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“The Church must be attractive. Wake up the world. Be witnesses of a different way of doing, acting and living.”

This is what Pope Francis said in a conversation with the Union of General Superiors of Religious Institutes for Men, held November 29, 2013 at the Vatican.

“It is possible to live differently in this world. We’re talking about an eschatological look at the embodied values of the Kingdom here on this earth. It is to leave everything to follow the Lord. No, I do not mean, radical’. Evangelical radicalism is not just for religious: it is required for everyone. But religious follow the Lord in a special, a prophetic way. I expect this witness from you”.

“Wake “p the World!” was also the main theme of the meeting of the General Definitory with the Presidents of the Conferences / Federations that took place in Assisi, June 9-14, 2014. On that occasion, Friar Ugo Sartorio guided a reflection titled: “Wake Up the World! Wake Up the Federations!” and the Minister General urged all of the participants to responsibly carry out their duty to be witnesses. Pope Francis reminds us that this is what is fitting for all religious.

![Minister General]

Friar Marco TASCA
April 7-12, 2014 Session

In the session held at the Friary of the Twelve Holy Apostles in Rome, the General Definitory:

- approved the minutes of the meeting held on February 17-27, 2014;
- was informed of the ongoing work of the CNUPGV of Assisi in relation to the organization of the International Youth Toward Assisi Meeting;
- agreed on a general economic canonical visitation to the houses of formation of the AFCOF Federation;
- was updated on some contacts with the CEFID of Assisi;
- was informed regarding the place, date and method of the spiritual exercises for the General Definitory at the Hermitage of Lecceto, Siena;
- reflected on the topic of economic solidarity in the Order starting from motion no. 4 of the Ordinary General Chapter of 2013;
- appointed the members of the General Secretariat for Formation (SGF), apart from the Secretary, Friar Roberto CARBONI, they are the following friars: Renzo DEGNI of the Italian Province of Rome, Lucjan BOGUCKI of the Provincial Custody of Slovakia, and Louis PANTHIRUVELLIL of the Province of India. Instructions were given for the operational priorities of the Secretariat based on motion nos. 1-2, 5-10, and 12 of the General Chapter of 2013;
- appointed as members of the International Commission for Formation (CIF) the following friars, proposed by their respective Conferences and Federations: Joseph NTUMBILA (AFCOF), Josef FISCHER (CEC), Piotr SZCZEPAŃSKI (CEO), Gary JOHNSON (CFC), Alessandro PERRISSINOTTO (CIMP), Franklin DURÁN (FALC), and Alfred PARAMBAKATHU (FAMC). Instructions were given for the operational priorities of the Commission based on motion nos. 1-2, 5-10, 12 of the General Chapter of 2013;
- appointed Friar Germano TOGNETTI, of the Italian Province of St. Anthony, General Delegate for the Second Order and Affiliated Institutions;
- listened to the report of Friar Jaroslav Wysoczanski at the end of his fraternal visit to the Provinces of the Czech Republic and Hungary-Transylvania;
- met with the Minister Provincial of the Province of Hungary, Friar Zsolt KALNA, in relation to guiding the Province on its way to revitalization, according to Chapter motion no. 24;
- met with the Minister Provincial of the Province of the Czech Republic, Friar Bogdan SIKORA, in relation to guiding the Province on its way to revitalization, according to Chapter motion no. 25;
- met simultaneously with the President of the CEO Conference, Friar Wieslaw PYZIO and the Ministers Provincial of the Provinces of Hungary-Transylvania and the Czech Republic, in relation to guiding the Provinces on their way to revitalization, according to Chapter motions nos. 24 and 25;
- put the finishing touches on the program and the agenda for the meeting with the Presidents of the Conferences and Federations in Assisi on June 9-14, 2014;
- listened to proposals by members of the General Treasurer’s Office on the allocation of economic aid in 2014 from the Fund for the Needs of the Order and allocated aid.
- presented the members of the General Treasurer’s Office, took note of the balance sheet for 2013 and the budget for 2014 and then approved them;
- established, in accordance with the mandate of the General Chapter of 2013 (motion no. 4), the Formation Fund of the Order and gave some instructions for the preparation of a specific regulation;
• approved the financial contributions to the General Houses;
• approved the rules governing the Tax for the General Curia and the Instructions for Requesting Specific Adjustments for Some Jurisdictions in reference to that same Tax;
• approved the request for an adjustment of the 2014 Tax for the General Curia for two provinces;
• listened to a proposal by the Legal Representative of the Order about making some modifications to the Statutes of the Seraphicum;
• approved the additions to the Provincial Statutes of the Italian Province of Rome;
• listened to and commented on the report of the Assistant General for the CFC, Friar Jude WINKLER and the Assistant General for the FAMC, Friar Benedict BAEK, at the end of their general canonical visitation to the Province of St. Joseph of Cupertino and the mission in Viet Nam;
• listened to and commented on the report of the Assistant General for the CFC, Friar Jude WINKLER, at the end of his general canonical visitation to the U.S. Province of St. Bonaventure;
• listened to and commented on an update from the Assistant General of the CIMP, Friar Joaquín AGESTA and co-visitor Friar Maurizio DI PAOLO, on their ongoing general economic visitation to the Province of Romania;
• listened to reports on a series of visits made by the Assistants General to various Jurisdictions:
  • from the Assistant General for the AFCOF, Friar Tadeusz ŚWIĄTKOWSKI,
  • on the occasion of his visit to the Provincial Custody of Ghana and his participation in its Ordinary Custodial Chapter (March 17-20, 2014);
  • from the Assistant General for the CEC, Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ,
  • on the occasion of his visit to his native Province of Croatia and his participation in its Ordinary Provincial Chapter (March 9-13, 2014);
  • on the occasion of his meeting with the Definitory of the Province of Germany and his visit to two friaries of the Province (March 21-25, 2014);
  • from the Assistant General for the CEO, Friar Jacek CIUPIŃSKI,
  • the occasion of his visit to the Polish Province of Warsaw and his participation in its Spiritual Provincial Chapter (March 3-8, 2014);
  • on the occasion of his visit to the General Custody of Russia and his participation in its Ordinary Custodial Chapter (March 11-14, 2014);
  • from the Assistant General for the CFC, Friar Jude WINKLER,
  • on the occasion of his meeting on the topic of fundraising, held February 14, in the USA in which he participated with the General Exactor, Friar Wojciech KULIG and various friars from different Provinces in the USA;
  • on the occasion of his fraternal visit to the Provincial Custody of Canada (December 27, 2013 - January 2, 2014);
  • from the Assistant General for the CIMP, Friar Joaquín AGESTA,
  • on the occasion of the recent Conference Assembly;
  • from the Assistant General for the FALC, Friar Jorge FERNÁNDEZ,
  • on the occasion of his fraternal visit to Costa Rica for the episcopal ordination of Bishop Enrique MONTERO (March 1, 2014);
  • on the occasion of his fraternal visit to the community in the state and city of Guatemala (2-6 March 2014);
  • on the occasion of his fraternal visit to the Provincial Delegation of Peru (March 6-14, 2014);
  • on the occasion of his participation in the Spiritual Provincial Chapter of his native Rio de la Plata Province (March 17-21, 2014);
  • on the occasion of the meeting of the Inter-jurisdictional Unification Commission (CUI) of the presences of the Order in Central America (the Provincial Custody of Honduras and the Provincial Delegation of Costa Rica), which was held in Alajuela, Costa Rica (April 1-3, 2014);
  • from the Assistant General for the FAMC, Friar Benedetto BAEK,
  • on the occasion of his participation in the Extraordinary Provincial Chapter of the Province of Japan (March 7, 2014);
  • presented the Secretary General for Formation, Friar Roberto CARBONI, listened to and discussed the basic layout of the Course for Guardians required by motion no.12 of the General Chapter of 2013;
• was updated on the recent International Assembly of the Militia of the Immaculata and on certain initiatives that the M.I. is planning;
In the session held June 3-7 at the Friary of the Twelve Holy Apostles in Rome, and then on June 9-13 at the Sacro Convento in Assisi, the General Definitory:

- approved the minutes of the meeting held April 7-12, 2014;
- was updated on some work and special preventative maintenance at the Friary of the Twelve Holy Apostles in Rome;
- was updated on Franciscans International;
- suppressed the Friary of San Giuliano in Messina, Italia;
- accepted the request that all solemnly professed friars of the Province of Korea be able to participate in their Extraordinary Provincial Chapter 2014;
- met with Friar Theo SCHOLTES, Minister Provincial of the Province of Holland and Friar Johan STEGE, Vicar Provincial of the same Province, regarding guidance for the Province according to Chapter motion no. 26;
- was updated about the revision of the statute of the St. Bonaventure College-Friary, Seraphicum, regarding the use of the premises;
- met with the members of the General Treasurer’s Office, Friar Nicola ROSA, General Econom, Friar Wojciech KULIG, General Exactor and Friar Maurizio DI PAOLO, Legal Representative, about some economic questions and some fundraising initiatives;
- analyzed the draft of the first chapter of the revised Constitutions prepared by the Executive Committee for the Revision of the Constitutions (CERC) and by its respective International Committee (CIRC) and proposed some changes;
- listened to the report on a study done by the legal committee composed of jurists Friar Maurizio DI PAOLO, Friar Donald KOS, and Friar Zbigniew KOPEČ, about the canonical legitimacy of dual membership, the legal privilege enjoyed by the friars of the Custody of the Sacro Convento of Assisi, as authorized by motion no. 13 of the General Chapter. The results of the study, later confirmed by the Holy See, have shown that the privilege of dual membership is legitimate;
- reviewed the program and agenda of the meeting of the General Definitory with the Presidents of Conferences and Federations;
- listened to and commented on the final report by the Assistant General for the CIMP, Friar Joaquín AGESTA, and by Friar Maurizio DI PAOLO, a member of the General Treasurer’s Office, at the end of their general economic canonical visitation to the Province of Romania;
- listened to reports on a series of visits made by the Assistants General to various Jurisdictions:
  - from the Assistant General for the AFCOF, Friar Tadeusz ŚWIĄTKOWSKI,
    - on the occasion of the meeting of the Faculty Council of the Inter-Franciscan College of St. Bonaventure in Lusaka, Zambia (May 6-8, 2014);
    - on the occasion of the AFCOF Federation Assembly in Nairobi (May 10-15, 2014);
    - on the occasion of the meeting with the AFCOF formators in Nairobi (May 10-15, 2014);
  - from the Assistant General for the CEC, Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ,
    - on the occasion of the “Juniorentreffen 2014” meeting in Schwarzenberg, Germany (April 22-26, 2014);
    - on the occasion of the meeting of the CEC Conference at the friary of St. Francis in Cracow, Poland (May 19-22, 2014);
    - on the occasion of the celebration of the second part of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter of his native Province of Croatia (May 25-28, 2014);
from the Assistant General for the CEO, Friar Jacek CIUPIŃSKI,
- on the occasion of the Spiritual Custodial Chapter of the Provincial Custody of Slovakia (April 28–May 1, 2014);
- on the occasion of the second part of the Ordinary Custodial Chapter of the General Custody of Russia (May 6-9, 2014);
- on the occasion of the Extraordinary Provincial Chapter of the Polish Province of Cracow (May 12-16, 2014);
- on the occasion of the meeting of the Minister General and the same Assistant General for the CEO with the Ministers Provincial of the three Provinces in Poland, held in Cracow (May 22, 2014);
- on the occasion of his fraternal visit to the Provincial Delegation of Ukraine (May 27-31, 2014);

from the Assistant General for the CFC, Friar Jude WINKLER,
- on the occasion of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter of the U.S. Province of St. Bonaventure, in which he participated together with Vicar General at Marytown in Libertyville, IL, USA (April 28–May 2, 2014);
- on the occasion of the first Ordinary Provincial Chapter of the new U.S. Province of Our Lady of the Angels (born on May 5, 2014 from the union of the U.S. Provinces of the Immaculate Conception and St. Anthony of Padua, in which he participated together with Minister General and the Vicar General, in Buffalo, New York, USA (May 5-9, 2014);
- on the occasion of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter of the U.S. Province of Our Lady of Consolation, in which he participated together with Vicar General at Mount St. Francis, IN, USA (May 12-15, 2014);
- on the occasion of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter of the U.S. Province of St. Joseph of Cupertino, in which he participated together with Vicar General at Alhambra, CA, USA (May19-23, 2014);

appointed Friar Felice FIASCONARO to a second term as guardian of the Community of St. Bonaventure (Seraphicum) in Rome, Italy;

considered the proposal to create an Institute / Center of Asian Studies in collaboration with the FAMC Conference and the St. Bonaventure Faculty in Rome;

indicated a procedure and appointed a work team composed of Friars Wojciech KULIG, General Exactor, César ESSAYAN, Custos of the Provincial Custody of the Orient and the Holy Land and Gianni CAPPELLETTO, biblical scholar and expert in pilgrimages to Israel to identify a possible location for a friary of the Order in Jerusalem;

analyzed the draft of a statute for a coordination group, tentatively called “Service for the History and Tradition of the Order”;

was updated on the process of organizing the International Youth Toward Assisi Meeting scheduled for August 2-9, 2015;

approved that the Order be an “actor” in the cause for the beatification of Friar Antonio SINIBALDI, a religious of the Italian Province of Rome who drowned after saving some young people during a boat trip in 1987 off the Port of Itaqui, near Sao Luis, in the state of Maranhão, Brazil;

examined various personal cases.

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June 9-13, 2014 Session

In the session held at the Sacro Convento in Assisi, the General Definitory met with the Presidents of the Conferences and Federations.

Those present: Friar Lambe FERENA, President of the AFCOF; Friar Milan KOS, President of the CEC; Friar Wieslaw PYZIO, President of the CEO; Friar James KENT, Representative of the CFC; Friar Giancarlo CORSINI, President of the CIMP; Friar Carlos TROVARELLI, President of the FALC; Friar Sebastian PEANDANATHU, President of the FAMC.

The meeting began with two moments of reflection-spiritual sharing from two lectures:
- “Wake Up the World, Wake Up the Federations!” Friar Ugo SARTORIO
- “The Role of the Federation President” Friar Maurizio DI PAOLO;
which were followed by a detailed exchange of views and experiences, in particular, on the service of authority of the Minister and on the role of the President of the Conference as a coordinator of collaboration between Jurisdictions.

According to the proposed agenda:

- information shall be shared regarding principal events occurring in each Conference and Federation, relevant to the last year;
- a systematic update concerning the mandate of the General Chapter of 2013 shall be presented to the Minister General with his Definitory and to the Conferences and Federations, particularly regarding ‘fraternal and economic solidarity’ (motion no. 4); on Franciscan Discipleship (motion no. 5), on the Ratio Studiorum (motion no. 6), the preparation of resource people for formation (motion nos. 8-11), the Course for Guardians (motion no. 12), the General Custody of Assisi (motion no. 13), the composition of the International Commissions (motion no. 15), the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Martyrdom of St. Maximilian Kolbe and the 100th anniversary of the founding of the MI (2017) (motion no. 16), concerning the General Treasurer’s Office (motion no. 19), the guidance of certain Provinces (motion nos. 22-26), the Tax for the General Curia (motion no. 27);
- presented the Coordinator and the Secretary of the Committee for the Revision of the Constitutions (CERC) Friar Valentín REDONDO and Friar Timothy KULBICKI, and indicated that they proceed first to an update on the work of revising the Constitutions and then to a systematic analysis of the draft of the first chapter in terms of what individual communities in the Order will be asked to do.
- presented the members of the General Treasurer’s Office, Friar Nicola ROSA, General Econom, Friar Wojciech KULIG, General Exactor and Friar Maurizio DI PAOLO, Legal Representative, dealt with some economic questions especially the issue of fundraising;
- was updated on the process put into place by the Conferences and Federations to revise their statutes on the basis of the “Binding Instructions for the Statutes of the Conferences and Federations” issued in December 2013;
- was updated about “Project Jerusalem”;
- talked about the International Youth Toward Assisi Meeting in 2015;

In addition, the Presidents:

- took part in a pilgrimage to Greccio and to the Holy Cave of Narni on Wednesday, June 11, together with the members of the General Definitory;
- met with the Definitory of the General Custody of Assisi on the afternoon of Friday the 13th;
- took part in a meeting of the Pro Seraphico Commission with the General Definitory also present on the morning of Saturday the 14th.
Meeting of the CIRC in Rome

Friar Timothy Kulbicki, Secretary of the CIRC

The International Commission for the Revision of the Constitutions (CIRC) met in Rome at the Seraphicum from March 31-April 7.

Members include seven representatives of the Conferences/Federations of the Order (Friar Bernardino Fiore of the Province of Naples [CIMP]; Friar Kazimierz Malinowski of the Polish Province of St. Anthony [CEO]; Friar Janez Kurbus of the Province of Slovenia [CEC]; Friar Kevin Schindler-McGraw of the American Province of St. Joseph of Cupertino [CFC]; Friar Joseph Blay of the Custody of Ghana [AFCOF]; Friar Rogério Pereira Xavier of the Brazilian Province of St. Francis [FALC]; and Friar Gabriel Singarimbun of the Custody of Indonesia [FAMC]) plus three members of the Executive Committee for the Revision of the Constitutions (CERC): Friar Valentino Redondo of the Province of Spain, Friar Timothy Kulbicki of the American Province of St. Anthony, and Friar Zbigniew Kopeć of the Polish Province of the Immaculate Conception.

After a joint meeting with the Executive Committee and a greeting from the Minister General, the International Commission examined the draft of Chapter I of the Constitutions prepared by the Executive Committee and suggested further revisions based upon particular cultural sensibilities of each Conference/Federation. Those revisions in turn will now be incorporated into CERC’s draft and presented to the General Definitory for its review in June. The draft of Chapter I reviewed by the General Definitory will be formatted into Guides for Conventual Chapter discussions, to be used in local friaries beginning in September, 2014. Those House Chapter guides in turn will serve both as a review of the proposed constitutional texts and for the friars’ continuing formation. Both CERC and CIRC participated in a study meeting designed to provide background for Chapter III of the Constitutions (Fraternal Life in Communion), held at the Seraphicum on April 4-5. CIRC will convene again in October, 2014, to review the draft of Chapter II.

For an update of the work done so far, check out the PowerPoint presentations at www.ofmconv.net, link Constitutions-Revision, link Multimedia, link 2014. As always, you can contact the Committee at constitutiones@ofmconv.net.
The Minister General has appointed new members of the International Commission for Formation (CIF).

The CIF is composed of members of the General Secretariat for Formation as well as friars proposed by the Conferences of the Order and confirmed by the Minister General.

Currently the CIF has eleven members: Friar Roberto Carboni, the Secretary General for Formation; Friars Renzo Degni, Louis Panthiruvellil and Lucian Bogucki, members of the Secretariat. For the African Federation of Conventual Franciscans (AFCOF): Friar Joseph Ntumbila; for the Conferentia Europae Centrals (CEC): Friar Josef Fischer; for the Conferentia Europae Orientalis (CEO): Friar Piotr Szczepański; for the Conventual Franciscan Conference (CFC): Friar Gary Johnson; for the Conference of Intermediterranean Ministers Provincial (CIMP): Friar Alessandro Perissinotto; for the Federación Conventuales America Latina (FALC): Friar Franklin Antonio Durán; and for the Federation of Asian Minor Conventuals FAMC: Friar Alfred Parambakathu.

The purpose of the Commission is to work closely with the General Secretariat for Formation to provide data on formation in each member’s Conference. This would include the number of friars in formation, formation activities, etc. The Commission also serves as a working group for discussing important formation issues suggested by the General Definitory and the Secretariat for Formation. The CIF normally meets once a year. Some of the stand-out priorities set by the General Definitory for 2014-2019 include a contribution to the global rethinking of formation by collaborating on the revision of the norms of the Constitutions related to formation in the Order. This has been set forth by the 2013 General Chapter—as has the testing and revision of Franciscan Discipleship and Ratio Studiorum.

On April 12, 2014, the Minister General, with his Definitory, appointed Friar Germano TOGNETTI as the new General Delegate to the Second Order and associated Institutions. He begins his four-year term on April 12, 2014.

On March 7, 2014, the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and the Societies of Apostolic Life issued a decree nominating Friar Germano as the Religious Assistant of the St. Clare Federation of Urbinist Poor Clare convents in Italy.

Friar Germano succeeds Friar Edoardo BRENTARI in both positions.

Friar Germano TOGNETTI is a friar priest of the Italian Province of St. Anthony and is now the guardian of the San Francesco friary in Ravenna (Italy). He was born in Lusignana (Reggio Emilia, Italy) on December 22, 1952, made his temporary profession on September 17, 1969, his solemn profession on December 7, 1977, and was ordained a priest on September 21, 1978.
“The Life of Fraternal Communion” was the theme of a study seminar sponsored by the St. Bonaventure Pontifical Theological Faculty in collaboration with the Executive Committee for the Revision of the Constitutions of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual.

It was held April 4-5, 2014, at the Seraphicum.

The objective of this event was to provide an in-depth academic and critical reading of the importance of the life of fraternal communion in the Constitutions.

The seminar speakers included Friars Giulio Cesareo, Luciano Bertazzo, Domenico Paoletti, Valentin Redondo and Emmanuel Rimoli. The moderators of the seminar and the discussion with the speakers were Friars Raffaele di Muro and Timothy Kulbicki. The Minister General, Friar Marco Tasca, was also in attendance.

The study seminar showed that “belonging to the Conventual reality should be rediscov- ered and valued”, as moderator Friar Raffaele Di Muro wrote in his synthesis, “However, it is impor- tant not to forget the fraternal dimension which needs deepening and greater affirmation in consecrated and Franciscan life today. It is a more credible witness of our Seraphic family. It will be very important to find a harmony between the friary and itinerancy: the first should be a meeting place for the brothers, the second, for heading out into a world characterized by selfishness and indifference. Being one in Christ is the aim of our communities.”
A New Franciscan Bishop in Italy

The General Secretariat

On April 16, 2014, Holy Wednesday, the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops informed the Minister General that the Holy Father appointed Rev. Father Giuseppe Piemontese, OFM Conv., Bishop of Terni-Narni-Amelia (Italy).

