On the 18th of January, 2016, the feast day of the University and of its Chancellor was celebrated. The event took place in the Aula Magna of the PUA and centered on the theme, “Beyond the sun: an encounter with the encyclical Laudato si’”.

Following a contribution from the Secretary General, Br. Mark Wach OFM, and words of welcome from the Rector of the University, Sr. Mary Melone SFA, two presentations were given. Prof. Cristina Simonelli, President of the Society of Italian Women Theologians, spoke on “Creation in travail – urgency and patience” and his Excellency Kenneth Hackett, U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See, spoke on “The political reaction to the encyclical Laudato si’: challenges and opportunities”.

Br. Michael A. Perry, Minister General of the Friars Minor, then presented the “St. Francis Award” to two scholars. Felice Accrocca, a priest of the Diocese of Latina and professor at the Gregorian University, was given the award in recognition of his volume, “A Saint on Paper. Biographical Sources for the life of St. Francis of Assisi”, while Aleksander Leon Horowski OFMCap was honored for his book, “Repertorium sermonum latinorum medii aevi ad laudem sancti Francisci Assisiani” – a compendium of medieval Latin sermons in praise of St. Francis of Assisi.

Finally, Br. Michael A. Perry, the Chancellor of the Pontifical University Antonianum, spoke and brought the celebration to a close.
Tangier, Morocco – the King of Morocco meets a Franciscan friar

On August 21st 2015, as part of the King’s 52nd birthday celebrations in the Royal Palace of Tangier, the King of Morocco received Br. Simeon Stachera OFM, who presented him with his doctoral thesis, entitled “Franciscans and Sultans in Morocco”. This volume is the result of three years study, and has been recognized as an important resource for Christian-Islamic interreligious dialogue. King Mohammed VI thanked the Franciscan friars for their religious and humanitarian service over the last 800 years.

Trent – Lecture given by Br. Francesco Patton OFM

On September 3rd and 4th, 2015, a group of lecturers in Catholic Religious Studies met at the Salesian Institute of Trent. As part of the gathering, Br. Francesco Patton gave a lecture on “Our relationship with Creation: Laudato si’”. If you would like to listen to this talk, simply click on: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ABwvNFknDec

Palma de Majorca, Spain – Centenary of Blessed Raymond Lull

Msgr. Luis F. Ladaria, Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, declared open the seventh centenary celebrations of the death of Blessed Raymond Lull in Palma de Majorca on November 27th, 2015. The Italian Center of Raymond Lull Studies at the Pontifical University, Antonianum, also participated in the celebrations, which take on a particular significance because of Lull’s thinking on interreligious dialogue, especially that between Christians and Muslims.

Roma – A full page on St. Francis’ Christmas Crib

December 28/29, 2015, saw an edition of L’Osservatore Romano dedicate a whole page (p. 4) to the Greccio experience of St. Francis. The saint, with the help of his friend John, wanted to see how Jesus was born in Bethlehem with none of the comforts that a newborn needs. The example of St. Francis led to the widespread adoption of the tradition of the Christmas Crib, and to an awareness of Jesus’ invitation to follow in his footsteps – something St. Francis resolved to do until the end of his life. The Osservatore drew on "The Poor King", an article written by Felice Accrocca, Professor at the Gregorian University and a priest of the Diocese of Latina, as well as “Hay, Manger and Eucharist” by Pietro Messa OFM, Head of the Higher Institute of Medieval and Franciscan Studies at the PUA.

Portiuncula – Opening of the Door of Mercy

Msgr. Domenico Sorrentino formally opened the Door of Mercy at the Basilica of Our Lady of the Angels, the Portiuncula, on December 20th, 2015. The event highlighted the role of this holy place which for eight centuries has allowed people to experience reconciliation and to “draw from the wellsprings” of the love of God.

Pesaro, Italy – Armando Pierucci named honorary citizen

On 21st December, 2015, the Corporation of the City of Pesaro named Br. Armando Pierucci, OFM, an honorary citizen, in recognition of his contributions in the artistic and humanitarian fields. “Pesaro has been with me in everything I have managed to do in life”, said the new honorary citizen - “I even brought Pesaro to Jerusalem!”
This volume is the result of extensive archival research and gathers the liturgical sources that are characteristic of the prayer experience of the fraternity of St. Francis. It is essential reading so as to understand the story of Francis and Clare of Assisi, as well as the life and thought of medieval authors - Franciscan and non-Franciscan.
The liturgical sources, now published, can be studied alongside those published previously: The Franciscan Sources, Clarian Sources, and the hagiographical sources of the Franciscan Order (including the sources for St. Anthony and Blessed Giles).

