



Homily

for the Meeting of Artist Friars

General Curia, Saturday, November 8, 2025

Dearest brothers,

may the Lord give you peace!

It is a joy to conclude this meeting of yours together, you artist friars who have reflected on the Cantic of Creatures on the occasion of its eighth centenary. And it is significant that today we celebrate the memory of Blessed John Duns Scotus, Franciscan master of the primacy of God's initiative and beauty.

Beauty, and therefore art, as Francis leads us to understand, does not isolate but weaves fraternity. Today the Word of God speaks to us precisely about this: the fabric of relationships that sustains the life of the Christian community.

The Network of Faces: Community According to Paul

Let us listen to Paul again: "Greet Prisca and Aquila... Greet Mary... Greet Andronicus and Junia... Greet Ampliatus... Greet Urbanus..." A list of names that might seem cold, but which is instead a living map of relationships. Paul does not write a treatise on the Church: he draws a family. Each name tells of a bond, a shared struggle, a risk faced together.

Prisca and Aquila risked their lives for him. Mary labored greatly for that community. Andronicus and Junia shared prison with him. This is the Church: not an abstract institution, but a network of faces, of hands clasping, of lives interweaving. Paul concludes: "Greet one another with a holy kiss" – a concrete gesture of fraternal affection, a visible sign of the love that binds us in Christ.

Dear ones, you Franciscan artists are also part of this network. With your brushes, chisels, musical notes and words, you do not create isolated works: you create relationship. True art does not close the artist in on themselves, but opens bridges toward others. Francis knew this well when he composed the Cantic: he did not sing alone, but invited all creatures – brother sun, sister moon, sister water – into a universal choir. You too, with your art, weave bonds, create common memory, awaken shared contemplation.



Faithfulness in Small Things: The Heart of the Disciple

Jesus in the Gospel challenges us with demanding words: "Whoever is faithful in very little is also faithful in much." What does this mean for us today?

Faithfulness is not measured in great heroic gestures that everyone sees. It is built in the hidden everyday: in punctuality for common prayer, in the patient welcome of the brother who irritates us, in humble work done with care, in attentive listening to those beside us. Paul has shown us a community that lives precisely this: ordinary people who take care of one another, day after day, without seeking visibility.

"You cannot serve God and wealth," Jesus says. Art too has its temptations: the search for personal success, idolatry of one's own work, the cult of the isolated genius. But Franciscan art is something else: it is humble service to God's beauty, it is a gift to the community, it is leaven of fraternity. Francis composed the Canticle not to assert himself, but to praise the Creator, to reconcile the bishop with the mayor of Assisi, to look in a new way at death, which is also part of God's good creation. This is the faithfulness that counts: to value our gifts to build peace and communion.

Conclusion: Art and Fraternity

Dear brothers, in these eight centuries Francis's Canticle has continued to generate beauty, poetic word and relationships. It has inspired artists, musicians, poets. It has reconciled divided hearts. It has taught us to look at creation with the contemplative gaze of the risen. Today you continue this tradition.

Blessed John Duns Scotus, whom we celebrate today, reminds us that at the heart of reality is God's free and creative love. For him, the divine will is not arbitrariness but freedom of love that bends toward every creature with tenderness. Christ, according to Scotus, is not a remedy for sin but the center of creation: everything is thought and willed in Him, for Him, with Him. This theological vision transforms our gaze: every work of art, every gesture of fraternity, every creature we contemplate bears within itself the imprint of that original love and calls us to respond with freedom, beauty and self-giving.

I ask you: in your works of art, always seek to weave fraternity. Do not work alone, but in dialogue with your brothers. Do not create for yourselves, but for the wider community of people today and for us, your brothers. Be faithful in small things: in the care of materials, in respect for time, in mutual listening during common work.

Paul has shown us a Church made of names and faces. Francis has taught us that everything is relationship: with God, with brothers, with creatures. You Franciscan artists continue this mission: make your art an instrument of universal fraternity.

May the Lord bless you and keep you. Amen.

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Minister General