Father Giuseppe was the former Custos of the Sacro Convento in Assisi.

The episcopal consecration took place Saturday, June 21, 2014, at 6 p.m., at the Cathedral Church of Terni.

"I congratulate the Order for the confidence the Holy Father has placed in it. This nomination reflects well upon the Friars Minor Conventual. On behalf of the Congregation of Bishops, I give you my heartfelt thanks for enriching the hierarchy of the Church in Italy with a member of your Order. This occasion is particularly pleasing to me. I offer you my warmest wishes for a happy and holy Easter. Be assured of my prayers that vocations within your Order may flourish more abundantly..." Marc Cardinal Ouellet.

Friar Giuseppe Piemontese belongs to the OFM Conventual Province of St. Nicholas and St. Angelo in Puglia (Italy). He was born in Monte Sant’Angelo (Foggia, Italy) on April 24, 1946. He made his temporary profession on September 8, 1963, his solemn profession on October 8, 1967 and he was ordained a priest on April 5, 1971. Among his various assignments, he was Minister Provincial of his Province from 1997 to 2009. In 2009 he was called to serve as the Custos of the Sacro Convento in Assisi. Since last year he has been a Provincial Definitor and the guardian of the Friary of Cupertino (Lecce, Italy).

Friar Giuseppe was consecrated by the laying on of hands and the prayer of consecration spoken by the Metropolitan Archbishop of Perugia-Città, Gualtiero Cardinal Bassetti. Consecrating with him were Bishop Vincenzo Paglia, Friar Giuseppe’s predecessor in the Diocese of Terni-Narni-Amelia and Bishop Ernesto Vecchi, the apostolic administrator of the same diocese. The celebration was also attended by the Minister General, several members of the General Definitory and a large group of friars.

Bishop Gardin a Member of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life

From the General Secretariat

The Holy Father recently appointed our Bishop, the Most Reverend Gianfranco Agostino Gardin, a member of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

Before being appointed Bishop of Treviso, 2006-2009, Bishop Gardin was the Secretary of the same Congregation. In addition to its Prefect and Secretary, the Congregation is comprised of more than 15 cardinals, 30 bishops, monsignors and Ministers General of religious congregations. Of course, Bishop Gardin is also among them.

www.ofmconv.net

Frater unus Nuntius
Rome: Feast of the Apostles Philip and James

Friar Roberto Brandinelli

On Saturday, May 3, 2014, the community and parish of the Twelve Holy Apostles celebrated their annual festival for the liturgical feast day of the Apostles Philip and James.

The special feature of this year’s festival was the willingness of the community of the Twelve Holy Apostles to make the liturgical celebration a festive occasion for all the friars of our friaries in Rome. The coincidence of some other previously planned initiatives, and parish community commitments, had limited the attendance of the friars a bit; but as a new project, it got a good response. This was particularly true for the many faithful who attended the solemn Eucharistic Celebration at 6:30 p.m., with His Eminence, Gianfranco Cardinal Girotti presiding. During the Holy Mass he also administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to eight youths.

After the celebration there was a buffet dinner followed by a free concert of Russian and German melodies. It should be noted that during the day, several groups of faithful had celebrated Masses at the Basilica commemorating the two Saints.

The May 3 celebrations were anticipated the previous evening with the singing of Solemn Vespers. The Most Reverend Matteo Zuppi, Auxiliary Bishop of central Rome presided. The attendees included church Rectors and other ecclesiastical entities located within the parish territory.
International “Youth Toward Assisi” Meeting 2015

Friar Andrew Hochstedler

On May 4-6, 2014, in Rome, friars from five nations laid the groundwork for the 2015 Assisi International Meeting, a triennial youth conference to be hosted in the birthplace of the Order, August 2-9 of next year.

Assistant General Friar Miljenko Hontić (Croatia) and CIMP youth ministry delegate Friar Simone Tenuti (Italy) met with Friars Elio Jorge Rojas (Argentina), Andrew Hochstedler (USA/Turkey), Tomasz Szymczak and Mateusz Stachowski (Poland) at the Seraphicum in Rome, May 4-6, to initiate planning for the event.

Inspired by the theme, “Hope is Young: Transformed by the Joy of the Gospel,” the camp will gather together youth, 18-28 years of age, from around the world, offering them a unique international experience of the Gospel in the footsteps of Francis of Assisi.

All youth are invited to participate in a competition for the design of the International Meeting’s logo, based on the theme (Hope is Young...) and on the Franciscan spirituality of the event. The best design will be chosen as the week’s official logo and prizes will be awarded. More details to follow.

www.assisimeeting.org
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On Tuesday, May 13, 2014, the ministries of lector and acolyte were conferred on some friars from various Jurisdictions of our Order at the Seraphicum College in Rome.

Holy Mass was celebrated at 5 p.m. in the St. Bonaventure chapel. The Minister General, Friar Marco Tasca, was the presider. The concelebrants were Friars Igor Salmič and Enzo Galli, the Vice-Rectors of the friars receiving ministry and all other friars of the community.

The reception of ministry began with the appeal from the candidates, followed by a homily from Friar Marco Tasca. Friar Marco, taking up the address Pope Francis made to some of the Pontifical Colleges and Houses of Studies in Rome, pointed out some of the temptations that students face: “the academicism that occurs when friars return to their provinces, not as fathers, but as doctors”. Moreover, referring to what the Pope had said, he highlighted the four pillars of formation: spiritual formation, academic formation, apostolic formation and finally community formation.

On community life, the Minister General underscored that one can’t become a priest on one’s own but rather, in community. In that respect, again, referring to the Pope’s comments, he warned the friars about a certain obstacle in community life: gossip. Whereas gossip is a plague in community, the path of service helps community life flourish.

After the homily there was the rite of reception for the new lectors and acolytes. The lectors were: Friar Andrew Hochstedler (Turkey) and Friars Dilan Joel Koswatta Liyanage Perera and Sumal Triloshan Madawala Liyanage (Sri Lanka). The acolytes were: Friars Andrea Antonio Beato and Simon Peter Schiavone (Italy), Friars Antolin Maria Ramos de la Cruz, Nestor Livera and Ruben Martinez (Mexico), Friars Andrei Bejan and Cezar Nanea (Romania), Friar Elias Paolo Marswanian (Lebanon), Friars Paul Kiarie Njuguna and Timothy Mwanjala Machila (Kenya), Friars William Chanda and Willis Chungu (Zambia), and Friar Rory Doyle (Ireland).

The rite consisted of the exhortation, the prayer of blessing and the distribution of Holy Scripture to the lectors and the paten and chalice to the acolytes.
New President of the CPF of Poland

At their meeting in Wroclaw, June 3, 2014, the Conference of Polish Franciscan Provincials (CPF) chose a new president.

He’s Friar Jan Maciejowski, OFM Conv., the Minister Provincial of the Polish Province of St. Maximilian Kolbe (Danzig).

Friar Alan Brzyski, OFM, was elected his Vicar while Friar Leszek Łuczkanin, OFM Conv., was elected Secretary. (Both are from their own respective provinces in Gdansk).

The Conference of the Ministers Provincial arose in response to the common needs of all Franciscan Provinces in Poland and to facilitate collaboration between them.

In Poland there are three families of Franciscans: the Order of Friars Minor (OFM) - 5 provinces; the Order of Friars Minor Conventual (OFM Conv.) - 3 provinces; and the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin (OFM Cap.) - 2 provinces.

The members of the Conference meet twice a year.

Friar Jan Maciejowski was born January 25, 1970, in Żywiec. He entered the Order in 1989, professed his solemn vows on October 4, 1994, and was ordained a priest on May 25, 1996.

On March 26, 2012, he was elected the 5th Minister Provincial of the Province of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe of Poland (Gdansk).

Rome: Feast of St. Anthony at La Vigna

The friars the Friary of St. Anthony at the Baths (La Vigna, Rome) celebrated the Feast of St. Anthony with solemnly sung Evening Prayer in the chapel, followed by an outdoor party.

The local friary hosted many friars from the General Houses, and everyone enjoyed the barbecue prepared by the African friars.

The Feast of St. Anthony also marks the end of the academic year. This year, four friars finished their Licentiates and one friar finished his Doctorate. Two more are about to complete their Licentiates while another will complete his Doctorate.

The friary began the year with seventeen friars, and over the course of the year four friars returned to their homelands for various reasons. Another five friars have completed their scholarships and are headed to other friaries. Another five friars will spend the summer in various locales for pastoral work and study before returning to La Vigna next year. The three friars of the stable fraternity will spend the summer in preparation for the upcoming fraternal year.
The General Definitory Meets the Presidents of the Cetuses

From June 9-13, the Sacro Convento in Assisi hosted the annual meeting between the Minister General, the General Definitory and the Presidents of the Conferences and Federations.

All the members of the Definitory attended and all the Conferences and Federations were represented: Friar Lambe FERENA, President of the African Federation of Conventual Franciscans (AFCOF); Friar Milan KOS President of the Conferentia Europae Centrales (CEC); Friar Wieslaw PYZIO, President of the Conferentia Europae Orientalis (CEO); Friar James KENT, Representative of the Conventual Franciscan Conference (CFC); Friar Giancarlo CORSINI, President of the Conference of Intermediterranean Ministers Provincial (CIMP); Friar Carlos TROVARELLI, President of the Federación Conventuales America Latina (FALC); and Friar Sebastian PENDANATHU, President of the Federation of Asian Minor Conventuals (FAMC).

The meeting had four main objectives: to meet in the presence of the Seraphic Father, St. Francis (prayer, pilgrimage); to have an opportunity for shared, ongoing formation; to confirm the fulfillment of the mandate of the General Chapter with the Minister and the General Definitory; and to confirm it with the Conferences and Federations.

In fact, the entire first day was dedicated to spiritual reflection-sharing on the topics: “Wake Up the World, Wake Up the Federations” and later on: “The Role of the President of the Federation”

It began with a conference from Friar Ugo SARTORIO and later, Friar Maurizio DI PAOLO.

Each President or Representative then presented major news items from his respective Federation or Conference. After that, a large part of the sharing was dedicated to the “Chapter Mandate” which is comprised of the 21 motions of the 2013 General Chapter.

Particular attention was paid to:
- The work of the revision of the Constitutions presented by the Coordinator and the Secretary of the Ad Hoc Committee (CERC), Friars Valentín REDONDO and Timothy KULBICKI;
- The economic solidarity of the Order with three members of the General Treasurer’s Office present: Friar Nicola ROSA (General Econom), Friar Wojciech KULIG (General Exactor), and Friar Maurizio DI PAOLO (Legal Representative);
- The outline for the Course for Guardians prepared by the General Secretary for Formation Friar Roberto CARBONI (SGF), and by the International Committee for Formation (CIF).
In addition to liturgical participation with the communities of the Sacro Convento and the Franciscanum College in Assisi, there were pilgrimages made to Greccio and to the Holy Cave of Narni.

The Presidents also met with the Definitory of the General Custody of Assisi.

