



DEATH BECOMES SISTER

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Letter of the Minister General for Easter 2026 *Death becomes sister*

Dear brothers and sisters,

May the Lord give you peace!

This year marks the eighth centenary of the death of Saint Francis. In this context, we celebrate the Lord's Easter with a renewed awareness: Francis, although he died on October 3, 1226, far from the liturgical season of Easter, experienced his death as a true Easter, so much so that he called death "sister."

An eloquent gesture bears witness to this: Francis wanted to hear chapter 13 of the Gospel of John, the account of the washing of the feet, which speaks of service and humility. In that supreme moment, he had already crossed the threshold of death, dwelling in the very heart of the paschal mystery of Christ.



Today, we live in a time full of uncertainties: geopolitical changes, wars that tear apart peoples and nations, and crises in our societies put us to the test. It is easy to seek superficial consolations in the face of such difficulties. Yet Francis shows us another way.

Read the full text of the Letter:

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

The Good Friday Collection for the Holy Land

A concrete gesture of communion with the Mother Church of Jerusalem



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As every year since 1974, when Pope Paul VI instituted it with the Apostolic Exhortation *Nobis in animo*, on the 3rd April, Good Friday, the Collection for the Holy Land will take place in all the Catholic churches of the world.

A gesture of solidarity and ecclesial communion with the Mother Church of Jerusalem that this year acquires an even more important value for the maintenance of the Holy Places and above all for Christians who live in a land devastated by war.

The Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, invites the Friars of the whole Order to take up and take care of this year's Collection in a special way, with all possible initiatives to raise awareness, inform and ask for concrete support for Christians in the Middle East, where the Friars Minor have been present since the time of St. Francis.

In his Letter, the Custos of the Holy Land, Br. Francesco Ielpo, recalls how the war conflict brought destruction and death to Gaza, the West Bank, Israel, Lebanon, and Syria. Countries where Christian communities suffer the direct and indirect consequences of the war: not only bombings, but also the absence of pilgrims, which *"has aggravated an already deep economic and employment crisis,"* writes the Custos. *"Many Christian families, who drew sustenance from the Holy Places and from activities related to pilgrimages, are now in great*

difficulty. The lack of security and work makes it increasingly difficult to support families and, even more, to imagine a future for young people and for the new generations," continues Br. Ielpo.

With the [Good Friday Collection](#), it will be possible to *"support schools, parishes, charitable works, social projects and emergency interventions, keeping alive the Christian presence in the places where Christianity was born"*, giving great importance to education, the only true key to a culture of dialogue, encounter and peace.

The Prefect of the Dicastery for the Oriental Churches, Card. Claudio Gugerotti, in his Letter published on the 16th March 2025, addressed to the Catholic Bishops of the world, launched an appeal in support of the Collection: *"Weapons continue to fire, people to die, lands to be disputed, Christians to emigrate to save their lives. Even schools do not often receive teachers because they are not allowed to pass"*. The cardinal invites us to prayer, to hope – *"God is our hope"* – and to a concrete gesture *"to help our brothers and sisters in extreme danger to live one day longer, to find the possibility of hope and to start again"*.

A sign of conversion, communion, closeness, and fraternity with those suffering the consequences of war, not forgetting the words of Pope Leo pronounced during the Angelus on the 15th March: *"On behalf of the Christians of the Middle East and of all women and men of good will, I address those responsible for this conflict: Hold your fire! Let us reopen paths of dialogue! Violence can never lead to the justice, stability and peace that the people await."*

Read the Letter of the Custos of the Holy Land:

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

Read the Letter of Card. Gugerotti:

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

General Curia Agenda



- ☑ The Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli and the Definitor General, Br. César Kulkamp, will visit the Franciscan Entities of South America: from the 1st to 7th April, the Province of the Holy Cross (Brazil), from the 7th to 10th the Custody of St. Benedict in the Amazon (Brazil), from 11th to 14th the Provinces of the XII Apostles and St. Francis Solano (Peru), from the 15th to 18th the Province of the Assumption of the BVM del Río de la Plata (Argentina), from the 18th to 21st the Province of St Francis (Brazil). On the 15th April, they will participate online in the pre-chapter of the mats of the Under Ten friars of UCLAF.
- ☑ From the 1st to 5th April, the General Delegate pro Monialibus, Br. Fabio César Gomes, will be at the Monastery of Mola di Bari for the celebration of the Easter Triduum.
- ☑ From the 7th to 10th April, the Definitor General, Br. John Wong, and the Director of the Communications Office of the General Curia, Br. Byron A. Chammann Anléu, will participate in the Ongoing Formation Meeting for the Communications Officers of the FCAO Entities in Singapore.
- ☑ On the 9th April, the Definitor General, Br. Cesare Vaiani, will participate in Assisi in the common pre-Chapter day of the 4 Provinces of Central Italy; on the 13th April he will make a speech at the opening of the Chapter of the Province of St. Bonaventure of Lazio and Abruzzo; on the 14th April he will speak at the Chapter of the Picene Province of St. James of the Marca.
- ☑ On the 13th and 14th April 13, the Definitor General, Br. Konrad Cholewa, will participate in the Provincial Chapter of the Province of the Immaculate Conception in Leżajsk (Poland); from the 17th to 19th he will make the canonical visitation to the College of Penitentiary Friars at St John in the Lateran.

Government of the Order



Closing of the Jubilee Year of the Church of Santa Maria del Pozzo (NA – Italy) *The Minister General celebrated the 450th anniversary of the church served by the Polish friars*



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On the 15th March, 2026, in the church of Santa Maria del Pozzo in Somma Vesuviana (NA – Italy), where the Polish Friars Minor serve, the Jubilee Year for the 450th anniversary of the consecration of the church ended. The Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, presided over the solemn Mass in which the Provincial Ministers who have been collaborating for 30 years participated: Br. Carlo Amodio (Province of the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Naples), Br. Krzysztof Bobak (Province of Our



Lady of the Angels in Krakow, Poland), and the General Definitor Br. Konrad Cholewa.

The Polish Province was also represented by Br. Marek Wach, Provincial Secretary; Br. Zenon Duda, a missionary in Morocco; Br. Paweł Sambor, a professor at the PUA in Rome; and Br. Lukas Kucieba. From the Sacred Heart Province, the Vicar, Br. Giuseppe Sorrentino, Br. Luigi Ortalio, and Br. Antonio Sannino were also present. Also participating

were the Dominican Sisters, the Sisters of the Holy Trinity, priests and religious from other parishes in Somma, faithful, Franciscan tertiaries from the local community, the “Friends of St. Francis” association, representatives of the “Battenti della Madonna dell’Arco,” and local government officials.

The programme of celebrations included a penitential procession from the statue of St. Francis, erected in 2000 on the road leading to the Franciscan friary, to the Jubilee Church, and a dedication ceremony, solemn blessing and lighting of the “lamp of peace” by the Minister General and Commissioner Corinne Palumbo, on behalf of the city community. The local jubilee took

into account a broader context: the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi. The sign of the passing of time was symbolised by eight amphorae of oil for the peace lamp, which will remain lit until the 10th January, 2027. They represent eight centuries of “unextinguished light” (i.e., the spirituality of St. Francis), from the ‘Blessed Transitus’ of the founder of the Order of Friars Minor to the present day. One of the final signs of the jubilee was the presentation of a medal commemorating the Eighth Centenary of Francis’s death: Br. Massimo presented it to the Commissioner, expressing the hope that his service to the citizens and the city would be sustained by the Spirit of St. Francis, the Patron Saint of Italy.

Reflections by Br. Massimo

Where compassion builds bridges



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echists lead small communities with a fresh faith, young religious and friars carry out very important educational works with dedication that moves. Life is stronger than destruction.

But the question burns: how to live and proclaim the Gospel where such an ancient and coherent cosmovision shapes every aspect of existence? Christianity here is perceived as something foreign, “Western”. There is a sort of historical impermeability that resists the usual methods.

Moreover, here is the discovery that surprised me. Buddhism lives compassion as a central value: *karuṇā*, they call it, that ability to feel the suffering of the other as one’s own. When Buddhists see Christians practising this same compassion in practice—amongst the sick, the poor, the abandoned children—something opens in their eyes.

