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Dear brothers and sisters, receive fraternal greetings from the Rome JPIC Office. With much joy we offer you the current issue of our newsletter ‘Contact’. In this number, together with offering you news about some of the Order JPIC offices’ activities, we want to highlight one of the priority themes agreed in the last International JPIC Council:

“The imbalance of economic, social and religious crisis has also created the MIGRATION phenomenon. Although it has always been with us, many nations and many groups have restricted their welcome and hospitality to those who have been forced to leave their homes and families behind, and leave them without economic assistance or protection. This situation may likely intensify in the coming years, since the climate change is displacing many of them from their homelands. How to respond to these sisters and brothers will be one of the greatest issues of a near future that is challenging us to be in solidarity with the disinherited pilgrims of our times.

(CIJPIC – Verona – 2016)

We would like to share the work taking place in different entities, and to encourage those who are starting or planning to carry out concrete actions related to this priority. We also encourage everyone of you to send news about your JPIC work in order to share them through this Newsletter. Next issue will be published at the end of June and will be focuses on the Mining issue.

Br. Jaime Campos, OFM
JPIC Office - Rome
We Franciscans arrived, in 1951, in Tenosique, Tabasco, a huge territory of mission, spreading beyond the geographical boundaries with Guatemala, on the arid Department of Petén. Since the last century 80’s, decade of internal conflict in Central America, many people began to leave their home countries. The South Mexican cargo-passenger train worked for several decades since 1945. It was the only means of transportation in the region. In 1997 the Mexican Government concessioned the railway, and thus it ceased its service for passengers to be only a freight train. People who crossed the South border to go from Mexico to the United States did not stop climbing the roof of the train, named “the beast”.

In 1995, when Mexico’s San Felipe de Jesús Province was established, the Franciscans started the pastoral care of all the people who had been displaced from their countries due to various reasons, but mainly to the death economy. Little by little the region has become a real humanitarian tragedy scenario. The evangelizing action of the Church and of the Order occurs in the context of a shameless inequality, an extreme poverty and a scandalous violence that cries to heaven. We should speak of one region alone, which drives out most people at a global level; Mexicans alone are 6 to 7 million people in the USA. The region is a real stage of death, pain and suffering for those who leave their places of origin forced by the system that permeates us.

La Casa del Migrante of Tenosique, Tabasco, which we, with total intention and evangelical lucidity, have wanted to name La 72 Home – Shelter for Migrants, since it is a site of memory, where we continually receive the migrant sufferers of this tragedy against the poor, tragedy that at San Fernando, Tamaulipas, came to a climax, to terror when organized crime massacred seventy Central and South American people. Our work joins other Casas del Migrante throughout Mexico. It is no longer enough to open our arms and receive the wounded of this inhumane and cruel war; it is no longer enough for us to clean their sore feet or their injuries product of assaults; it is no longer enough to comfort them and say “have a nice trip, may God bless your journey”. We have committed ourselves to defend their rights, their dignity, and we proclaim that we are going to change their history.

La 72 is located in a territory of violence. It is the first oasis of care for people displaced from their countries, and is about 60 kilometers from the “línea” (the “line”), and it is there for victims who were raped, assaulted, abducted, buried, maimed by the freight train called the “beast”.

La 72, Home – Shelter for Migrants
San Felipe de Jesús Franciscan Province

Br. Tomás González Castillo OFM, La72
Alternative economic, political and social project:
Other world is possible from the migrant identity

We want to make out of the La 72, a Global Village, i.e. the first place in this corner of Mexico where the boundaries are destroyed. We are planning to make an alternative and comprehensive project, a new just order, a place where a new model of society and a new model of economy can be born. All and everyone who enter La 72 are welcomed, and the first thing they receive is food and water to satisfy their hunger and thirst, and a place to rest; it is now and here that the new approach starts posing a new order, different from the one that hunger and thirst imposed on them, and forced them to work to exhaustion without compensation with the indispensable things for a decent life. Right since the first contact, when we share the bread and listen to their painful stories, we are already committing ourselves to a humanizing project.