In his concluding remarks, the Minister General first thanked all those present and, through them, extended thanks to all those who carry out the service of authority in the Order. He then called attention to the proposal to get a reflection started in the Order on the theme of ‘Spiritual Fatherhood; something Pope Francis has referred to on several occasions. Such a topic should be examined in depth and be linked with our professed celibacy, with the theme of fraternity, and even with the role of the service of authority and the revision of the Constitutions.

Commentarium Ordinis 1/2014

Friar Luigi Costantini, Executive Editor

Commentarium Ordinis celebrates its 111th anniversary with the publication of its first issue for 2014.

Among the most important items inside are the Decretal Letter of Pope Francis on the equivalent canonization of Blessed Angela of Foligno and the Decree of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints on the “super martyrdom” of our confere Francis Zirano, martyred in Algiers in 1603.

The most significant events of our religious family are found summarized in the Acts of the General Minister, in particular, the suppression of two U.S. provinces (Immaculate Conception and Saint Anthony which resulted in the erection of the new Province of “Our Lady of the Angels”. There is also the circular letter to the whole Order on the “Revision of the Constitutions.”

The Secretary General has submitted his usual entries (meetings of the General Definitory canonical visits, celebrations of some Provincial and Custodial Chapters); there is a report on the appointment of a bishop, the episcopal consecration of two of our friars and official statistics of the Order updated to December 31, 2013.

Besides all this, the bulletin contains the record of the academic life of the Seraphicum and various Jurisdictions of the Order. Among these are the foundation of a new mission in North India; the erection of the new Brazilian Provincial Custody at Maranhao; celebrations in honor of Saint Angela of Foligno; the “Frescobaldi International Festival of Music” at the Basilica of the Twelve Holy Apostles in Rome and a conference on Friar Thomas of Celano at Tagliacozzo.

In 1892, the Minister General, Friar Lorenzo Caratelli, began printing a “Diarium Franciscalice” which was recorded in the “Res Ordinis Memoratu Dignae.” Another Minister General, Friar Dominic Reuter, in 1904, proposed the publication of “Notitiae ex Curia Generalitit Fratrum Minorum Conventualium”, a title that Friar Dominic Tavani, the Vicar General in 1915, changed to “Commentarium Ordinis Fratrum Minorum Conventualium.”
Testifying... on the Streets of Rome

On the afternoon of the Easter Vigil, a group of young friars from the Seraphicum testified to the joy of the Risen Lord.

Tourists and Roman residents crowding Fori Imperiali Street on Holy Saturday afternoon were drawn in by the singing of a group of young friars from the Seraphicum, who, wearing their habits and playing guitars and a “djembe”, were testifying to the joy of the Risen Lord. This group of 15 friars of various nationalities did not let themselves get discouraged by looming rainclouds.

Standing at the corner of the Altare della Patria (Altar of the Fatherland), their heart-felt renditions of English and Italian hymns and worship songs, along with their offer of prayer, attracted many passersby. People who first stopped by out of curiosity and surprise, soon found themselves happily participating in the singing and prayer.

The Franciscan Weblibrary

A few weeks ago, a new page was opened in the webpage of the Secretariat for Formation: the Franciscan Weblibrary.

It is a small web-library, by no means exhaustive, which handles many of the issues of interest regarding our Formation. It collects, in digital format (PDF) articles, reflections, notes and formation topics which the friars from different parts of the world have sent us. Some of the topics the articles deal with include: Spiritual Direction, Franciscan Spirituality, Affectivity, Vocation, Formation, Formators and those being formed, etc. All of these texts have been left in their original languages, just as they were sent to us. The Weblibrary wants to be a stimulus, primarily for the Formators of our Order, so that they may send their articles, writings and notes which might be useful to other formators, too. Hopefully, in the not too distant future, we will open a blog about formation. We ask everyone to work together, to make the Weblibrary even richer in content by sending articles, conferences, reflections, and even the writings of other authors (obviously without infringing on copyrighted material).

Attention: Weblibrary access is reserved to members of the Order (OFM Conv.) only.
Secretary of the SGF with the Formators of Africa

Friar Roberto Carboni, Secretary General of the SGF

At the invitation of Friar Tadeusz Świątkowski, the Assistant General for the African Federation of Conventual Friars, the Secretary General for Formation, Friar Roberto Carboni, visited the houses of formation in Zambia and Kenya.

From May 5 to 16, 2014, he met with the formators of our formation houses in Africa (Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Uganda and Malawi). In Lusaka (Zambia) he was also able to participate in the annual meeting of the Board of Governors (Council of the Faculty) of the College of Saint Bonaventure University, where our young friars are studying philosophy. This study center was born out of the desire of the three Franciscan families to demonstrate a sign of unity and fraternity and to foster mutual understanding and friendship among their friars in formation.

Our academic community has large numbers of friars in formation; in July there will be about 80 from various African nations. In addition to those studying Philosophy, there are large numbers studying Franciscanism and Spirituality. In response to this, a new Institute of Formation has recently been approved. It is connected with the College University and will offer the friars an introduction to Franciscanism and studies on the history and philosophy of the Franciscan tradition in addition to the subjects of Education, Psychology and Spirituality.

Following a bi-annual tradition, all the formators of our formation houses in Africa met together in Nairobi. The meeting program included the study of Franciscan Discipleship and its effective use in formation plus some explanation of the new chapters that were introduced and approved by the General Chapter.

In addition to that topic, which I covered, we had the distinguished presence of the Director of Catholic Civilization, Father Antonio Spadaro, S.J., an expert on new media. He talked about use of the Internet in religious formation and the need to accept this new “pulpit” from which one can proclaim the Gospel today. Fr. Anselmo Bonfigli, Rector of students in Lusaka, then talked about Educational and Relational Dynamics and has expertise in some areas of Graphology.

The climate of fraternal hospitality created by the friars of Lusaka and Nairobi made our days of study and sharing even more fruitful. The meeting included a relaxed and prayerful visit to the National Shrine of Subukia, dedicated to the Mother of God. It is entrusted to the care of our friars who are constructing this impressive new shrine with enthusiasm and lots of sacrifice.
On April 9, 2014, Friar Jarosław Wysoczanski, the General Secretary for Missionary Animation, was at the Sacro Convento in Assisi to make a fraternal visit to promote missionary animation at the novitiate located there.

This novitiate accommodates the novices of all of Italy and the CIMP Conference. Friar Jarosław took the opportunity to give a presentation on the elements of missionary spirituality, the style of a Franciscan mission, the missionary experience of the martyrs of Peru and to relay information about new missions of the Order.

His main objective was to get the novices to discover stronger and more profound reasons for mission, to allow them to get excited about missionary activity and to experience it as true passion for the Gospel.

The meeting was attended by 14 novices from various provinces of Italy (North Italy, Naples, Sicily) and other Provinces, Custodies and Delegations (Romania, Croatia, Slovenia, France and Portugal).

We support our brothers in prayer.
Missionary Animation in Poland

Friar Jarosław Wysoczański, Secretary General for the SGAM

The Secretary General for Missionary Animation, Friar Jarosław Wysoczański, was in Poland for a fraternal visit to promote missionary animation at the formation houses in that country from April 30 to May 12, 2014.

Friar Jarosław visited the common novitiate of the Polish Provinces of Warsaw and Gdańsk in Smardzewice, the postulants in Gniezno, the major seminary in Łódź-Łagiewniki and the parish community in Łódź-Dąbrowa.

At the formation houses, Friar Jarosław presented the elements of missionary spirituality, the style of a Franciscan mission, the missionary experience of the martyrs of Peru and information about the Order’s new missions.

The main objective, as usual, was to awaken in the young friars a deeper and stronger motivation for mission and to allow them to develop enthusiasm for missionary activity and to experience it as real passion for the Gospel.

The meeting at the novitiate in Smardzewice was attended by 12 novices from various regions of Poland and Belarus. At present, there are 19 young men in the postulancy program in Gniezno.

It was a good time of sharing for the brothers in formation and the formators, as well as an opportunity to schedule the animation program for next year.

A Day of Prayer for the Beatification of the Servants of God, Michał Tomaszek and Zbigniew Strzałkowski, was celebrated in the parish community of Łódź-Dąbrowa.
Conference on Kolbe at the Seraphicum

Raffaele Di Muro, General Assistant for the M.I.

On Saturday, May 3, the St. Bonaventure Pontifical Theological Faculty held its regular conference, organized by the Kolbean Chair, called: “Kolbe, Today”.

The purpose of the meeting was to focus attention on the message of the Polish saint. The moderator was Professor Anna Maria Calzolaro, professor of the Kolbean Chair.

Works were introduced by the Secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Archbishop Luis Francisco Ladaria. They dealt with the theme of the Mariology of Vatican II. Professor Alfonso Langella, teacher of Mariology at the Pontifical Theological Faculty of Southern Italy, for his part, highlighted the lines of Mariology that can be attributed to the Franciscan martyr on the basis of the Saint’s own experience and self-expression as well as on the basis of current theological parameters.

Friar Felice Fiasconaro, Professor of Mariology at the St. Bonaventure Pontifical Theological Faculty, explained the issue of the theological language of St. Maximilian and how it can “be translated” to the man of today. Finally, Friar Dominic Paoletti, President of the St. Bonaventure Pontifical Theological Faculty, drew various conclusions with respect to what the speakers had explained.

Taking part in the event were friars and young men from Italian novitiates and postulancy programs and many other attendees who particularly appreciated the Mariological stance of the Conference. The transcripts will be published in the journal Miles Immaculatae.

The Kolbean Chair has set May 9, 2015, as the date for the next workshop to study the person of St. Maximilian Kolbe.
The financial aid administered by the General Curia isn’t the only circle of solidarity in the Order; in fact, there are commendable and exemplary solidarity initiatives, for example, between Mother Provinces and their Daughter Custodies or Delegations, or through ‘twinning’ thanks to the involvement of groups, institutions and parishes. We extend our thanks to you all!

FOR HOLY MASSES:
- Prov. of St. Anthony, Italy

FOR MISSIONS:
- CIMP Missionary Center
- Prov. of Korea
- Prov. of Tuscany, Italy
- Prov. of St. Anthony, Italy
- Cust. of Austria-Switzerland

FOR THE NEEDS OF THE ORDER:
- Prov. of Spain
- Prov. of the Marches, Italy
- Prov. of Tuscany, Italy
- Prov. of the IC, USA

FOR FORMATION:
- Prov. of OLC, USA
- CIMP Missionary Center
- Prov. Argentina-Uruguay

SCHOLARSHIPS:
- Prov. of Holland

THANKS also to those who have been using the GENERAL CURIA as a channel of communications.
On April 22-26, 2014, a traditional formation meeting was held for post-novices and their formators. It took place at the friary and spirituality center in Schwarzenberg, Germany.

Superiors of the Conferentia Europae Centralis (CEC) were also in attendance. Among the post-novices of the CEC this year, there were seven men from the Custody of England and Ireland with their Custos, Friar Peter Damian Massengill. In all, some thirty participants gathered together from Croatia, Slovenia, Germany, Austria-Switzerland and England-Ireland.

The theme of the meeting was “The Spirituality of St. Clare in Relation to St. Francis, St. Elizabeth and St. Agnes”.

The first two days of the conference were presented by Mrs. Martina Kreidler–Kos, an expert on the spirituality of St. Clare.