I met orphaned children, for example, and some with autism: welcomed and cared for, they found a home and a family with

The smell of incense envelops you before you even cross the threshold. In the Buddhist temples I have visited in recent months in Asia, monks in saffron or brown robes recite ancient formulas with a concentration that questions. Outside, life flows between crowded markets, scooters, and rice paddies. Buddhism here is not a choice: it is the air you breathe, the language with which a people has been reading the world, pain,

hope for 2500 years. In Cambodia, in the 1970s, the Church was literally erased. Bishops, priests, religious and lay people killed or missing, buildings razed to the ground. There is nothing left, except for a few and sparse Christians. Yet, walking among the Cambodian communities today, I found a Church that is being reborn with surprisingly local roots. Khmer faces, and descendants of Vietnamese, animate the celebrations, local cat-

us. It is not a theological reasoning; it is a recognition. *"You live what we also seek"*. In Singapore and elsewhere, I have seen how this silent witness builds very strong bridges, creates trust, and opens unexpected paths towards faith.

St Francis sensed this: he went to the Sultan not with arguments, but with his unarmed presence. Our charism asks us first of all to be present, like evangelical

leaven, without haste, ready to speak *"when it pleases the Lord"*, in harmony with everyone, with patience for the long term, acting as a "we" and not as individuals.

After all, the Taoist vision that permeates this part of the world also moves our Christians towards this wisdom. It is not resignation: it is the wisdom of the seed that works in the silence of the earth. In this Year of St Francis, Buddhist Asia offers us a precious

and surprising lesson: we are not called to convince, but to live the Gospel with such intensity that its light becomes visible. The Buddhist *karuṇā* and the Christian *agape* look at each other, recognise each other, and question each other. In that space, a dialogue opens up that no book of theology could generate.

We continue to sow. The Lord will make it grow in the times and ways that please Him.

Franciscan Centenaries



Celebration of the 800th anniversary of St. Francis' Easter in Lubumbashi *Province of St. Benedict the African (DRC)*



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In fraternal joy and thanksgiving, the Franciscan Family of Lubumbashi, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, gathered on Sunday, the 22nd March, 2026 at the Parish of St. Francis of Assisi, located in a suburb of the city, to solemnly celebrate the beginning of the 800th anniversary of the Easter of St. Francis of Assisi. This celebration, shared in communion with the entire Order of Friars Minor, brought together friars, nuns, members of the Franciscan Family and many faithful parishioners.

In the heart of this Eucharistic celebration, which marks the inauguration of the Jubilee Year dedicated to the 800th anniversary of the birth into Heaven of St. Francis, the Minister of the Prov-

ince of St. Benedict the African, Br. Georges Misange, OFM, invited the assembly to be artisans of peace and life in places where violence and death seem to reign supreme. Drawing inspiration from the Word of God and the luminous witness of the Poverello-Poor Man of Assisi, he invited the faithful to be close to the lepers, the marginalized and the suffering of Congolese society; to enter deeply into the Paschal Mystery, the source of hope and new life.

He emphasized in particular that, in this Jubilee Year, we are called, with the intercession of the Seraphic Father, to pray for the grace of being men and women capable of helping others to rise

from their graves: tombs of discouragement, injustice, irresponsibility, corruption, violence, poverty, fear and despair. In this spirit, the assembly was exhorted to ask the Lord for the strength to continue to believe even when all seems lost; continue to hope even when everything seems dead; continue to love even when all seems lost. This celebration was an intense moment of communion, fraternity, spiritual renewal and mis-

sionary commitment, reminding everyone that the spiritual legacy of St. Francis remains a living source of hope for our wounded world and for the human and social peripheries of our world, and in particular for our country, the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Br. Heribert Mujinga, OFM

In the footsteps of St. Francis on the 800th anniversary of his Transitus

Franciscan Jubilee Pilgrimage of the Prov. of Our Lady of the Angels (Poland)



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From the 2nd-13th March 2, 2026, the Province of Our Lady of the Angels of Poland held a Franciscan Jubilee pilgrimage on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the Transitus of St. Francis, organised by the Secretariat of Missions and Evangelisation of the Province. The friars of the Province, the Bernardine Sisters, some representatives of the Secular Franciscan Order and lay faithful linked to Franciscan convents participated.

The event had a special significance, offering the opportunity to pray before the mortal remains of the Seraphic Father. The pilgrimage began on the 2nd March in Krakow, in the early hours of the morning, in the chapel of the seminary, where Holy Mass was celebrated presided over by the Minister Provincial Fr. Krzysztof Bobak.

The first stop of the pilgrimage was Padua, with a visit to the Basilica of St. Anthony and the Basilica of St. Justina.

In the following days, the pilgrims also reached numerous cities rich in religious and cultural history, including Florence, San Gimignano, Siena, Orvieto, Bolsena and Bagnoregio.

On the fifth day, the pilgrims arrived in Rome, where they prayed in the four papal basilicas. In Rome, the group of pilgrims was joined by the Minister Provincial Fr. Krzysztof Bobak, who continued the pilgrimage until its conclusion. After their stay in the Eternal City, the pilgrims went to places particularly linked to the life of St. Francis. In the Rieti Valley, they visited, among other things, Fonte Colombo – the place where the Rule of the Order was written, where they renewed their religious vows – and Greccio, where St. Francis prepared the first nativity scene in history. They also visited Poggio Bustone, from where the Saint sent his friars to different parts of the world.

The most important moment of the pilgrimage was the visit to Assisi and the prayer in front of the mortal remains of St. Francis. The pilgrims were welcomed by the Custos of the Sacred Monastery, Br. Marco Moroni OFMConv. After paying homage to the remains of Francis, the participants had time for personal prayer and to visit other places related to the history of the city, including the Basilica of St. Clare.

During their stay in Assisi, the pilgrims also visited the Hermitage of the Prisons and the Porziuncola in the Basilica of Our Lady of the Angels. In this sacred place, the Mass was presided over again by the Minister Provincial, who prayed particularly for the Province and for the preparations for the next Provincial Chapter.

On that same day, the 25th anniversary of the perpetual profession of Br. Krzysztof and Br. Adam Stanik was also celebrated. An important stage of the pilgrimage was a visit to the Sanctuary of La Verna, the place where St. Francis received the stigmata. In this holy place, the pilgrims, in addition to the Holy Mass, participated in the traditional procession.

The Jubilee pilgrimage has become a time of prayer, reflection, fraternity and deepening of Franciscan spirituality. It was not only a journey to the places linked to the life of St. Francis, but also a living experience of the Church and an inspiration to live the Gospel in the spirit of peace, simplicity, and fraternity.

Pilgrimage to Assisi of the Conference of St. Jerome

Inter-Franciscan initiative for the student friars of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia



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On the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis, the student friars and formators of the OFM Conference of St. Jerome (from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Slovenia), together with those of the Croatian Province of St. Jerome of the Friars Minor Conventual and the Croatian Capuchin Province of St. Leopold Bogdan Mandić, went on pilgrimage to the city of Assisi. It was the first time that almost all the student friars (72 in total), together with 7 formators of the Franciscan Family of the region, reached the Poverello-the Poor Man's hometown together.

The pilgrimage began on Friday, 27th February in the early hours of the morning: the pilgrims arrived in Assisi around 3 p.m., to go immediately afterwards to Rivotorto (where St. Francis lived with his friars from 1209 to 1211), before moving to the Porziuncola. In the shrine, the Mass was presided over by Br. Danijel Nikolić OFM, master of the Bosnian student friars. After the Eucharistic celebration and the prayer of Vespers, the friars had the opportunity to visit and spend some moments of personal prayer in the small house where the first friars of the Order lived, as well as in the church built above it to protect it from deterioration. The students then spent the evening in fraternal company, exchanging impressions and ideas.

The following day, the friars were welcomed at the Holy Friary by Br. Vilček Novački OFMConv, from the Croatian Province of St. Jerome. After praying over the mortal remains of the Seraphic Father, they went to the side chapel of St. Bonaventure, where they renewed their profession of faith and received the blessing of the pilgrims. Later, Br. Vilček donated small symbolic gifts: wheat seeds and some soil. Afterwards, they reached the Benedictine church of St. Peter in Assisi: here the Eucharist was presided over by Br. Renato Galić OFM, vice-master of the Herzegovinian student

friars, while the homily was given by Br. Franjo Vuk OFM, master of the student friars of Zagreb. Subsequently, taking advantage of their free time, the pilgrims had the opportunity to visit Santa Chiara and pay homage to St. Charles Acutis, and then return to the Porziuncola for the prayer of Vespers together with the Italian friars.

The following day, Sunday the 1st March, the friars left for their countries of origin, not without a stop in Padua to visit two saints particularly dear to them: St. Anthony of Padua and St. Leopold Bogdan Mandić. In the Basilica of St. Anthony, the Eucharist was presided over by Br. Stjepan Brčina OFMConv, master of the conventual student friars, who also gave the homily. They then visited the shrine of St. Leopold, where they remained for some time in personal prayer and meditation. Finally, the pilgrims continued their journey home, thus concluding this pilgrimage in the Jubilee Year of St. Francis.