We cannot give them money; we do not only offer them charity. The message of the Early Church reminds us our functions: “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you”. We try to recover health, economic dignity, which is basic to the entire life. They matter economically in their countries only when they send remittances which, by the way, are one of the large pillars of the expelling countries’ economy.

Our project is committed to a new political identity. Migrants are on their road, and La 72 is only a part of it. The road will make them homeless, beggars; authorities will treat them like criminals, and the society will brand them as filthy foreigners. They will not even be allowed to enter cities, since in many cases the Migrant Shelters are located in the outskirts. In their home countries they are the forgotten ones, the poor ones, but at least they had some identity; on the road, in our country, they will the nobodies, the invisible ones. Politically they do not matter except in election times. At La 72, a new political identity also is forged. Through workshops on reality, and on human rights, we are planting in them the seed of the struggle to transform the world. More often than not, they will leave La 72, shouting: “… we migrants are not criminals, we are international workers...”

They will go out glancing at the horizon and challenging the long road in front of them. They will no longer bow their heads to any authority. They know they have rights, and are ready to defend them. On the road they will become real subjects and defenders of their own rights, and itinerant social fighters. Even those who decide to stay at the forgotten border or anywhere in the country know they have the right to negotiate their immigration regularization.

We are therefore building with them a new social order. We are betting for the migrants, on leaving La 72, to not leave only with a backpack on their shoulders, but rather carrying liberty, fraternity and solidarity tattooed in their hearts; these values will go with them, if they succeed in arriving, in the USA, if they are stopped on the road on going back to their home country. Even in front of organized crime, which has inflicted so much harm on them, their glance will be different. We are betting for migrant’s identity as a human being capable of transforming the structures and the system that have compelled them to leave their country, and launch their history in another direction.
La 72, Everyday Pentecost, ecclesiological model that arises from the permanent crucifixion

The itinerant crowds that arrive in La 72, are men and women of profound faith, who have abandoned the Catholic Church, we need to critically admit it, because of the neglect by the bad shepherds. However, the bread that they do not have calls us to be from Jesus the daily bread for them. Consequently, renewed and creatively every day, the liturgies that fuel the ecumenical faith and sustain the hope forged by daily martyrdom revive.

With the daily arrival of the Central and South American brothers and sisters, cultures, creeds, ideologies etc. are brought together; they will change our house into a real Pentecost where the Spirit will show up in various ways, unifying all the dreams of these permanently in exodus people. Faith will again be one, it will give them cohesion to nourish one another in solidarity on the road, and to bear the martyrdom that is expecting them: assaults, rapes, humiliations, abductions, mutilations by the beast, death. We are not masters of the migrants’ faith, we are companions who share our faith in Jesus.

And so, the ecclesiological model that Jesus raised revives.

“The Lord has led me through them… and I did Mercy”:
La 72, privileged space and time to reinvent the Franciscan Charisma

This is our time, it is our kairos and the chance to Franciscanly make the kingdom. La 72 is not an isolated project, it should not be, of the Church and of the society. We face a structural problem that encompasses the entire extensive region. We are one more voice that cries out to the sky, we are one more step in search of the good and the peace, we are a shoulder united to other shoulders, we want to make a paradise out of this land.

The spiritual inheritance that was bequeathed to us by Saint Francis of Assisi gives us the evangelical reason of our provincial project to take care of the migrants: “The Lord has led us through them… and we did Mercy”. This is what we intend to do in that Southern region of Mexico.

A few years after starting La 72, we have begun a new project where we will link the migration issue with that of caring for creation. The Agro-ecological Farm for migrants and refugees Laudato Si. Techo, Trabajo y Tierra, will promote the access to the rights to work, security, health, identity, besides promoting Care for Creation.

( la72direccion@gmail.com & la72comunicacion@gmail.com )
3. MIGRATION MINISTRY IN THE ORDER

BRAZIL

Province of Immaculate Conception

“Franciscan Solidarity Service” (SEFRAS). SEFRAS is the institution that renders two public services to immigrants in the city of São Paulo.

The Reception Center for immigrants: it’s a center (home) to the immigrant population of the city of São Paulo, which is referenced by Social Assistance Reference Center (CREAS). It offers accommodation services, feeding, bathing, social assistance and legal and even socio-educational activities and courses in Portuguese. It welcomes immigrants and refugees (families, children and single adults).

Reference Center: offers a service for the immigrant population of the city of St. Paul is in transit or residents, regardless of nationality and immigration status. It is a service that the immigrant can access directly. It performs legal, psychological and migratory regularization.

( Website: [http://www.sefras.org.br/portal/](http://www.sefras.org.br/portal/) )

ITALY

Province of Sicily

“The Tent of Father Abraham.” The challenge of this house is the human development, trying to put the young in our fraternity-family and then help him to settle in the context that surrounds us and then in society. In the last two years immigration has changed its destinations: Eritreans, Somalis and the Syrians, once having arrived in Porto Empedocle, fled to the neighboring cities including Favara. In this wandering the doors of our convent we were also open at night to give the opportunity to many brothers eating or brushing to continue the long journey to Northern Europe.

As many were hosted for a few days in the sports hall in Favara, being asked by the Mayor, the friars were present at the meal times to distribute the food and try to meet their needs as if they are our brothers living in tents.

Br. Giuseppe Garofalo OFM

Province of Assisi

From the end of August 2014, two Friars Minor of the Seraphic Province of St. Francis of Assisi, Br. Danilo Cruciani and Br. Stefano Tondelli, serve and live permanently in the “initial reception Caritas center” of S. Maria degli Angeli, thus constituting the small Franciscan fraternity, “Casa Papa Francesco” to share prayer, meals and daily life with the guests of the center.

The center has a “soup kitchen” and welcomes every day about 30 needy people who are in the area - local or passing by - by offering them with meals for lunch and supper. What sustains the activities of the friars every morning is the Eucharistic Adoration that is held every day from 7 to 8 am and ends with the morning prayer. Staying in the presence of the Lord “hidden” in the humility of bread (as St. Francis said) helps to recognize Him hidden in the poor who inhabit in our days!

Br. Stefano Tondelli OFM
IRELAND

Ireland Province

The provincial JPIC Commission works closely with the JPIC Commission of the Conference of the Religious, which negotiates with the government to provide resources for the Syrian refugees. The Province is willing to give financial support.

Two friars are working locally with immigrants and the people who have been victims of trafficking in Ireland. Both have participated in a seminar on the practical ways to help immigrants.
- Br. Richard Kelly OFM (Waterford fraternity) works with asylum seekers in direct provision centers. He also works alongside the members of Waterford Immigration Network (WIN). WIN provides various supports, social and educational opportunities, etc. There are 83 residents from Nigeria, Congo, Zimbabwe, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Franciscan community has hosted regular meetings for them.
- Br. Séan Cassin OFM (Multyfarnham fraternity) is working on trafficking issues in Vietnam and those who have been victims of trafficking in Ireland.

Br. Francisco O’Conaire OFM

AUSTRALIA

Holy Spirit Province

The Province has assisted in launching and funding “The House of Welcome”, a refugee agency in Sydney, “Hotham Mission,” another refugee agency in Melbourne, and other agencies such as the “Romeo Center” in Queensland. These agencies help refugees in terms of human and legal rights, housing, cultural and social adaptation.

The Province has given seed funding and support to “The Project Bread & Butter”, a social enterprise that trains and assists refugees to become bakers and get jobs. Twelve refugees have graduated so far. He also financially supported “Work and Welcome”, a program to employ refugees in schools. The GPIC Committee hosted lament services for refugees and supported the teaching of languages.

Sarah Menassa-Rose

AUSTRIA

Province of St. Leopoldo

There are 140 refugees staying in various convents in Frauenkirchen, Pupping, Telfs, etc., especially in the convent of Lienz. The Province has opened its convents and offered accommodations to refugees while they adapted themselves in the society.

Br. Severin Mayrhofer OFM

UNITED STATES

the Assumption Province

The Province helps immigrants in several parishes. The most significant program is to “Immigrant Assistance Center” at a parish in McAllen, Texas. Although the center is run by Caritas, but the parish community is deeply involved in this ministry. The parish hall was given to the care of migrants, for example. These immigrants are the ones who crossed the Mexican-American border. Over 100 immigrant families come to the center every day.

Br. Jason Welle OFM
MOROCCO

The Custody of Protomartyrs of the Order

The brothers work to help migrants directly or indirectly in different fraternities. In the diocese of Tangier, for its proximity to the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla and the proximity of Spain itself beyond the Strait of Gibraltar, the Caritas is present through TAM Center (Tangier Migrants Home) in the cathedral premises next to it is the brotherhood of monks who works closely with the Franciscan bishop monsignor Santiago Alegría to meet the needs of migrants.

In Caritas center of the cathedral, where there is the Spanish parish of the Holy Spirit entrusted to the friars, there is a center of welcoming and listening, shower service, washing machines, and distribution of food and clothes.

The pastor of the Cathedral is also engaged in a spiritual accompaniment and catechism for migrants. In the French-speaking parish of the Assumption of Virgin Mary and St. Joan of Arc of Tangier, the parish priest organized a pastoral activity, being attentive to the presence of migrants.

In the fraternity of Tetouan, the friars are trying to figure out how to meet the needs of migrants who come to the parish asking for material help. There is currently a defined and organized structure, even though the priest is always willing to listen and to evaluate case by case.

What it does offer in a structured way is a free Spanish language course at Lerchundi cultural center belonged to the fraternity.

In the parish of the Holy Martyrs in Marrakech (the Diocese of Rabat in the center-south), the friars have granted the premises in a small church, which is no longer open for worship, to accommodate the migrants to let them rest and regain strength to resume their trip to the north: the aid is meant for sixty people who can stay a week and then make room for others.

Br. Natale Fiumanó OFM

SPAIN

The Immaculate Conception Province of Spain

For the thousands of refugees who need to be hosted, the Provincial Council of the Immaculate Franciscan Province of Spain, moved by the Gospel of mercy, has decided six months ago to give an empty monastery and unused spaces in the convents for the reception of refugees.

We have commissioned two brothers for this. We entered into the negotiations with CEAR (Spanish Commission for Aid to Refugees), one of the three NGOs to which the Spanish government officially commissioned the reception of refugees, to agree on how they would stay in these spaces. The CEAR has a system to accompany the refugees during two years (lawyers, psychologists, social workers) only in some cities. So not all the places we have offered is of their interest. For housing that does not accept the CEAR are looking for other organizations that might be interested.

The project coordinators have posted in early February a letter to all the fraternities report the situation and encouraging them, on behalf of the Definitory, to be involved in this area through prayer vigils, meetings to raise awareness, and collaboration with economic collections the Franciscan family to pay the rent of refugee families and support networks and the integration of refugees.

Br. Vicente Felipe Tapia OFM
3. MIGRATION MINISTRY IN THE ORDER

NORTH SLAVIC CONFERENCE

As for the problem of refugees, the friars of our provinces are trying to help them in various ways. For example, the province of Katowize welcomed a family from Syria and gave them a home, food, the possibility of studying Polish that one needs to find some works. The province of Poznan takes care of a family living in Syria and every month sends to Syria a sum of money for them through “Caritas Poland” for living, for food, for school etc. In Slovakian Province, several brothers accompany refugees from Syria both in material assistance and in organizing prayers for them and for peace in Syria. On the other hand, the friars of the Province of Wroclaw accompany refugees from Aleppo in a parish that is in Germany.

In Poland, there are around a million of refugees from Ukraine, where there is still a war. The brothers of Ukraine are in Poland to conduct retreats in parishes and then go back to help also those who are suffering from the war in their country.

Br. Maciej Olszewski OFM

MEXICO

Holy Gospel Province
Fray Junipero Serra Refugee Shelter

This shelter, of Christian-Franciscan inspiration, provided assistance service for Cuban refugees, in a first experience, during May and June 2016, at the Roger Bacon Franciscan fraternity, in El Paso, Texas. In a second experience, during August and September 2016, it did the same to refugees from Central America, all of them in search of a better life.

The activity consisted of providing a temporary shelter, no longer than 72 hours, for 50 people in the first stage. In the second, we received even more than one hundred, since the Central Americans came with their families. We welcomed a group of refugees, three days a week, but the hardest and most sensitive part was the process for their travel to their final destination, through phone calls to their relatives in the United States.

This Social Pastoral, taken up by our Fraternity formed by brothers Fr. Luis Chavira, OFM, Fr. Víctor Pérez, OFM and Fr. Alberto Hernández, OFM, is inspired by the Pope’s and the entire Church’s persistent concern about the phenomenon migration.

Br. Samuel López Padilla OFM
International Day of Prayer and Reflection Against Human Trafficking

Feb. 8 is the “International Day of Prayer and Reflection Against Human Trafficking” that was announced by Pope Francis. There are millions of poor and vulnerable people around the world who are systematically being trafficked and manipulated. And almost one third of the victims are under age of 18. The victims of human trafficking are exposed to sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced marriage, illegal adoption, forced labor, organ trafficking and criminal practices while being deeply wounded in body and mind.

Talitha Kum, the worldwide network of consecrated life (UISG) has been fighting against human trafficking in collaboration with other several organizations.

This year’s slogan was “They are just children! Not slaves!” As a member of the Committee, our JPIC Rome office participated in the events organized by Talitha Kum, such as the seminar, the prayer vigil, and the public audience, where Pope Francis has endorsed and blessed this network, addressing the human trafficking as one of the gravest sins against humanity.

Br. Rufino Lim OFM
JPIC Office—Rome
An International Conference, “Laudato Si’ and Catholic Investing Movement: Clean Energy for Our Common Home” was held at Pontifical Lateran University on January 27. Among the conveners of the event was Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) and JPIC Commission of USG and UISG.

Almost two hundred representatives from various religious congregations, educational institutions, and development organizations have participated. The conference was initiated with the keynotes by Cardinal Peter Turkson and Christiana Figueres (the former UNFCCC Chief). It was stressed that any positive action against climate change is the ethical imperative to all the religions and that the divest/reinvest movement is an effective tool for the religious institutions.

Many speakers have presented various case studies on divestment from the funds linked with the fossil fuel industry. Hundreds of catholic institutions have already participated in the divestment movement. And the investment experts have emphasized that the reinvestment in the climate solutions is considered not only ethical and ecological, but also more prospective and profitable. The conference was closed with an urgent and strong call for immediate and unified action taken by more Catholic institutions in this movement. In the words of Christiana Figueres, who took the important role in bringing out the historic Climate Agreement in Paris (2015), we have to keep reminding ourselves of the seven pairs of eyes of the upcoming seven generations.

Br. Rufino Lim, OFM
JPIC Office—Rome
The Franciscan Province of the Twelve Apostles of Peru had an annual Assembly in the city of Lima, Peru from January 9th to 14th, 2017. Seventy-two friars from the various fraternities of the Province participated in a process of reflection and in the drawing up of the Ecological Plan of the Province. The assembly was attended and facilitated by Br. Jaime Campos, Director of the Order’s JPIC Office.

During this week of reflection led by the Provincial Minister, Br. Guido Zegarra, there was also a presentation about various aspects of Peru’s social and economic realities by Dr. Pilar Arroyo, a distinguished sociologist and political analyst at the Bartolomé de las Casas Institute.

Br. Jaime Campos, OFM
JPIC Office – Rome

On December 18th, 2016, the Pakistan Franciscan JPIC committee, in collaboration with Kawish Resource Centre and the OFM Special Commission for Dialogue with Islam, organized an “Interfaith Celebration of Eid e Milad ul Nabi and Christmas”.

Fr. Jamil Albert, OFM, a member of the OFM Special Commission for Dialogue, welcomed the guests and noted how great a joy it was for the brothers that their Muslim guests recited evening prayers in the friars’ chapel. It was a true sign of the interfaith harmony that this celebration of Eid e Milad ul Nabi and Christmas was organized to express.

www.ofm.org/
MEDIATORS & RECONCILERS:
NEW JPIC MEDIATION CENTERS IN BOLIVIA

The JPIC Course for Mediation and Reconciliation in Bolivia concluded on March 4th, 2017 with 36 participants. This project started a year ago through the support of TAU Navarra’s funding from the Province of Aránzazu, the endorsement of The San Pablo Catholic University of Bolivia and Professor Juan Pablo Albornoz Kokot.