The remaining two days were dedicated to a program of culture and recreation. On Thursday afternoon, the participants visited the city of Bamberg, the seat of the diocese where the Schwarzenberg friary is located. Friday was spent visiting the city of Würzburg where our church and seat of the Province of Germany are. On the return from Würzburg, the participants stopped at the little town of Iphofen. At this typical spot in Franconia we were able to taste the area’s characteristic food and wine. The encounter concluded with a solemn Eucharistic Celebration presided over by the Minister Provincial of Germany, Friar Bernhardin Seither, who besides having been the host, is also the Vice President of the CEC. The organizer of the meeting was the new Director of Formation for the CEC, Friar Josef Fischer. During the meeting with the post-novices he was also able to meet with the formators of the Conference.

During the post-novitiate formation meeting, Friar Miljenko Hontić, the Assistant General for the CEC, met with Friar Milan Kos, the President of the Conference along with the Vice President, Friar Bernhardin Seither, to prepare for the next Conference Assembly scheduled for May, 2014.
Canonical Visit to Holland

Friar Miljenko Hontić, Assistant General for the CEC

On May 6-14, 2014, on behalf of the Minister General, Friar Marco Tasca, Friar Miljenko Hontić, the Assistant General for the Conferentia Europae Centralis (CEC), made a canonical visitation to the Province of St. Willibrord in Holland.

During the visitation, Friar Theo Scholtes, the Minister Provincial, went almost everywhere with the Assistant General. They visited every community in the Province and all of the friars had an opportunity to speak with the Visitator.

One should remember that there are three Belgian friars, still living in Belgium, who have been affiliated to the Province for the last two years. The Province currently has 21 members, most of them elderly. It is divided into three regions; North, Center and South, with friaries in Brunsum-Treebeek, Beek and Valkenswaard.

Towards the end of the canonical visitation there was a Provincial Assembly attended by almost all the friars. Together with the Visitator, they reflected on the future of the Province. Later, the Visitator met with the Provincial Definitory. The visitation ended at the headquarters of the North region in Voorhout.
On May 19-22, 2014, the first of two annual assemblies of the Conferentia Europae Centralis (CEC) was held at the friary of St. Francis in Cracow, Poland.

This time the members of the CEC met together outside the territory of their own Conference because the organizers in this case were the three Provincial Delegates of the Polish Provinces, headed by the President-in-Office from the Province of Cracow, Friar Dariusz Zając.

All members were present except the Delegate to the mission in Scandinavia.

After approval of the minutes and updates from the various jurisdictions of the Conference, several topics were discussed: the formation of young friars after solemn vows and ordination, the Statutes of the Conference, the small number of vocations in the CEC, the Revision of the Constitutions, and upcoming events of the Conference.

One morning was devoted to a meeting of the CEC with the three Ministers Provincial of the Polish Provinces, the Minister Provincial of Romania and the Minister General, together with the three Assistants General of the European Conferences. The main thrust of the meeting was to reflect on the manner, style and quality of our presence in Europe, starting with how things are standing today in comparison with the current challenges and concerns of Pope Francis.

The meeting concluded with a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Christ’s Passion in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska and the new shrine dedicated to St. John Paul II, on the outskirts of Cracow.

On June 26-29, 2014, the Exactor General, Friar Wojciech Kulig, the former General Delegate of Belgium and current Secretary of the Custody of the Orient and the Holy Land, Friar Dominique Mathieu, and the Assistant General for the Conferentia Europae Centralis (CEC), Friar Miljenko Hontić, visited the community of friars at the friary in Brussels.

They also visited three Belgian friars affiliated to the Province of Holland, who were once members of the Delegation of Belgium.
During the meeting, various situations arising from the closure the Delegation of Belgium were investigated.

The community of the friars in Brussels has gotten off to a good start, and—as they say—are sowing the first seeds of their lifestyle and way of being present in this European metropolis. In this community there are five friars representing four different nationalities: Friar Daniel, the guardian and Friar Jean Luc are from France, Friar Bart is from Belgium, Friar Adrian is from Romania and Friar Jack is from Australia.

The three other Belgian friars who were visited still live and work in Belgium, but they are affiliated with the Province of Holland. All three are retired, yet despite their age, are doing well and still work, each according to his ability. Friar Remi lives in Landen, in a former school of our Order and every Monday and Tuesday he goes to Brussels for the Masses in Flemish and for the devotion to St. Anthony. Friar Andrea can be found at his former parish in Wezembeek, where he helps a neighboring pastor, and Friar Mark is in a retirement home in Halle, where he writes books on the history of the Friars Minor Conventual in this part of the world.

In addition to these visits, there were several meetings with representatives of KADOC (Research Center for Religion, Culture and Society) and with various representatives in the field of economic management.

For more news photos, please visit our website:

www.ofmconv.net
Feast Day of the Province of Hungary/Transylvania

Friar Jacek Ciupiński, Assistant General for the CEO

On April 28, 2014, in Miskolc, Hungary, we celebrated the feast day of the Province of St. Elizabeth of Hungary and Transylvania.

A crucial moment of the feast day was the celebration of a solemn Mass commemorating our brother and Servant of God, Friar Kelemen Didak. During the Mass the friars and the faithful prayed together for his beatification.

The Mass was attended by friars from the Province of Hungary and Transylvania and the Provincial Custody of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M. of Slovakia. For the Slovakian friars and Friar Jacek Ciupiński, the Assistant General for the Conferentia Europae Orientalis (CEO), the Mass also served to open the Custody’s Spiritual Chapter taking place in Brehov, Slovakia.
FraterusNuntius
Fraternal Visit to Romania - Part I
Friar Maurizio Di Paolo, Procurator General

From March 24 to April 3, 2014, Friar Joaquín Agesta, Assistant General for the Conference of Intermediterranean Ministers Provincial (CIMP) and Friar Maurizio Di Paolo, the Procurator General, made a fraternal visit to the Province of St. Joseph of Romania.

Greeted at the airport by the Minister Provincial, Friar Emilian Cătălin and the Provincial Secretary, Friar Daniel Romila, the two visitors began their visit the next day, on the feast of the Annunciation, as they met with the Provincial Definitory of Romania.

In the days that followed, their visit extended to the houses of formation: the Novitiate, where Friar Joaquín presided over the Mass, the Postulancy House, at striking mountain site in the Carpathians where there was time for a nice walk around the woods and the friary of Roman.

Friar Joaquín listened to individual friars, while Friar Maurizio went to see the works of the Province: the great Seminary of Roman, with its high school and theological institute, the Farm, the Nursery, the work of the St. Anthony Charity to benefit the poor, the Print Shop and other worthwhile enterprises.

Meeting with the young men, the postulants, was a sign of hope: there were 27 of them altogether, plus 17 novices, and 30 clerics. They’re all young vocations who inspire hope. They are asking to take on a big commitment; the maintenance of their human, spiritual and cultural formation.

The visit will continue in May, in preparation for the Spiritual Chapter, which will be celebrated in June.
On the feast day of St. John the Baptist, June 24, 2014, in Iasi (Romania), 29 young men were ordained to the priesthood.

These included 13 Friars Minor Conventual, 14 men from the diocesan seminary of Iasi, a Capuchin Friar Minor, and a member of the “Don Orione” congregation.

The Mass began with a splendid procession which started off from the old cathedral, built between 1782 and 1789. The Most Reverend Petru Gherghel, Bishop of Iasi presided at the Mass. The concelebrants included the Archbishop Emeritus of Liverpool (England) Bishop Patrick Altham Kelly, the Most Reverend Anton Cosa, Bishop of Chisinau, the auxiliary Bishop of Iasi, Bishop Aurel Perca and more than 250 priests.

In his homily, Bishop Gherghel reflected on the mission of St. John the Baptist and urged the candidates to model themselves on Blessed Anton Durcovici, Bishop of Iasi. He was declared blessed by the Church on May 17, 2014. The bishop asked the people to always pray for and support those who chose to respond positively to the vocation they received.

All those present followed the key points of the ordination with interest.
We give thanks to God for the gift of these young priests. The Lord has always taken care of his Church so that it does not lack disciples willing to serve humanity.

In the next few Sundays, the new priests will be welcomed in their communities of origin to celebrate their first Masses.

Solemn Profession of Friar Pietro Zhao

Friar Maurizio M. Bazzoni, Custodial Secretary

On June 28, 2014, Friar Pietro Zhao Wenbo made his solemn profession into the hands of Friar Mauro M. Gambetti, the Custos of the General Custody of the Sacro Convento in Assisi.

The ceremony took place beside the altar of the lower church of the Basilica of St. Francis during the Eucharistic celebration on the vigil of the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul. The General Custos presided.

Friar Peter, 32, was born in Shanxi; a north-western province of the Republic of China. He arrived in Assisi in August of 2004.

After postulancy, he made his novitiate at the Friary of the Saint of Padua at the Basilica of the same name. It was there he made his temporary profession on August 30, 2008. He then continued his post-novitiate education at the Franciscanum in Assisi, attending the local Theological Institute.

Next September he will be transferred to the Seraphicum International College in Rome to attend courses in Franciscanism at the Antonianum Pontifical University.
On April 27, 2014, Sunday in the Octave of Easter or Divine Mercy Sunday, crowds of worshipers not only gathered in Rome, Assisi and Cracow.

The Franciscan missionaries in Uganda also organized an outdoor prayer meeting. About 5000 believers attended the feast of Divine Mercy Sunday, the day of the canonization of Popes John XXIII and John Paul II. It was held at the Shrine of the Ugandan Martyrs at Munyonyo. Even the oldest residents of this neighborhood in Kampala (the capital of the country) could not recall a larger gathering than this.

The meeting began with the “Holy Hour”—the adoration of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament—which concluded with the participants praying the “Chaplet of Divine Mercy.”

After the prayers, the pilgrims listened to two lectures. The first was made by a Missionary of the Poor, Brother Raymond (the Philippines). The second was made by our confrere, Friar Marian (Kajubi) Goląb, Rector of the Shrine of Munyonyo.

The central moment of the meeting was the Holy Mass, presided over by the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Kampala, Father Charls Kasibante. At the end of the Eucharist, the celebrant blessed the images and mementos connected with the Divine Mercy cult.

The saints were not only present spiritually, but also physically: the relics of Saint Faustina and John Paul II were exposed continuously during the celebration. Every participant was able to personally touch them and pray for a moment in front of them. The veneration lasted about 4 hours.

Pope John Paul II visited Uganda in February of 1993. Thanks to that visit the Ugandans became familiar with Poland and Saint Faustina Kowalska, the Apostle of Divine Mercy. The sainted Pope was fixed in their memory as a man immersed in prayer.
East Africa – Ongoing Formation for Guardians

On April 29 to May 2, 2014, the guardians of eleven friaries in East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda) held a joint meeting on ongoing formation.

It was a meeting of fraternity, formation and information.

The meeting took place at the National Marian Shrine of Kenya, which, for years, has been staffed by the Friars Minor Conventual (210 km from Nairobi).

The theme of the meeting was linked to the legacy of the newly-sainted Pope John Paul II and his teaching in and for Africa. The facilitators of the meeting were: Friar Robert Leżohupski, OFM Conv. (Professor of Canon Law in Nairobi) and Friar Daniel Karau, OFM Cap.

