bible from a Dutch friary that was later closed;
- the copy of the *Chartula* of St. Francis;

in the *Franciscan Bullary* there is, among others, the bull of Leo XIII, *Felicitate Quadam*, which in 1897 brought together some Franciscan families of the time in the current Order of Friars Minor.

These are the staff who work at the Archive, We thank them for their welcome and availability:

Br. Chryzostom Fryc, OFM, Director of the Archive;



Br. Narcyz Klimas, OFM, collaborator at the Archive;

Dr. Anna Grazia Petaccia, archivist and collaborator of the Archive who, amongst other things, receives scholars and prepares the material they are researching.

Dr. Massimiliano Cardone, who catalogs the books on Franciscan spirituality and by Franciscan authors that are donated to the Library connected to the Archive.

[Regulations for accessing the Archive](#)

LIFE in the Order



Deceased Brothers

† 24th July: Br. Haitham Franso Yalda Hano, Custody of the Holy Land

† 20th July: Br. Patrick Edward Fereday, Prov. Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA)

† 15th July: Br. Juan Alberto Carmona Marqués, Prov. Immaculate Conception (Spain)

† 27th June: Br. Regis Gallo, Prov. Immaculate Conception (USA)

† 28th May: Msgr. Francis Xavier so-il Yu, Prov. The Holy. Martyrs of Korea (South Korea)

Information received from the General Secretariat



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OFM

Ordo Fratrum Minorum
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