*Br. Toni Divković, OFM
Province of Holy Cross (Bosnia and Herzegovina)*





News from the Entities

Franciscan Iftar Gathering in İzmir, Türkiye *Sharing the Table of Friendship*



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On the evening of 17 March, after sunset, the Franciscan friars in İzmir, on the western coast of Türkiye, welcomed Muslim friends and members of the local community for an *iftar*, the traditional meal that breaks the daily fast during the holy month of Ramadan. Around forty people participated in the gathering, including representatives from the local municipal government and the police department.

This annual event has become an important moment in the life of the Franciscan fraternity, reflecting their ongoing commitment to interreligious dialogue, encounter, and fraternity in the local context of Türkiye. Through such simple gestures of hospitality, the friars seek to build bridges of friendship and mutual respect among people of different faith traditions.

At the end of the meal, the fraternity's Guardian, Br. Felianus Dogon, OFM, addressed the guests and reflected on the spiritual meaning of this time for both Muslims and Christians.

He noted that Ramadan is a sacred time for Muslims, marked by fasting, prayer, charity, and a renewed turning of the heart toward God. For Christians, these same weeks coincide with the season of Lent, a time of preparation for Easter, charac-

terized by prayer, fasting, charity, and the renewal of life in God.

Br. Felianus observed that it is particularly meaningful that Ramadan and Lent occur almost at the same time this year, reminding believers of both traditions of their shared call to purification of heart and closeness to God. Each person, within his or her own faith tradition, is invited to deepen their spiritual life and renew their commitment to goodness and compassion.

He also encouraged those present to recognize the deeper significance of the shared meal:

“May the table we share this evening be more than a meal. May it be a sign of hope, friendship, and solidarity. When people of different faiths sit at the same table, it becomes a powerful reminder that mutual respect, understanding, and friendship are possible. Our beliefs may be different, but we share the same human dignity and belong to the same human family.”

The Head of the Bornova District, who attended the gathering, expressed his gratitude to the Franciscan community for organizing the *iftar* each year and for contributing to the strengthening of bonds of friendship within the local society. Referring to the present global situation, marked by conflicts and wars, he invited those present to pray and work for peace in the world.

The Mayor of Bornova also offered a few words of appreciation, thanking the Franciscan community for their initiative and emphasizing that such encounters help foster mutual respect and peaceful coexistence within society.

The evening concluded in a warm and fraternal atmosphere. Gatherings like this remind everyone present that dialogue, hospitality, and simple moments of encounter can become seeds of peace, helping people of different religions walk together in respect and friendship.

Br. Jeffrey Haller, OFM



Registration is now open for the Course on Interreligious and Ecumenical Dialogue 2026 Istanbul, Turkey, from 11 to 24 October 2026



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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Peace and all good!

We are pleased to invite you to participate in the Annual Course on Interreligious and Ecumenical Dialogue 2026, organized by the International Community for Interreligious and Ecumenical Dialogue, to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 11 to 24 October 2026, at the OFM Santa Maria Draperis Friary.

This annual course seeks to form persons capable of genuine dialogue with others, even amid differences of culture, religion, and belief. Rather than offering techniques or strategies of dialogue, the course invites participants to a process of personal change and inner conversion, recognizing that authentic dialogue must begin within ourselves and within the communities in which we live. For us, dialogue is not merely a method but a way of life.

The inspiration for this course comes from the life and witness of Saint Francis of Assisi, particularly his encounter with Sultan Malik al-Kamil in Damietta, Egypt—an enduring sign of courageous openness, humility, and peaceful encounter across religious boundaries.

The course is intended especially for the members of the Franciscan Family who are engaged or interested in interfaith and ecumenical dialogue. The program will include conferences, group sharing, attentive listening to testimonies, and visits to historical sites as well as Muslim and other Christian communities in and around Istanbul. The rich experience and insights of the speakers—scholars and practitioners directly involved in interfaith and ecumenical dialogue—will greatly enrich the participants.

The final three days of the course will be dedicated to a pilgrimage to the seven ancient churches mentioned in the Book of Revelation. This pilgrimage forms an integral part of the course, offering a spiritual journey of prayer, reflection, and shared faith.

The year 2026 holds special significance for us. It marks the 20th edition of this Annual Course, for which we give thanks to God. It is also a profound-

ly meaningful year for the Franciscan Family, as we celebrate the 800th anniversary of the death of Saint Francis of Assisi. In light of this jubilee, the theme of the 2026 course will focus on this decisive moment in the life and legacy of Saint Francis.