In addition, during the meeting, the guardians were able to reflect on and share their experiences about the role the guardian plays in promoting the following:

1. Francis—the Model of a Minister, 2. The Guardian—Guiding the Community in Living the Evangelical Counsels, 3. How to Respond to Various Difficulties in Community Life.

The atmosphere of the meeting was particularly enhanced by the meeting’s location. Every day, crowds from all over the country come here to honor and pray to Mary, Mother of the Kenyan people.

The friars have appreciated this way of sharing their views on their responsibilities as superiors who have been given the mission of caring for individual friars and friaries.

The participants
On May 6-8, 2014, Friar Tadeusz Świątkowski, the Assistant General for the African Federation of Conventual Friars (AFCOF), took part in the Assembly of the Council of the Faculty of Philosophy at the Inter-Franciscan College in Lusaka.

The College offers common study and formation for all three Franciscan Orders. The meeting was attended by Major Superiors and Provincial Delegates from within our presences in Africa who have their student friars in Lusaka. Those students include 5 Friars Minor Conventual, 6 Friars Minor Capuchin Friars and 4 Friars Minor OFM. They come from Kenya, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, Ghana, Uganda, Mozambique and South Africa. Also attending were the Superiors from three other Congregations affiliated with the Faculty: Marian Hill, Oblates and SMA.

The President of the Assembly this year was the OFM Provincial Custos of Zimbabwe (every year a Minister from one of the three Orders chairs the Council of the Faculty: Year A: OFM, B: OFM Conv. and C: OFM Cap.).

Officers were elected to the following positions: Rector of the College – Friar Charles Mukuka, OFM Conv. of Zambia (first term); Dean of the College – Dr. Godfrey Marera (Zimbabwe); Vice-Rector and Treasurer – Friar Lucas Gololombe, OFM (Mozambique); Director of the Institute for Formation – Friar Kizito Nyendwa, OFM Conv. (Zambia).

One of the various issues on the agenda was discussed at length. It concerned the implications of the “Bologna Process” and its effect on our friars in formation and their studies. As a result of the discussions, the Assembly decided to create a new Institute, independent from the Faculty of Philosophy, which will take care of issues concerning formation and religious studies. The Institute for Formation was thus created, by unanimous agreement, so that students, with the permission of their superiors, could earn a Diploma in Formation in addition to a Bachelor of Philosophy. On the other hand, all Franciscan students not aspiring to earn a diploma will have to take courses on Franciscanism and Liturgy.

There are 22 professors teaching in the college (18 religious and 4 laypersons). Some 185 students are expected for the 2014-15 year. Among them will be numbers of friars in formation: OFM Conv.: 80, OFM Cap.: 51 and OFM-36.
Assembly of the Major Superiors of the AFCOF

On May 10-15, 2014, the annual assembly of Major Superiors of the African Federation of Conventual Friars (AFCOF) was held in Nairobi, Kenya. Formators from the AFCOF Federation were present as well.

Among those attending were the Assistant General for the AFCOF, Friar Tadeusz Świątkowski, Friar Mauro Gambetti, the General Custos of Assisi and the Major Superiors of Zambia (Friar Ferena Lambe), Ghana (Friar Anthony Bezo), Kenya (Friar Kazimierz Szulc) and Tanzania (Friar Krzysztof Cieślikiewicz), and the Delegates of Burkina Faso (Friar Marek Hryniewicki), Malawi (Friar Linus Mulenga) and Uganda (Friar Wojciech Ulman).

During the meeting the Superiors discussed, among other things, the following topics:

1. Challenges with the common houses of formation, including the most burning issues: the inter-jurisdictional exchange of formators and the rapid growth in the number of those needing formation.

2. The division of AFCOF Common Formation into two zones: Western and South/East.

3. The difficult challenge of finances: it was decided to convene a meeting of all the treasurers of the common houses of formation to find solutions.

4. The General Custos of Assisi made a presentation to the Superiors on the current situation and needs of Assisi.

5. At the end of the meeting Fr. Antonio Spadaro, S.J., Director of Catholic Civilization in Rome, made a presentation to the Superiors and formators on religious life and the use of mass-media.

The Common Houses of Formation in Africa predict the following statistics for the year 2014-15:

- Novitiates: Ndola (Zambia): 7 novices from Zambia and 1 from Malawi = 8
- Accra (Ghana): 4 novices from Ghana and 1 from Burkina Faso = 5
- Arusha (Tanzania): 6 novices from Tanzania, 2 from Kenya and 2 from Uganda = 10
- Philosophy students: Lusaka: 78 student friars from: Zambia (28), Ghana (23), Kenya (15), Tanzania (8), Burkina Faso (2), Uganda (3) and Malawi (1).
- Theology students: Nairobi: 36 student friars from: Zambia (20), Ghana (2), Kenya (10) and Tanzania (4).
Pilgrimage of Catechists to Munyonyo

Friar Adam Mutebi Klag, OFM Conv., Uganda – Munyonyo

The months of May and June in Uganda are a time for pilgrimages. It’s an event connected to the anniversary of the death of the Ugandan Martyrs who gave their lives when the Gospel was first being preached in this country.

May 26 is one of the most important dates for the Church in Uganda. On that day there is an annual pilgrimage of Ugandan catechists to the shrine in Munyonyo, the place where the patron saint of catechists, St. Andrew Kaggwa, was martyred and buried.

This year the festival was attended by five Bishops: the Most Reverend Cyprian Kizito Lwanga – Archbishop of Kampala, Augustin Kasujja – the Apostolic Nuncio in Nigeria (native of Uganda), Aul Ssemogerere – Bishop of the Diocese of Kasana–Luweero, Mathias Ssekamanya – Bishop of Lugazi and Christopher Kakooza – Auxiliary Bishop of Kampala), plus many priests and about two thousand catechists and faithful from across Uganda.

The Catechist plays a very important role in the African Church. You can compare him to the Vicar of a parish. He ministers to the community of the faithful who often live places quite distant from the parish, around various branch chapels. He prepares them for the sacraments through catechesis; organizes different events; presides in the absence of the priest at the Sunday Liturgy of the Word. He very often celebrates funerals and visits the sick. Until the missionary learns the local language, he also serves as interpreter. In other words, the priest won’t budge without the catechist, because the catechist knows the local people and their traditions better.

The catechist is a leader among his people, in the countryside or in his tribe. The older he is, the more he is esteemed. Not only Catholics ask his advice, but even the faithful of other religions. He must be able to answer different questions and also everyday ones, like, which seed to sow in the land and how to invest money to make a profit.

The pilgrimage of the catechists opens the pilgrimage season in East Africa. Everyone goes to the National Sanctuary of the Ugandan Martyrs in Namugongo. This year, on June 3, the feast was attended by around one million faithful. Some of them stopped at the shrine of Munyonyo along the way, thanked the friars for their pastoral care of the place, and promised their prayers and support according to their ability.
Activities in Costa Rica

Friar Jorge R. Fernández, Assistant General for the FALC

The Assistant General for the Federación Conventuales America Latina (FALC), Friar Jorge Fernández, was in Costa Rica between March 31 and April 4, 2014, carrying out different activities.

First, Friar Jorge took part in the sixth meeting of the CUI (Inter-jurisdictional Unification Commission) which is working on the project of unifying the Custody of “María Madre de los Pobres”, based in Honduras, with the Delegation of “Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles” in Costa Rica. The gathering took place at the “Nuestra Señora de la Asunción” friary in Alajuela, Costa Rica.

Also present were Ministers Provincial Friar Justin Biase of the Immaculate Conception Province (USA), Friar Jim Kent, of Our Lady of Consolation Province (USA), the Custos of Central American (Honduras), Friar Grevin Sierra, along with three Definitors of the Custody, the Provincial Delegate of Costa Rica, Jorge Dobles and two counselors of the Delegation.

The Assistant General took advantage of his stay in Costa Rica to dialogue with the Venezuelan friars. They number seven in all and they are residing in the Delegation to complete their process of initial formation. This dialogue was preliminary to the canonical visitation the Assistant General will make to the Custody of Venezuela next May.

Finally, Friar Jorge Fernández, visited the “Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe” friary where there is a single postulancy program shared by both Central American entities. It has five postulants in formation.
Canonical Visit to Venezuela

Friar Jorge R. Fernández, Assistant General for the FALC

Between May 4 and 16, 2014, Friar Jorge Fernández, the Assistant General for the Federación Conventuales America Latina (FALC), made a canonical visitation to the General Custody “Nuestra Señora de Coromoto” of Venezuela.

The visit started in Caracas, continued to Guanare, then to Pueblo Llano, Barinas, and finally, San Cristobal. Friar Jorge even had the opportunity to meet with the Poor Clare Sisters at their monastery located near the National Shrine of Coromoto. He spent a moment of fraternal dialogue and sharing with them.

On May 14, the Assistant General and all the friars of the Custody participated in a day of reflection at the friary in Barinas. All of the friaries hold meetings with different groups of lay people who, in some cases, share pastoral work with the friars or at least share their spirituality and belong to a Franciscan Family (YOUFRA, OFS, Friends of St. Francis, etc.).

The social, political and economic situation in the country is rather tense, which is why Venezuela needs a lot of prayer and an attitude of dialogue and respect in order to restore peace. Let us accompany our Venezuelan brothers through this difficult mission!
Fraternal Visit to Ecuador

Friar Jorge R. Fernández, Assistant General for the FALC

On May 17-28, 2014, Friar Jorge Fernández, the Assistant General for the Federación Conventuales America Latina (FALC), made a fraternal visit to the General Delegation of Ecuador.

The Provincial Delegation of St. Anthony of Padua in Ecuador, from the Polish Province of St. Maximilian Kolbe (Gdansk), consists of 13 friars (12 solemnly professed and one temporarily professed). It has friaries at Shushufindi, Túcán, Santo Domingo and Quito.

The Assistant General carried out visits to each of these friaries and also had the opportunity to visit two monasteries belonging to our Poor Clare Sisters. The first was in Ibarra, “Santa Clara y Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles”, and the second was at the Shrine of Our Lady of Peace, “Santa Clara y Nuestra Señora de la Paz.”

Our confreres who live and work in Ecuador are doing well and, although there might be few vocations to religious life, nowadays almost every friary has a friar from the original Delegation. This is cause for joy and giving thanks to God!

One of the most urgent priorities of the Delegation is youth ministry and vocations, to keep dreaming about having an increasingly lively and fruitful presence in this beautiful country.

May God abundantly bless the work of sowing faith and love that our friars are doing in Ecuador!

Priestly Ordination in Colombia

Friar Sidifredo

On May 24, 2014, Friar Fabián Esteban Arrieta Botero was ordained a priest in the “Hermano Francisco” parish of the Archdiocese of Medellín (Colombia).

The imposition of hands was performed by Bishop Ricardo Tobón, Archbishop of Medellín. Friar Fabián Esteban was born in Medellín (Antioquia, Colombia) on November 27, 1984. He made his temporary profession on December 12, 2004, and his solemn profession on September 19, 2010. He is a member of the Provincial Custody of St. Francis in Colombia.