This volume contains the Acta of the Study Day, held in Florence in 2014, which focussed on Leo X’s Bull *Ite vos*, the document which fixed the division between the Friars Minor of the Observance and the Conventuals. The various contributions in this publication can help towards an understanding of this division, and also contribute to a solid historical basis for the event envisaged by the Franciscan Ministers General, “Franciscan Friars in Chapter”.

This work aims to achieve an integrated vision of the life story of Francis of Assisi by studying the immense corpus of literature which analyses the writings of St. Francis. The study is presented in three parts. The first deals with essential information on the sources, and then proposes a well-reasoned chronology of the life of Francis divided into a number of stages. Part two is more extensive and analytical, and retraces the different “periods” of Francis’s life while at the same time presenting the writings which correspond to those periods. This allows the voice of Francis to “recount” his spiritual journey. The third part gives a brief biography of the saint, and seeks to pull together the key features of Francis’ experiences in order to arrive at a brief summary of the essential information arising from the author’s research.

NEW MINISTERS PROVINCIAL

**BR. DAVID GAA**
Province of St. Barbara, USA

**BR. CLAUDIO PEGORARO**
Province of Taiwan

**BR. ALGIRDAS MALAKAUSKIS**
Province of St. Casimir, Lithuania

NEW GENERAL DELEGATES

**BR. PIET BOTS**
Province of the Holy Martyrs of Gorcum, the Netherlands, for the Custody of St. Francis, Herald of Peace, Indonesia

**BR. BOBBY VADAKKAL**
Province of St. Thomas, Apostle of India, for the Custody of St. Francis of Assisi, Papua New Guinea

THE DIARY OF THE MINISTER GENERAL
FEBRUARY 2016

1-2
ROME
Concluding ceremonies of the Year of Consecrated Life

3-4
Travel to Papua New Guinea

5-14
PAPUA NEW GUINEA
Visit to the Custody of St. Francis of Assisi

14-28
AUSTRALIA
Visit to the Province of the Holy Spirit

24-26
NEW ZEALAND
Visit to the Foundation of St. Andrew

28-29
HONG KONG
Chapter of Mats for Chinese language friars
Meeting of the South Asia, Australia & Oceania Conference
September 7-9, 2015 - The annual meeting of the South Asia, Australia & Oceania Conference (SAAOC) was held in Jayapura, Indonesia, hosted by the Custody of West Papua. The main agenda item for the meeting was the election of the new President and Vice President of the Conference. Friars Paul Smith, Minister Provincial of Australia and Friar Wilhelmus Gonsalit Saur, Custos of West Papua, were elected President and Vice President respectively.

The “Frati Assisi” App
December 5th, 2015 - “Frati Assisi” (Assisi Friars) is a free App designed to appeal to friends of Francis of Assisi. It is aimed towards those who have experienced his charism and have been fascinated by the simplicity and beauty that radiates from him. The App will bring people closer to the saint who called himself a “new kind of fool”, sent by God to speak to the hearts of those far away, as well as those who are near. St. Francis spoke a simple and universal language that overcame barriers and made dialogue with everyone possible.

East Asian Conference Meeting Held in Korea
The General Assembly of the East Asian Conference was held from December 6th to 10th, 2015 at the Provincial House of the Holy Korean Martyrs Province in Seoul, South Korea.

Franciscans International and Caritas Release Handbook to Help Eradicate Poverty
A press conference was held in the Holy See Press Office (John Paul II room) on December 18th, 2015, to launch “Making Human Rights Work for People Living in Extreme Poverty: a Handbook for Implementing the UN Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights”.

Fr. João Muniz Alves appointed as Bishop Prelate of Xingu
23 December 2015 - Fr. João Muniz Alves has been appointed by the Holy Father as Bishop Prelate of Xingu, Brazil. He has served in a number of pastoral roles, including service as Provincial Minister in Bacabal (2007-2013) and Visitor General of the Franciscan Custody of Mozambique (2014). He is currently Guardian of the Franciscan community at São Luís do Maranhão, Assistant Pastor, Formator and Lecturer in Moral Theology.

DECREE: GENERAL STATUTES – AMENDED ARTICLES
The General Chapter of the Order of Friars Minor, celebrated in Assisi during the Feast of Pentecost 2015, made some modifications to the General Statutes, in Articles: 21; 158§3; 201b.

Therefore, having reviewed them and having obtained the consent of the General Definitory, in its Session of 7th December 2015, by virtue of the faculties that belong to us,

WE PROMULGATE AND DECLARE PROMULGATED the following modified Articles of the General Statutes, i.e.: 21; 158§3; 201b, and we prescribe that the respective norms become obligatory in the Order from the 19th March 2016.

Fr. Michael A. Perry, OFM
Minister General

Fr. Aidan McGrath, OFM
Secretary General

Rome, 8th December 2015
Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary