

CONTACT

QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION, OFM



Laudato si' Cultural Evening

A night in praise of God's creation

On March 23rd, 2018 a cultural event was held to highlight the Encyclical *Laudato Si'*. The Basilica of St. Anthony at the Lateran was filled to overflowing with brothers and sisters from the Franciscan Family who gathered to praise their Creator. It was a night of wonderful music and featured the display of a beautiful *Laudato Si'* icon that was brought in pilgrimage through 18 countries in Latin America last year.

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ECOLOGY

USA - Holy Land - Italy - Spain

2

MIGRATION

Mexico - Guatemala - USA

3

PEACE

USA - Geneva - Croatia



**Laudato si'
Interreligious
Conference in
Jerusalem**



**Italy, Building
fraternal cities**



**USA,
Franciscans
March for Our
Lives**

The challenge of JPIC in working with the Franciscan Youth

The search for the meaning of life is the most typical, engaging and dramatically difficult aspect of the youth experience. The answer to this question is not always ready, direct and easy to find

The Franciscan Youth (YouFra) is an experience that, even if “officially” born around the fifties of the last century, some even want to go back to St. Francis. They affirm that Francis began his journey of conversion in the height of his youth and that many of those who followed him were also young. So, there is a big question in the heart of a young man among youths:

“Lord, what do you want me to do?”

The search for the meaning of life is the most typical, engaging and dramatically difficult aspect of the youth experience. The answer to this question is not always ready, direct and easy to find.

Here then, in the Franciscan family, the help to those young people who are confronted with this question comes through the proposal of the YouFra, which is a vocational context in which research and discernment are dealt with following or inspired by spirituality. Franciscan as lived in the Secular Franciscan Order (OFS). The inspiring and formative document of the YouFra, *“YouFra: A Way of Franciscan Vocation”* (Rome, 2004) is in fact mediated on the “form of Life” that the OFS Rule presents in its second chapter.

The YouFra world is a world of youth that aims to help its members at the time of their lives in which they are called to make fundamental choices in a rapid and continuous transformation. Moreover, the YouFra proposal is still relatively recent.



That's why many of its initiatives are not yet structurally consolidated but still very flexible, even though there are a few exceptions, for example, that of Brazil where there is a JPIC sector in the National Council of YouFra in defense of Human Rights.

This also applies to the commitment of the members of YouFra to JPIC, a commitment that is mainly implemented at the level of local fraternity and this fact makes it very difficult to have centralized information on this commitment which, concerning issues very close to young people certainly has for them a great "appeal."

There are fraternities involved in volunteering in prisons, others in welcoming immigrants, assisting the homeless, the sick, others in activities to defend the environment, in raising awareness of new lifestyles and in regard to climate change, but, and from here it seems to me that the great challenge must begin, which should not concern the YouFra only but the whole Franciscan family, they are all, or almost, initiatives that take care of the consequences of the problems but do not deal with the causes.

Here then is the great challenge and the great leap in quality that life and the world demand, not only for the young but all of us.

But how do you deal with the causes? Is not it a task too big and out of our reach? In my opinion, there is no single recipe, but there are some ingredients that then everyone must know how to measure with skill. First of all, preparation and study (i.e., a formation made not only on the documents of the Magisterium of the Church but also on professionally valid texts). Then commitment and service entering the existing structures of both civil society and religious associations bringing in them the Franciscan spirit of dialogue, service, and acceptance lived in the minority, but also

and above all in the consistency, firmness, and testimony of values in which we believe and want to live.

To us, adult members of the family (not only Franciscan but also human), the challenge of helping the youth and the YouFra in this journey, in particular, is challenging and demanding. However, we all need to listen to them, advise them when requested, and above all to support them in the moments of hardship, console them in the defeats and moments of disappointment, encourage them to "throw the heart" beyond the obstacle. Because it is through work for the poor, the most vulnerable and the oppressed - and among the oppressed, as Pope Francis reminds us in *Laudato Si'*, there is also our common home, our mother Earth - that our Franciscan vocation becomes clear and concrete.

And it is here that the answer to the question that was asked of Francis, in his research, is also found.

"Lord, what do you want me to do?"

Attilio Galimberti, OFS
OFS International Council
Milan



Croatia, Franciscan Institute for the Culture of Peace against thermal power plant.