We warmly invite you to join us for this unique time of mutual listening, strengthening, encouragement, and enrichment. As the number of participants is limited, we kindly encourage you to register as soon as possible.

We look forward to welcoming you to Istanbul.

Fraternally yours,

Br. Felianus Dogon, OFM, Guardian

Contact persons:

Br. Felianus Dogon, OFM: fellyanusdogon@gmail.com

Br. Pascal Robert, OFM: pascalrobert764@gmail.com

The Church of Santa Maria Draperis
Istiklal Caddesi n. 215 - P.K. 243
34433 Beyoğlu – Istanbul, Turkey

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

for the Course on Interreligious and Ecumenical Dialogue 2026

in the Franciscan Mission

OCTOBER 11-24, 2026

at the Convent
of Santa Maria Draperis
Istanbul, Turkey

Contact persons:
Br. Felianus Dogon, OFM:
fellyanusdogon@gmail.com
Br. Pascal Robert, OFM:
pascalrobert764@gmail.com

Participation fee
700 EURO
including
the pilgrimage
to biblical sites

Meeting of the Permanent Council of UFME Rome, Curia General, 8th-10th March 2026



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From the 8th to 10th March, the new Permanent Council of UFME (Union of Friars Minor of Europe) met at the General Curia of the OFM. Present were Br. Sinisa Balajić, Br. Antonio Scabio, Br. Piusz Berhidai, Br. Benedict Swiderski, the Secretary Br. Paolo Maiello and the Deputy Secretary and Bursar Br. Milko Gigante. The Council dedicated itself to the verification of the Final Document of the last Assembly held in Kalwaria (Poland) last October, with some propositions that emerged.

The discussion developed on some indications from the Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, regarding fraternal communion between the Provinces, the accompaniment of some processes

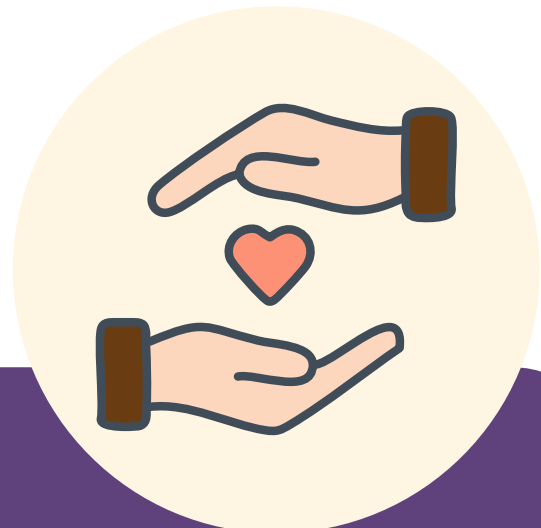
of transformation of the Entities, concrete collaboration in the formative and missionary fields, the adoption of a more synodal logic and greater collaboration with the Franciscan Family. The meeting with the Minister General and some area Definitors was proactive: Br. Cesare Vaiani, Br. Albert Schmuki, Br. Konrad Grzegorz Cholewa, Br. Jimmy Zammit, with whom the Council held an open and sincere dialogue, sharing some propositions and future choices concerning the work of UFME. The invitation was made to think of themselves more and more as an Order, capable of going beyond their provincial borders, betting on young people, and collaborating with the Franciscan Family. The work continued by looking at the economic aspect and the revision of the Statutes. On the morning of the 10th March, the Council evaluated and adopted the proposal for an Assembly for the Temporarily Professed of Europe to be held from the 20th to the 23rd September 2027 at the Marian Shrine of Matraverebely-Szentkut in Budapest, Hungary. In addition, it has been established that the UFME General Assembly will be held in Split, Croatia, from the 7th-11th February 2028.

The entire Permanent Council underlined the positivity of the work carried out, enriched by fraternal and sincere dialogue, looking to a future that sees the friars of Europe increasingly called to work together for fraternal collaboration for the good of the Order.

Charity

LENT 2026

But when you give alms, let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your alms may remain secret; and your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you (Mt 6:3-4).