We give thanks to God for the life and vocation of our confrere and pray that his ministry may be fruitful for the good of the Order and the Church.
Solemn Profession and Ordination Jubilee in Indonesia

Friar Maximilianus Sembiring, Provincial Custos

On Saturday, April 26, 2014, Friars Albertus Tenang M. Sembiring and Paskalis M. Hanoe professed their solemn vows into the hands of their Provincial Custos, Friar Maximilianus Sembiring.

The event took place at the Church of St. Joseph, Spouse in Delitua. Next to the church is the friary of St. Joseph, Spouse which is itself the seat of the Provincial Curia of the Custody of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M.

The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Friar Antonius Saragih, who was celebrating the 25th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

The Mass and festivities were attended by minor seminarians, postulants, novices, several friars of the Custody, the families of those being celebrated, several men and women religious, priests, and the laity.
France-Belgium: Ordinary Custodial Chapter - Part II

Friar François-Xavier Bustillo, Custos

On May 10-13, 2014, the Custody of France-Belgium carried out the second part of its Ordinary Chapter.

On the agenda was the approval of its Custodial Plan. For several years the Custody has been trying to embody the Franciscan charism in France and in Belgium. The triad of prayer, fraternity and mission, is always topical.

Our European contemporaries, disappointed by strong materialism, are seeking a path of interiority. St. Francis, the man who became prayer, presents a nice challenge. The friar Capitulars ask themselves: “Are we seen as men of prayer by the people we meet?”

In tense times of controversy and division, fraternity is an evangelical response to the thirst for love in our era. Fraternity must be visible and real in us so that we are believable to ourselves and those who look at us as witnesses of Francis of Assisi.

Pope Francis has invited the religious to awaken the world and to light up the future for our lives. That mission today is realized more through our gestures and actions being consistent with the Gospel than through fine declarations.


In addition, the Capitulars decided to open a friary at Lourdes (until now it was only a presence) and to forward the canonical procedures to the Province and the Minister General.
On April 27 through May 1, 2014 and June 16-18, 2014, the first and second parts of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter of the Province of St. Joseph in Slovenia took place at the Friary of St. Peter and Paul in Ptuj (Slovenia).

The first part of Chapter was presided over by Minister General, Friar Marco Tasca. He was accompanied by the Assistant General for the Conferentia Europae Centralis (CEC), Friar Miljenko Hontić, who also attended the second part.

All 24 Friar Capitulars were present along with the outgoing Minister Provincial, Friar Milan Kos. After hearing some reports, the Capitulars divided themselves into three work groups and assessed the last four years. The third session of the Chapter was open to all friars of the province who had voting rights (42). They reelected Friar Milan Kos for his third term as Minister Provincial.

On the last day of the first part of the Chapter, the new Provincial Definitory was elected as follows: Friar Ernest Benko, (Vicar Provincial); Dominik Tikvič, (Secretary); Danilo Holc and Andrej Segula (Definitors). Friar Vito Muhič was elected Province Treasurer.

For the second part of the Chapter, the Minister Provincial, Friar Milan Kos, with his Definitory, prepared an instrumentum laboris and a draft of the Province Four-Year Plan (PPQ). All members of the Chapter were already aware of the draft before the sessions. In Chapter, this draft was again discussed, and then voted on and approved. The PPQ has four main points: a) life in union with God, b) fraternal life, c) apostolate, and, d) living in moderation. Moreover, some decisions were made (as planned in the instrumentum laboris) concerning vocation promotion, the union of some friaries, taking over management of a shrine in northeastern Slovenia, the celebration of a Spiritual Chapter (in two years), some economic issues, etc.

During the sixth session, eight guardians were elected. The formators for the houses of formation were elected as were the chairmen of the provincial commissions and the provincial delegates.

It all concluded with the solemn celebration of the 25th anniversary of priesthood of Friar Franc Murko, which took place at the Marian shrine of Sladka Gora. A formal lunch followed in the friary at Olimian. Almost all the friars of the Province attended. The friars' name days for this month were also commemorated.
Slovakia: Spiritual Custodial Chapter

On May 1, 2014, the Custody of the Immaculate Conception B.V.M. concluded its Spiritual Chapter in Brehov, Slovakia.

All the friars of the Custody working in Slovakia and Albania attended the Chapter. Friar Jacek Ciupiński, the Assistant General for the Conferentia Europae Orientalis (CEO) took part along with Piotr Stanisławczyk, the Vicar of the mother Province of St. Anthony of Padua and Blessed James of Strepar (Cracow).

During Chapter, the friars heard and discussed issues presented by speakers Fr. Peter Figel (SBD) and Friars Jacek Ciupiński and Tomasz Lesňák concerning religious identity in Franciscan community life and pastoral work.

On the afternoon of April 30, the friars went to Rad, where they celebrated Mass on the foundations of our ancient church. A few months ago, thanks to the kindness of the local pastor, Fr. Roland Bor, the remains of Friar Elias Iglody Stefan and his six companion martyrs were located. They had been killed at the beginning of the seventeenth century by the Calvinists.

Our best wishes go out to friars of the Custody. We hope the Chapter and the witness of our friars from the past will help and inspire them to a meaningful Franciscan life in the present and future.
USA: Ordinary Provincial Chapter of the Province of St. Bonaventure

Friar Jude Winkler, Assistant General for the CFC

From April 28 to May 2 of 2014, the friars of St. Bonaventure Province in the USA celebrated their Ordinary Provincial Chapter at the friars’ retreat house and shrine at Marytown in Libertyville (Illinois).

The presider of the Chapter was Friar Jerzy Norel, the Vicar General of the Order. Friar Jude Winkler, the Assistant General for the CFC, was also present for the Chapter.

Almost all of the friars of the Province were present including seven friars from the Delegation of Our Lady Help of Christians in Australia.

Friar Michael Zielke was elected as the Provincial in the first ballot of the election held during the Chapter.

 Friar Michael Zielke Minster Provincial 

The new Provincial was born in Baltimore (Maryland, USA) on September 9, 1961. He made his temporary profession of vows on August 15, 1980, his solemn profession on August 8, 1985, and was ordained to the priesthood on June 10, 1989.

His Definitory includes Friar John Grigas, the Vicar Provincial; Friar Robert Cooke, the Provincial Secretary; and Friars Patrick Stoffer, James O’Brien and Anthony Lajato as the other Definitors. The Treasurer of the Province will be selected during the second part of the Chapter to be held this July.

The Definitory with the Vicar General and the Assistant General

www.ofmconv.net

www.francescani.net
USA: First Ordinary Provincial Chapter of the Province of Our Lady of Angels

Friar Jude Winkler, Assistant General for the CFC

The friars of Our Lady of the Angels Province in the United States celebrated their first Ordinary Provincial Chapter on May 5-9, 2014.

This province was created by the fusion of two provinces on the East Coast of the United States: Immaculate Conception Province and St. Anthony of Padua Province. The Chapter was held in Buffalo, New York, and 170 members were present for this historic occasion. In previous years, the Chapter worked on setting up the new Province of “Our Lady of the Angels”.

The proposal for the next four years is to bring about the unity which has been juridically sanctioned in the life of the fraternity.

The Provincial, Friar James McCurry, the last provincial of the former St. Anthony Province, had been elected by mail ballot preceding the Chapter. The Vicar is Friar Brad Milunski, the Secretary Friar Richard Jacob Forcier, and the other members of the Definitory are: Friars Anthony Kall, Jude Surowiec, James Moore, Donald Grzymski and Michael Heine. The delegates elected for the General Chapter are Friars Timothy Kulbicki and Justin Biase, the former Provincial of the Immaculate Conception Province. Friar Mitchell Sawicki was selected as the Treasurer of the Province.

Among the decisions made at this Chapter were the closure of a number of friaries and apostolates so that the friars might live in friaries with larger numbers. Each friary will have from four to six friars, a decision which will reinforce community life and Gospel witness.

A few new apostolates were also approved by the Chapter as a sign of the new life and hope of this youngest of the provinces in the Order. The second part of the Ordinary Chapter of Our Lady of Angels Province will be held in Buffalo in early August.
On May 6-9, 2014, the second part of the Ordinary Chapter of the General Custody of Our Holy Father St. Francis was held in St. Petersburg, Russia.

The Chapter was attended by all 15 friars of the Custody and Friar Jacek Ciupiński, Assistant General for the Conferentia Europae Orientalis (CEO). He acted as the Minister General’s delegate.

The second part of the Chapter was preceded by half a day of spiritual retreat during which the friars listened to a lecture by Father Mariano Sedano, CMF. They also participated in Eucharistic adoration and the Conventual Mass which featured a homily by the Assistant General for the CEO.

The friars then devoted a portion of the Chapter to the discussion of the current life of the Custody. Next, they approved the plan for the coming four years and chose the guardians for the four friaries of the Custody: in Astrahan, Friar Michał Gruszka; in Czerniachowsk, Friar Stanisław Wójtowicz; in Moscow, Friar Adam Nowak; and in St. Petersburg, Friar Andrian Zudin.

The Chapter concluded on May 9 with the Holy Mass, during which the new guardians made a profession of faith and took the oath.

We invoke the aid of St. Francis and other patron saints of our Order, that the Lord may bless the Custody and that the power of the Holy Spirit may help them give Christian witness on Russian soil.
USA: The Ordinary Provincial Chapter of the Province of Our Lady of Consolation

Friar Jude Winkler, Assistant General for the CFC

The Province of Our Lady of Consolation celebrated the first part of its Ordinary Provincial Chapter from May 12-15, 2014, at Mt. St. Francis in Indiana.

Friar Jerzy Norel, the Vicar General, presided. Friar Jude Winkler, the Assistant General for the Conventual Franciscan Conference (CFC), was also present.

Friar James Kent had already been elected by postal ballot for his second full term as Provincial. His vicar, Friar John Stowe, was confirmed for a second mandate. The Secretary of the Province is Friar Nicholas Wolfla. The other Definitors are: Friars Ed Goldbach, Mark Weaver, Miguel Briseño, and Randy Kin. The Province Treasurer is Friar Regis Schlagheck.

After hearing various reports which the Assistant General had presented, the Provincial, the Treasurer as well as the heads of the various commissions, and the delegate friars, spent a day and a half evaluating the life of their Province and its strategic goals for these coming years. The second part of the Chapter will be held in Mesilla Park, New Mexico, at the end of July.
Poland (Cracow): Extraordinary Provincial Chapter

From Cracow/jms

The Extraordinary Provincial Chapter
of the Province of St. Anthony of Padua and Blessed James of Strepar of Poland
was concluded on May 16, 2014.

There were 58 delegates from Poland and abroad participating in the Chapter which was held at the Friary of St. Francis in Cracow (Poland). Also participating were Friar Jacek Ciupiński, the Assistant General for the Conferentia Europae Orientalis (CEO), Friar Ronald Armijo Zelada, the Custos of Bolivia, and Friar Tomáš Lesňák, the Custos of Slovakia. The Chapter was presided over by the Minister Provincial, Friar Jarosław Zachariasz.