Private investor *Vis Viva* has developed the Project of construction of gas thermal power plant at the lake Peruća on the river Cetina. The first public presentation of the Project focused on its Environmental Impact Assessment Study in December 2016 was accompanied by protests of a local population. The citizens have established the initiative named “Don't give in – Cetina.”

Franciscan Institute for the Culture of Peace has been actively involved in the campaign protesting against this Project. Among other things, together with the Franciscan Province of the Most Holy Redeemer, based in Split – the Franciscans are providing pastoral care in this area – on September 7, 2017, it sent the call pleading to stop this Project.

- The lake Peruća contains 564 billion liters of 1st class drinking water, and the river Cetina practically supplies with water more than 500,000 people, in summer season even more than 1,500,000. The river Cetina with its lake Peruća is the major national resource of drinking water and must be granted absolute protection.

- Waste heat – 271 MW – is too high for the flow and it would overheat the lake and the river Cetina. Water treatment against pipes fouling (daily quantity of wastewaters would reach 280,000 liters per day) would irretrievably degrade drinking water. Consequently, this Project would be against to the provisions of European Union Directive (80/778/EEC, 98/83/EC, and 2000/60/EC) which emphasizes that “in any circumstances” it is not allowed any deterioration of the present quality of water, which is intended for human consumption, and any kind of water pollution. Due to these reasons, it is not permitted to construct such facilities, even significantly cleaner ones, directly close to potable waters.

- Waste gases from 110-meter high and 9-meter wide chimney would pollute water and air.

- Gas is fossil fuel, and it is not considered as a renewable energy source. Besides the above, Project is unprofitable from the economic aspect. The price of gas is permanently increasing, and the cost of electric energy is decreasing. In 2014 and 2015 even 30 power plants like this one were closed in 8 EU countries due to unprofitability of gas power plants.

- Such a Project would have harmful consequences in the long run, and as such, it would not be in compliance with the principle of common good and intergenerational justice, emphasized by Pope Francis in the Encyclical *Laudato Si'* (LS 156 – 162).

All these are the reasons due to which Franciscan Institute for the Culture of Peace has not fallen for the criticism of „weakness of responses," highlighted by Pope Francis in the Encyclical mentioned above (LS, 54 – 59). The Project was also opposed by Split - Makarska Archdiocese (December 7, 2017) for the same reasons. The Open letter of protest against this Project, signed by 64 scientists, was published the very next day. On December 12, 2017, the Commission for the evaluation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Study provided negative opinion on the Study. Thereby the Project was stopped, to the great satisfaction of all its opponents.

Br. Bože Vuleta, OFM
JPIC animator – Split, Croatia

USA, initiative for integration of JPIC in Christian education in Buffalo.

At Ss. Columba-Brigid Parish in Buffalo, New York, several parishioners were interested in preparing for the sacraments through *the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (RCIA). Some of those same parishioners, along with others, wanted to learn more about Catholic Social Teaching. Instead of having them come two different nights for those sessions, Fr. Jud Weiksnar, OFM (of the Holy Name Province, and formerly of the JPIC Animation Committee) and his pastoral team decided to integrate the two. Now the RCIA is offered along with Catholic Social Teaching/JPIC themes that complement that subject matter. For instance, in the section on Creation Stories and the Book of Genesis, the parishioners learn about Care for Creation and *Laudato Si'*. In the section on Sin, Reconciliation, and Mercy, they will also learn about reforming the criminal justice system. In the section on the 10 Commandments and the Nicene Creed, they will learn about the Principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

This approach is believed to be unique in the United States. Usually “Catholic Social Teaching” is included as an individual class in the RCIA syllabus but under the Ss. Columba-Brigid approach, JPIC is integrated into each theme.

After the initial sessions, the 18 participants are very enthused. Some of them have already taken the initiative of discussing how they can “green” the parish, and how they can reach out to the homeless population in the city.

Br. Jud Weiksnar, OFM
Team JPIC – Buffalo, US



Italy, building fraternal cities with creativity and co-responsibility.

After the national summer camp in Palermo, JPIC National Commission of OFM of Italy organized a weekend of confrontation and training from 1 to 3 December at the *Antonianum* in Rome. Twenty-six young people took part, a sister and eight friars from all over Italy. The theme was: “*Building fraternal cities with creativity and co-responsibility.*”

It was a very intense weekend in a beautiful fraternal atmosphere, visualizing a different future and imagining concrete projects that can give continuity to work done with a very constructive exchange.