The first part of the five-month course began in August of 2016. It composed of both in-person classroom lessons and on-line classes with students coming from the three different regions of La Paz, Oruro and Cochabamba. The course offered theoretical training in relation to the mediation process. It emphasized non-violent communication and empathic listening, and provided tools to generate a process of reconciliation and understanding. The course prioritized questioning as a pedagogical tool since it stimulates productive thinking that helps to clarify thoughts and leads to deep reflection and analysis.

The second part of the course is the practical training which took place through the opening of three Community Mediation Centers (in each of the JPIC offices in the three cities mentioned above) so that the participants can put into practice what they have learned and provide effective service to their communities.

The conclusion of the whole project will take place when the Bolivian Franciscan Justice and Peace Movement receives the recognition from the Bolivian Government to open Reconciliation Centers that carry legal validity.

Br. Carmelo Galdós, OFM
JPIC Office – BOLIVIA
Meeting of the New Provincial Ministers and Custos

During the month of January was held in the General Curia the Meeting of the Minister General and its definitory with the new Provincials and Custos of the Order. The brothers who initiated the fraternal service in their entities, had a chance to know about the personnel and works of the secretaries and offices of the General Curia.

The General Definitory requested the JPIC office to present the last two guide booklets of the Order: “The Cry of the Earth and the Cries of the Poor”, “Poverty and Minority”. Along with this, we took the opportunity to present, briefly, the works done by the Office in the service of the Order.

We encourage the brothers who work in the JPIC field of the entities to collaborate actively with their respective Ministers in the implementation of the decisions of the General Chapter 2015 (n.8, n.10 and n.11), which are directly related to the guide booklets presented.

Br. Jaime Campos, OFM
JPIC Office—Rome
The Meeting of ROMAN VI

The last Roman VI meeting was held on January 12 at the Curia fraternity of the Conventuals. Almost all the members were present except the JPIC animator of TOR. The main subjects of the discussion were, the participation report on COP22, and the discussion on the World Day of the Poor.

Br. Rufino reported his experience of attending COP22 in Marrakech. He said that he was strongly impressed by one of the ecumenical meetings where the various Christian groups’ efforts on greening their churches were presented. Some of them has initiated ‘green church’ program even before the ‘Paris Agreement’. He suggested an international Franciscan movement on climate change. Roman VI decided first to collect the information on the Franciscan practices against climate change that had been already taken up, and to spread the existing tools for calculating the carbon emission.

The Pontifical Council for the Promoting of the New Evangelization has initiated the discussion of preparation of the World Day of the Poor which was suggested by Pope Francis. The Franciscan delegation was invited to the discussion group. Attilio Galimberti reported about decisions of the meeting. This day will be celebrated on the Sunday before the Feast of Christ the King. It won’t be a centralized celebration but in every place wherever there are the poor. The Church should take some kind of concrete action. The focus is not on the theoretical poverty but on the poor.

The next Roman VI meeting will be on April 24.

Br. Rufino Lim, OFM
JPIC Office—Rome
## 11. Agenda of the Office

### April

- **25 March ~ 1 April**: Visit to the Custody of Morocco / Jaime Campos
- **5**: JPIC promoters’ meeting in Roma, (in Spanish) / Jaime Campos
- **12**: JPIC promoters’ meeting in Roma, (in English) / Rufino Lim
- **24**: *Romans VI* meeting / Jaime Campos – Rufino Lim

### May

- **1 ~ 4**: Annual fraternity retreat / Jaime Campos – Rufino Lim
- **8 ~ 14**: JPIC course / Jaime Campos – Rufino Lim
- **24 ~ 31**: Visit to the Holy Land Custody / Jaime Campos
- **26 May ~ 8 June**: Visit to the Indonesian Province / Rufino Lim