Among other things, the Capitulars decided on new ways of taxation for the friaries in Poland, the creation of a financial aid fund, and a proposal for changes in the Provincial Statutes. Now a copy of the minutes of the Chapter will be sent to the General Curia in Rome.

During the opening Mass (May 12), the Assistant General asked the friars to take up issues for discussion and to do so in a spirit of discernment—in order to understand what God wants from the Province now and in the future.

The Minister Provincial, Friar Jarosław, stated that both Order and the Province were inevitably approaching the time when they must clearly and more concretely declare themselves on Jesus’ side. They must decide more clearly to want to go back to his word or else the world and its interests will lead the Friars.

The Minister Provincial asked the friar Capitulars to pray for the grace of discernment.

During the Chapter, there was also a visit from Bishop Grzegorz Ryś, the Auxiliary Bishop of Cracow. He held a conference and presided over the Eucharistic Celebration. In his comments the Bishop thanked the Friars for their service in the confessionals—very important work which is not always properly recognized—and for their commitment to the New Evangelization and to ecumenical and interfaith dialogue.

The next Provincial Chapter, this time Ordinary, will take place in 2016.
USA: Ordinary Provincial Chapter for the Province of St. Joseph of Cupertino

Fr. Jude Winkler, Assistant General for the CFC

The Province of St. Joseph of Cupertino (California) celebrated its Ordinary Provincial Chapter from May 18-22 at Sacred Heart Retreat House in Alhambra, California.

24 Capitulars were present for the 10th Ordinary Chapter of the Province. Fr. John Heinz was installed as Provincial, having previously been elected by postal ballot. Friar Victor Abegg was selected to be the Vicar of the Province, and Friar Kevin Schindler McGraw was selected to be its secretary. The other Definitors of the Province are Friar Jacob Carazo and Friar Joseph Kim.

Friar Jerzy Norel, the Vicar General of the Order, presided over this first part of the Chapter, and Friar Jude Winkler, the Assistant General for the Conventual Franciscan Conference (CFC), was present as well. In addition to a review of the life of the Province, the Chapter also made some decisions concerning formation and the apostolic activities of the friars.
Croatia: Ordinary Provincial Chapter - Part II

Friar Miljenko Hontić, Assistant General for the CEC

On May 25-28, 2014, the second part of the Ordinary Chapter of the Province of St. Jerome in Croatia was held at the Holy Spirit Friary in Zagreb.

All of the Capitulars were present except one. The Chapter opened with an introduction by the Minister Provincial, Friar Josip Blažević, and included a presentation of the priorities of the Province for the next four years. After that, the Province Four-Year Plan was sent forward for drafting and approval.

Various letters to the Chapter were read and discussed as were some questions regarding the future of the Province. One of them, about the opening a mission, was entered into the Four-Year Plan. It was also decided to celebrate the Extraordinary Chapter of 2016 based on that theme.

During the sixth session, twelve guardians of the Provincial Communities were elected. New formators for the Houses of Formation were elected, as were the presidents of the Provincial Commissions. There was discussion and decisions made about the realization of certain motions from the last General Chapter that concerned the Province.

The Chapter concluded with the traditional meeting of the two Provinces: the Province of Slovenia, with its Minister Provincial Friar Milan Kos attending, and the Province of Croatia. For the occasion, the new book by Friar Špiko Marasović, recently deceased, was presented, as was a DVD on the history of the Province of Slovenia.

The meeting ended with the celebration of Holy Mass presided over by the Assistant General, Miljenko Hontić. The Mass was followed by a solemn fraternal dinner.
On May 26-31, 2014, the Polish Province of the Immaculate Mother of God held its Spiritual Provincial Chapter at Niepokalanów (Poland).

The reason for the Chapter was the 75th anniversary of the birth of the Province. The Minister Provincial, Friar Wiesław Pyzio, in his introductory reflection on the methodology of the Chapter, made it understood that the purpose of the Chapter’s program was to lead the friars to a real understanding of the history of the Province. It started off by covering the current situation and went on to planning for the future with the hope that it will bear good fruit. The Chapter’s work included: conferences devoted to the history of the Province, to the evaluation of the current state of religious life in Poland, and also ways for every friar to live in order to be rooted in Christ.

It was a great opportunity for sharing, discovering what God wants from the Franciscans of the Province of Warsaw and for working out a plan for the future of the provincial community. This work was carried out in groups.

The para-liturgies celebrated during the Chapter created space for prayer, in which the friars thanked God for graces received, asked forgiveness for their sins and failures, and asked the Lord to strengthen them in their vocations.

Because the Province has so many members, the Chapter was divided into three groups: the first met in March, the second in May and the third group will meet some time this June.
The Orient and the Holy Land: Ordinary Custodial Chapter

Friar Dominique Mathieu, Chapter Secretary

On May 27-30, 2014, the first part of the Ordinary Chapter of the Provincial Custody of the Orient and the Holy Land of the Province of Romania was held.

It took place on the Asian side of Istanbul at Polonezkoy, where the friars take care of a small Polish parish community. Of the twenty-three chapter members, twenty answered ‘present’ during the roll call. Three were excused for reasons of age and/or health. The Chapter was presided over by Friar Emilian Cătălin, the Minister Provincial of the Province of Romania. It was led by one of his definitors, Friar Cristian Blăjuţ, a moderator who is versed in law.

Friar Agesta Joaquín Cuevas, the Assistant General for the Conference of Intermediterranean Ministers Provincial (CIMP), introduced the work of the Chapter with a reflection on the importance of the Chapter assembly in our fraternal life.

After reading various reports, having discussions in work groups, and later as an entire assembly, the voters confirmed Friar César Essayan for his second term as Custos. Friar Cesar was born in Beirut (Lebanon) July 15, 1962. He made his first profession of vows on September 8, 1988, his solemn profession on September 21, 1991, and was ordained a priest on April 17, 1993. The newly re-elected Custos professed the creed and pronounced his oath of office in the church.

After that, in the Chapter meeting room, Friar Cristian Blăjuţ, the President of the Provincial Commission for the Revision of the Statutes, read and commented on the draft of the Statutes of the Custody.

At the end of the day the members of the Definitory were elected. They are, in order of profession, Friar Martin Kmeteć, Friar Dominique Mathieu, Friar Dariusz Wisniewski and Friar Julian Pişta. Friar Martin Kmeteć accepted the office of Custodial Vicar and Friar Dominique Mathieu accepted the office of Secretary.

Before closing the first part of the Chapter, issues facing the Custody that arose during the discussions were listed and prioritized for in-depth examination during the second part of the Chapter. These concerned: the primacy of God, initial and ongoing formation, administration of assets, Statutes of the Custody, new and old presences and relations with the Mother Province.

The second part of the Custodial Chapter will be held in the same place on July 14-18. The above-mentioned issues will be taken up again with an eye toward the drafting and approval of the Four-Year Plan.
Romania: Extraordinary Provincial and Spiritual Chapter

The Provincial Secretary

Lots of youth, a sea of black habits, and most of all, plenty of desire to get together and “think about the future,” as Minister General Friar Marco Tasca reminded the friars at this Chapter.

The Province of St. Joseph, Spouse of B.V.M. in Romania, with its 254 solemnly professed friars, is growing more and more every year. It is one of the most youthful Provinces of the Order, with the friars now spread throughout Europe and beyond.

The Spiritual Chapter brought the friars together to reflect on the spiritual and fraternal life of the Province, in order to “cross to the other shore,” as Minister Provincial Friar Emilian Catalin said. He presented an initial report analyzing and synthesizing the life of the friars. The work that was done in groups touched on some important issues such as the life of faith, fraternal life, the witness of Romanian friars, and other practical and administrative aspects of the Province.

The wish that Pope Francis addressed to the consecrated to “Wake Up the World” was also the latest wish of the General Minister, who came to this Chapter accompanied by Friar Joaquin Agesta, the Assistant General for the Conference of Intermediterranean Ministers Provincial (CIMP), and Friar Maurizio Di Paolo, the Procurator General.

The Spiritual Chapter was followed by two days of Extraordinary Chapter which were chiefly aimed at deciding a few matters concerning the Provincial Statutes.

The Capitulars prayed to the Holy Spirit, that He himself might lead the Province to grow in maturity of faith.
**Demographic Information**

**Professiones temporaneae**

- Prov. Brasiliensis S. Francisci
  - MARTINS PINHEIRO Augusto Luis, ROCHA Arnaldo César (2014-02-05)
- Prov. Romana (Del. Brasiliensis)
  - AVELINO da SILVA Romario, FORTALEZA de SOUZA Roberto, VITOR de LIMA TORRES Felipe (2014-02-21)
- Prov. Indiæ
  - AMBALATHINGAL Jesvin, AMBATTUPARAMBIL Albin, KACHAPPILLY Sonu, KOCHERIYIL Abraham, MANGALAN Delvin, PAYYAMBILLIL Shibin, VELLACHALIL Tijo (2014-05-01)

**Professiones sollemnes**

- Cust. prov. Indonesiana
  - HANOE Paskalis, SEMBIRING Albertus Tenang (2014-04-26)
- Prov. Indiæ
- Cust. gen. Assisiensis
  - SHAO Pietro (Wenbo) (2014-06-28)
- Prov. Romana (Deleg. Prov. Brasiliensis)
  - MESQUITA Josué Oliveira (2014-02-21)

**Ordinationes diaconales**

- Prov. Coreana
  - KIM Jongyun John, LEE Dahan Stefano (2014-01-06)
- Prov. Polonica B.M.V. Immaculatae
  - ADAMCZEWSKI Karol, DROŚ Marcin, OWSIANKO Grzegorz, SZOK Tomasz (2014-06-01)

**Ordinationes sacerdotales**

- Prov. Dacoromana
  - FARCAŞ Sergiu-Cătălin (2014-01-11)
- Cust. prov. Columbiae
  - ARRIETA BOTERO Fabián Esteban (2014-05-24)
- Prov. Polonica S. Antonii
  - BIELECKI Jacek, KUKO Paweł, LOTAWIEC Rafał, MORDZIAŁEK Michał, PAZGAN Łukasz, ZALUSKI Marcin (2014-05-31)
- Prov. Polonica B.M.V. Immaculatae
  - BURBA Hubert, PAXULA Jarosław, RZĄDZIŃSKI Rafał, SOCHA Piotr (2014-06-01)
- Prov. Italica S. Antonii
  - TURRISENDO Fabio (2014-06-08)
- Prov. Germaniae
  - KOCH Martin, SCHLATTMANN Konrad (2014-06-14)
- Prov. Dacoromana
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- Secretary General: segrgen@ofmconv.net
- Assistant General for the AFCOF: afcof@ofmconv.net
- Assistant General for the CEO: ceo@ofmconv.net
- Assistant General for the CEC: cec@ofmconv.net
- Assistant General for the CFC: cfc@ofmconv.net
- Assistant General for the CIMP: cimp@ofmconv.net
- Assistant General for the FAMC: famc@ofmconv.net
- Assistant General for the FALC: falc@ofmconv.net

**Attention**

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- Postulator General: postulator@ofmconv.net
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- Commentarium Ordinis: commentarium@ofmconv.net
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- Revision of the Constitutions: constitutiones@ofmconv.net
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- General Assistant for the II Order: 2ordine@ofmconv.net