Br. Giuseppe Buffon (the dean of the PUA), introduced us to the topic. His reflection is focused on some passages:

- From a logic of rejection and discard to the ethics of fraternity. To build fraternal

cities, it is necessary to start from what we refuse.

- The reflection was accompanied by photos of works of the exponents of the *Arte Povera* (of *Pistoletto*), which contest the current consumerist system.

- To transform waste into a resource, we need to learn from the ecosystems, in which everything becomes a resource.

- The Franciscan charism must be actualized by overcoming a consumerist pleasure to announce a Francis who values what is rejected.

In the evening, after prayer and dinner, we strolled to discover the beauties of Rome. On 2nd Dec., Saturday, we had a morning session of a workshop with **Prof. Giancarlo Cursi** (UPS teacher). We started from the analysis of reality, where it is a reversed registry pyramid (a minority of young people, to whom no space was recognized in an older society), the reflection continued through a song by Cristicchi, and we shared problems and opportunities. Finally divided into groups we reflected on the awareness of good work, on how to spread it, influencing others and how to be protagonists of a new process.

Very interesting was what came up from the working groups.

The afternoon was dedicated to the testimonies:

- **Br. Alessandro Ciamei** presented the projects of the Lazio minors, in the particular fraternal city, in particular, the project of *Torre Angela* and *San Francesco a Ripa*;

- Cristina, an operator of *Villa Letizia*, spoke to us about her experience with the community that takes care of the psychological problems;

- Pierpasquale and Mariapaola who have been told as a couple, have shared with us their choices and their will to work for the common good.

- **Br. Andrea Tirelli**, from the province of *Puglia Molise*, on the other hand, illustrated the interesting microcredit project: "*I trust you.*"

Before dinner, we had the surprise of the visit of the **Minister General**, who urged us and encouraged us to continue our work.

In the evening, **Br. Antonino Clemenza**, the director of the canteen, guided us to discover the street art of *Tor Pignattara*. We were fascinated by the creativity of the artists has enhanced and transformed a suburban neighborhood.

Sunday morning **Br. Rufino Lim** presented us with the work of the general JPIC office and the most important topics the office is working on. Even after a wonderful and intense sharing, we concluded with the celebration in the basilica and lunch.

Br. Francesco Zecca, OFM
JPIC Animator – Salento, Italy



Spain, meeting of college professors of the Franciscan family.

Convened by the Inter-Franciscan JPIC Commission and by six Franciscan Orders and Congregations, we met in El Pardo, on February 2 and 3, one hundred and twenty Franciscan educators from nine branches of our Franciscan family. In the joy of the meeting, we have listened, shared, celebrated, prayed and above all, experienced that we are “family” and we have many traits, intuitions, and wishes that identify us as such.

Now, before we finish, we want to express in these brief conclusions, our gratitude for all that we have lived and our commitment so that this is, not only a timely meeting but the first step in this journey, long ago undertaken, as educators of the Franciscan family:

1. We are happy to have found ourselves in this atmosphere of confidence and joy. We have felt in the “common home” and, in it, we have known, listened to and verified how much it unites us and the many common expectations and hopes that moments like this awaken in us.

2. We are convinced that our Franciscan educational mission also involves caring for the common home and this conviction we have seen reflected in the many experiences that we have shared here that have given us light and sufficient drive to commit ourselves to an ecological conversion that will lead us to an authentic eco-education.



3. We have seen how the ecological value is a demanding and attractive form of our pastoral activities, everything is interconnected and leads us to connect with God, our God who gives us the earth and life. Garden cultivation is another form of pastoral commitment that reaches the poorest from near and far in its solidarity dimension.

4. We are all eco-vigilant, to be close to our sister Nature, to take care of it and to remedy in some way its disasters, reforest, clean rivers and mountains, get involved in recycling ... Eco-vigilance that includes and prioritizes the closeness and care of Poor brothers and sisters.

5. We thank the contributions of other charismatic families that have enriched us, made us remember, and lived the reality of universal fraternity, in which we want to educate.

