



# ORDO FRATRUM MINORUM

## MINISTER GENERALIS

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**To all the Brothers of the Order**

Rome, May 6<sup>th</sup> 2022

"The Lord says, 'Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore, be prudent as serpents and simple as doves'. Therefore, those brothers who by divine inspiration wish to go among the Saracens and other infidels, let them go with the permission of their minister and servant". (RegNB XVI, 1-3)

Dear Brothers of the whole Order

*may the Lord give you peace!*

From 10 to 23 February 2022, I personally made the canonical visit to the Custody of the Most Holy Protomartyrs of Morocco in order to get to know directly this reality that depends on the Minister General.

I experienced this opportunity as a real pilgrimage in a unique land, during which the words of the Rule not branded just mentioned grew in me, and with it the awareness that here an essential point of our charism is at stake: to be with and to be among people as a transparency of the Incarnation and the Passion, of the Good that dwells in every creature.

As I have travelled through this land, I have brought with me the brothers of the whole Order, feeling that here we are playing with something very vital: adhering to a land, a people, a culture, languages and other visions of the world, loving them and humbly seeking in them the traces of the presence of the God of life.

Our Constitutions say: "*As followers of St Francis and the first missionaries of the Order, the brothers should be strongly concerned to go humbly and devoutly among the people of the Islamic religion<sup>1</sup>, for whom equally there is no omnipotent except God<sup>2</sup>.*"

We live this vocation in many parts of the world. Morocco is the place where Francis, Clare and Anthony would have liked to give a radical witness to Christ, and where the Order's Martyrs lived it out. I thank all the brothers who have accepted the divine inspiration to come and live with and among this people, as a response to the inner call to say yes again to the vocation of Friars Minor.

With these simple words, it is my intention to remind all the brothers of the Order of the missionary call that belongs from within to our vocation, which dies without keeping this thrust alive.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rb 12,1; Rnb 16,3.

<sup>2</sup> CG 95, 3.

The need for new brothers is very urgent:

- in the **Custody of Morocco**, you will find the specific presentation attached;
- in **Sudan and South Sudan**, where knowledge of English and Arabic is required, we are waiting for brothers for the service of formation and for pastoral and missionary service in Khartoum and Juba;
- In the **Custody of the Holy Land** there is a need for formators and brothers who, learning the languages, can enter the various forms that the mission in this place requires today.
- In **Russia and Libya**, we need brothers who are available for mission in difficult contexts.

I ask the brothers who feel this call to listen to it in prayer, to make a personal discernment and with their Minister and to come forward with me through the General Secretariat for Missions and Evangelisation. I thank you even if only to listen to this call, the heart of our vocation.

With the blessing of St Francis, who wants us to be brothers and minors in the world, I greet you fraternally.



*Fr. Massimo Fusarelli, ofm*

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*Minister General*

Prot. 111247



## Appendix on the Custody of Morocco

The Custody comprises 22 friars from 12 countries (Brazil 2, Slovakia 1, Spain 1, Congo 3, Poland 3, Italy 2, France 2, Philippines 1, Mexico 2, Costa Rica 2, Croatia 2, Colombia 1). The Custody has two simply professed brothers. The brothers are distributed in the six fraternities of Rabat, Marrakech, Meknès, Larache, Tetouan and Tangier. The friars accompany four parishes and three Cultural Centres, participate in the animation of Caritas, visit prisons and animate several religious chaplaincies. They also accompany the monastery of the Poor Clares of Casablanca affiliated to the Order of Friars Minor from 16 May 2019. The mission in this land requires:

1. **Willingness to live and work in an international fraternity:** this requires special care for the quality of fraternal relationships and those with society, with the attention and development of an authentic interculturality.
2. **Readiness to live with and among Muslims,** cultivating a spirituality of listening and a contemplative gaze. This also requires a great deal of vigilance and training to meet, accept and respect the reality of difference, the otherness of the Muslim world.
3. **Willingness to learn French, Spanish and Arabic as spoken in Morocco.**
4. **Availability for work in cultural centres with Moroccans, pastoral work with sub-Saharan migrants, and care for European Catholics and tourists,** to be always lived with a focus on our specific choice to be here with and among people in a Muslim country.
5. **Availability for initial preparation** for presence and service in this land.

## Appendix on the Foundation of Sudan and South Sudan

The Foundation consists of 4 friars: 2 from the Province of Egypt in Khartoum, Sudan and 2 in Juba, South Sudan (1 from Italy and 1 from Vietnam). The friars accompany a parish in each city, together with solidarity service, refugee assistance and care for the reception of candidates in Juba.

The mission in this land requires:

1. Willingness to live and work in **international fraternities:** attention to and development of an authentic interculturality.
2. Willingness to **live *with and among* Muslims** in Sudan.





3. Willingness to learn **English and Arabic** spoken in these countries.
4. Willingness to undergo **initial preparation** for presence and service in this land.

#### **Appendix on the Custody of the Holy Land**

1. Willingness to live and work in **international fraternities**.
2. Willingness to live *with and among* people of different religions.
3. Willingness to learn **other languages**, with attention to Italian and local ones.
4. Willingness to adapt especially to life in the **Sanctuaries**, with liturgical animation, welcoming pilgrims, taking into account fraternal life and the Custody path.

#### **Appendix on presences in Russia and Libya**

1. Willingness to live and work in **international fraternities**.
2. Pastoral, humanitarian and educational services in Russia. Care for dialogue among Christians.
3. In Libya, Caritas and pastoral services for migrant and religious communities. English language.