OFS, fraternal and pastoral visit in Chile
11-15 March 2026



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The fraternal and pastoral visit to the National Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order in Chile was held at the fraternity of San Francisco de la Alameda, at the Provincial Curia of the OFM Province of the Holy Trinity, from March 11 to 15, 2026. OFS Regional Ministers and the National Council Members came to meet the Delegates from the International Council of the Secular Franciscan Order (CIOFS), namely the International Presidency Councilor, Silvia Diana, OFS, and Br. Pedro Zitha, OFM, the representative of the Conference of the General Spiritual As-



sistants. The National Fraternity of Chile has 38 fraternities, of which 32 are canonically erected by OFM from which 8 local fraternities are spiritually assisted by Franciscan sisters; 2 canonically erected by the OFMConv; 4 canonically erected by the OFMCap.

The last pastoral and fraternal visit were conducted in 2016, and due to many factors, the visitation was postponed several times. Finally, this year, the Presidency of CIOFS and the National Council were able to realize the long-standing visit.

LIFE
in the Order



Solemn professions

31st January, Immaculate Custody of the Mother of God (Angola)

Br. Mário Baptista, Br. Paulo Gabriel, Br. João Lima, Br. Abel Nené, Br. Gualter Pascoal, Br. Manuel Singue.



Priestly Ordinations

14th February, Prov. St. Thomas the Apostle (India)

Br. Benefits Elias Reddy Benefits



Deceased Brothers

† 17th March: Br. Nicolao (Megumi) Hirata, Prov. Holy Martyrs of Japan (Japan); Br. Herbert Schneider, Prov. St. Elizabeth (Germany)

† 7th March: Br. Albinus (Domenico) Fusco, Prov. Immaculate Conception BVM (USA)

† 9th February: Br. Bienvenido Gaitán González, Prov. Our Lady of Guadalupe (Central America and Panama)

Information received from the General Secretariat



Appointment of the new Rector of the Pontifical University Antonianum *Br. Giuseppe Buffon, OFM*



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The Dicastery for Culture and Education has issued the Decree appointing Br. Giuseppe Buffon, OFM, of the Seraphic Province of St. Francis in Umbria and Sardinia, as Rector Magnificus of the Pontifical University Antonianum.

The new Rector takes over the office from Br. Agustín Hernández Vidales, OFM, who has held this office since September 2019, as Acting Rector, and since 2020 as Rector Magnificus for two terms.

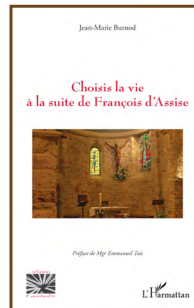
After the Canonical Visit of the University, which took place between the 27th November and 5th December 2025, the election of the new Rector Magnificent proceeded through two ballots. At the end of the process, the Minister General and Grand Chancellor of the University, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, presented three candidates to the Dicastery for Culture and Education, which finally led to the appointment of Br. Giuseppe Buffon, former Vice-Rector for Research.

Br. Giuseppe is a full professor of Modern and Contemporary Church History. In addition to his sci-

entific interest in integral ecology, he collaborates with several periodicals, including: *Revue d'histoire Ecclésiastique*, *Rivista di Storia della Chiesa in Italia*, *Catholic Historical Review*, *Semata*, *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, *Archivio Italiano per la Storia della Pietà*, *Internationale Zeitschrift für Humboldt Studien*, *Archivo Ibero-Americano*. His research activity has focused on the definition of a modern and contemporary Franciscanism.

Read about his research areas on www.ofm.org

Franciscan Bookmark

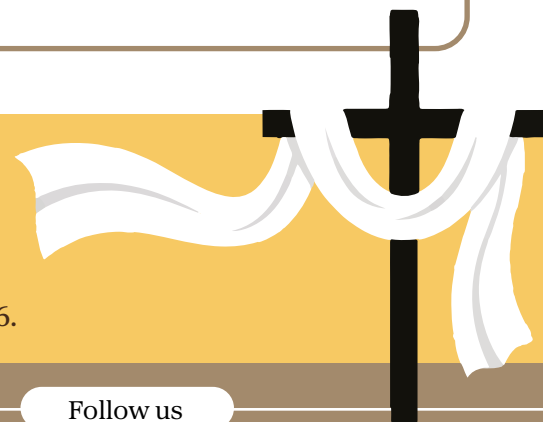


Choisis la vie à la suite de François d'Assise

Jean-Marie Burnod
Édition L'Harmattan

Happy Easter to all!

The next issue of Fraternitas will be released on the 22nd April, 2026.



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