6. Along with Caritas and other Church organizations, we have become aware that the fight against poverty is linked to the care of creation, and we want to do that day by day in our homes, in our educational communities, and in our classrooms. Educating from ecological spirituality, for depth, for care, and for the alternative, we have everyone “linked” in this direction.

7. From now on, we count on the valuable contributions of the workshops embodied in that projected “Guide of good practices” that will help us to undertake new projects and to involve our colleagues, students, families ... so that the life of all and that of our common home get fuller every day.

8. Encouraged and feeling the presence of the Spirit among us, that sustains our charismatic experience, we accept and assume the challenge of making each of our schools a “sustainable” school. We are

convinced that we will achieve this as long as we do it together, generously sharing achievements, difficulties, illusions, and helping each other.

May the Lord bless us and keep us in this educational task that we take up together as a Franciscan family!

Source: <https://www.franciscans.cat>

JPIC Commission in Guatemala.

On November 20, 2017, the Provincial Definitory agreed that the theme addressed at the 5th Continental Meeting of the Americas of 2017 in Anápolis, Brazil, would be addressed as a training space at the regional meeting in Guatemala, as well as in the Central American region. Dedicating enough time to the JPIC Animation Plan 2018 - 2020; within the framework of the Verona Statement, 2016.

The first formation was held in the facilities of the San Antonio de Padua fraternity on February 20. Sr. Sandra Carolina Ascencio of El Salvador participated, who shared an analysis of the context from the municipal and parliamentary elections that took place in March 2018. With the same analysis, it would begin when it is addressed in the regions of the Province.

Br. Armando González Villatoro, the President of the JPIC Commission presented the annual report (2017) of the JPIC Commission of the Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe of Central America, Panama and the Mission of the Santa Cruz in Haiti.

The below can be mentioned among the most relevant aspects:

- *Laudato Si'* Pilgrimage of the America
- Season of Creation
- First Meeting of Ongoing Formation of the emergent fringe at the Conference level in the Port of Veracruz from May 4 to 7, 2017
- Meeting of the JPIC Conference from August 29 to 31, 2017 in Anápolis, Brazil
- 5th Continental Meeting of the Americas from September 1 to 8, 2017 in Anápolis, Brazil



- Closing of the Pilgrimage of the Americas in Quito, Ecuador from October 21 to 28, 2017
- 1st World Day of the Poor, November 19, 2017.

Rosario Martínez, who collaborates with JPIC Guatemala, shared the objectives of the JPIC Animation Plan 2018 – 2020 as well as the principles that would govern the work of the Province, these being:

- Lifestyle:** Raise awareness of the need for a change of life; do it by:
- (a) Conference on climate change (in this way the intellectuals are also involved)
 - (b) Promote popular workshops.
 - (c) Organize ecological fairs (preferably for children and young people)
 - (d) Articulate groups that work in this area, be it social or Christian groups.

Mining:

- (a) Information and formation on the mining
- (b) Articulate the NGOs that are already working on this aspect
- (c) Support movements that fight against mining
- (d) Get in touch with Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador who are living this problem of mining.

Migration:

- (a) Deepen the understanding of the phenomenon of migration.
- (b) Participate in forums and meetings on migration.
- (c) Promote the interprovincial house in northern Mexico for work with migrants.
- (d) Support the shelter home *La72* in Tenosique, Tabasco.
- (e) Participate in the network for migrants
- (f) Promote a Franciscan network of assistance to migrants with the entire Franciscan family



Br. Armando Gonzáles Villatoro, OFM
President of the JPIC Commission
Province of N. S. Guadalupe



Franciscans March for Our Lives.

WASHINGTON—A number of Franciscans joined hundreds of thousands of people at the March for Our Lives here on Saturday, March 24. Other Franciscans marched in one of the hundreds of similar marches around the world.

Friar Jacek Orzechowski OFM was the principal celebrant at a Mass for Catholic youth attending the march. The Mass was held at [St. Patrick's church](#) at 10th and G Streets NW before the march. Afterward, those attending the Mass were given a bag of snacks and water prepared by Catholic Charities.

Among those attending at the march were Friars Angel Vazquez OFM and Jim Bernard OFM, from Chicago; Friar Joe Nangle OFM of Washington, DC; and numerous postulants from the Franciscan house of formation in Silver Spring, Md.

Other friars, such as Friar Paul Keenan OFM, of Wood-Ridge, N.J., took part in marches in other parts of the country.

Provincials Endorse Franciscan Sisters' Statement

On March 6, six US Provincials Ministers endorsed the statement of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany on assault rifles, background checks, and gun trafficking.

It can be read here: <https://usfranciscans.org/2018/03/26/franciscans-march-for-our-lives/>

USA, information from Holy Name Province's Office for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.



Four Priorities

The Office for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation of Holy Name Province (New York, USA) has identified four major priorities on which it is working closely with the ministries of Holy Name Province, and the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Directorate. The Directorate has formed four working groups to align with the four priorities. They are:

Immigration:

- As one of the Order's JPIC priorities is Migration, Holy Name Province also made attention to immigration issues one of its mandates from its 2017 Chapter. The Province has responded through various means including advocacy, outreach and a commitment of resources. The Province mandated that the 35 friaries hold house chapter to address immigration issues.

- The Migrant Center at the Church of St. Francis of Assisi in Manhattan plays a major role in the New York City area as well as throughout the province. It offers Immigration Assistance, Advocacy and Network Building, and Education and Formation.

- The JPIC Office supplies resources to help friaries/ministries better support immigrants in danger (or potential danger) of deportation. Much of this has gone out in the past in different forms, but it takes on added importance now with the threat to Dreamers (undocumented persons who were brought to the United States as children). There has also been increased deportation action from the government's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) which has affected many community members associated with Holy Name Province parishes and ministries. One can see how the Trump administration views immigration by



the photos used on the home page for ICE. Rather than showing an iconic symbol such as the Statue of Liberty, the photos feature militarized actions.

- On February 26, 2018 the group *Justice for Immigrants*, a campaign of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, sponsored a Call-In Day to the members of Congress to advocate for fair treatment for Dreamers. Holy Name Province encouraged its ministries to participate in the Call-In Day.

Climate, Care for Creation and Extraction Practices:

- The JPIC Office and JPIC Directorate has encouraged local friaries and ministries to join efforts sponsored by [Climate Mobilization](#) and [Food and Water Watch](#) to seek city/county/state legislation that would make their jurisdictions net carbon neutral by 2035 (and even better 2025 in a few cases). The goal of this effort is to help take meaningful action on climate while there is limited action on a national level.

Racism and White Privilege

- At the 2017 Chapter, a floor discussion addressed the issues of Racism and White Privilege. The Provincial Administration is committed to exploring these issues, and has asked variou

provincial committees to collaborate at the grass roots level, including the Fraternal Life in Mission Directorate, the African Ancestry Committee, the Asian Ancestry Committee, the Hispanic Ministry Committee, and the JPIC Directorate. The Province is looking to outside experts to help guide the process, while recognizing that real change has to be initiated from within.

Nonviolent Peacemaking

- While not an official mandate of the 2017 Chapter, a groundswell of support among members of the JPIC Directorate led to the formation of this working group. Among the laypersons working on this initiative is Marie Dennis, co-president of Pax Christi International.

Br. Jud Weiksner, OFM
Team JPIC – Buffalo





COP24 • KATOWICE 2018

UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

Franciscans in COP24. (1/3)

What is COP?

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is an international environmental treaty adopted in 1992 and entered into force 1994 after a sufficient number of countries had ratified it. The parties to the convention have been meeting annually from 1995 in the Conferences of the Parties (COP) to assess progress in dealing with climate change. The COP21 in Paris, 2015 was a milestone after more than 20 years of failure in the climate negotiation at the UN level. The parties agreed to adopt the Paris Agreement, that aims to keep global temperature rise at least below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. It deals with greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, adaptation, and finance, etc. It got ratified by more than 190 states before the consequent COP.

Franciscan Participations in COP

The international Franciscan delegation took part in the World Earth Summit in Rio, 2012 (Rio+20), after which the JPIC & Mining Project started in response. The JPIC General Office has also been involved in the Franciscan delegation to COP21, Paris as well as the consequent COP22, Morocco, and COP23, Bonn. The general objectives of participation would be to be updated in climate movements, to take solidary actions and communication with civil society, and promotion of the Franciscan perspectives on ecological crisis. Even though they were informative and inspirational experiences, unfortunately, they didn't result in any solid

communal initiatives or concrete decisions dealing with the climate issue in the Order, and the delegation didn't succeed in raising consciousness or sensitization in global warming in the Franciscan Family.

COP24

The COP24 will be held in December in Katowice, Poland. Katowice is a city mainly dependent on coal mining for its economy, and the decision of the venue for COP implies a huge challenge to any climate movements to deal with social and economic realities. Moreover, this COP is particularly crucial because the "Paris Rulebook," which is the legally binding implementation of the Paris Agreement, is to be officially adopted by the parties.

Preparation

As the role of the faith-based communities in tackling the issue is increasingly being sought, it's crucial for the Franciscans to take climate actions and keep going on persistently in this direction. In this sense, CONTACT will publish on coming editions a couple of articles on climate change and the role of religious communities written by experts in climate action.

There will be a climate pilgrimage starting from Assisi and all the way to Katowice. It's organized by Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) and other NGOs. This action will be for promoting public awareness on the global issue of climate change in the society as well as in the religious communities. The JPIC General Office along with Romans VI is communicating with GCCM to take part in the pilgrimage.

The JPIC General Office is also trying to collaborate with FI and other NGOs to plan this year's participation with a Franciscan climate workshop in which the voice of local mine workers can be met with that of climate experts, inter-faith as well as ecumenical prayer service, and public climate actions. We hope this could raise consciousness and provoke an ongoing climate initiative among the brothers and sisters in the world.

Lastly, the JPIC General Office is always open to your ideas, suggestions, and questions in this issue. Don't hesitate to write to us if you have any ideas. The Office will keep in touch with you.

Websites for further information

UNFCCC

<http://unfccc.int>

Intergovernmental Panels on Climate Change (IPCC)

<http://www.ipcc.ch>

Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM)

<https://catholicclimatemovement.global>

Br. Rufino Lim, OFM
JPIC General Office – Rome

Meeting of New Provincial Ministers.



The meeting between the General Government and the new Provincial Ministers and Custodes of the Order was held at the General Curia from January 17 to 25. The program of the meeting included the presentation of the JPIC Office. On the morning of January 23, we had the opportunity to present the work that the Office does and how it is organized in the Order. Also, we present the subsidies "*The Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor*" and "*Poor and Lower Ones ...Where are We?*"

We take the opportunity to request the new Ministers to grant the necessary space to the JPIC office of their entities and the participation of the new JPIC animators in the annual JPIC course. Likewise, we gave them a questionnaire to update the contact information of the entities, recognize their appreciation and to request a suggestion for JPIC animation work both in each entity and in the Order.

Br. Jaime Campos F., OFM
JPIC General Office – Rome



Rome, Laudato si' Cultural Evening.

A night in praise of God's creation

On March 23rd, 2018 a cultural event was held to highlight the Encyclical *Laudato Si*. The Basilica of St. Anthony at the Lateran was filled to overflowing with brothers and sisters from the Franciscan Family who gathered to praise their Creator. It was a night of wonderful music and featured the display of a beautiful *Laudato Si'* icon that was brought in pilgrimage through 18 countries in Latin America last year.

The audience included ambassadors and representatives from embassies to the Holy See, the Rectors of the *Antoniano* and *Urbaniana* universities, Superiors General from around ten Franciscan Congregations

of Sisters, and representatives from the Capuchins, Conventuals, Salesians, and Benedictines

They were treated to musical performances from three artists, including our brother Friar Alessandro Brustenghi, OFM, who is a member of the fraternity at the Portiuncula — his vocation has seen him develop his musical gift, becoming an internationally recognized tenor, and signing a contract with Decca Records with whom he has recorded three CDs: "*Voice from Assisi*", "*Voice of Joy*" and "*Voice of Peace*." The audience also heard from Maestro Eugenio Fagiani, who is considered to be one of the finest organists in Italy and is internationally well known. Finally, Bologna's famous Children's Choir "*Marielle Ventre*" based at the Antonianum de Bologna, received a hugely warm response. This children's choir was established more than 60 years ago and now ranks among the most famous in the world, having sung in numerous concerts with the most famous musicians nationally and internationally.



At the end of the evening, Br. Michel Perry, OFM Minister General, addressed the audience. Using the thoughts and words of the Cantic of the Creatures, he spoke about the grave dangers that threaten *our common home* and urged all those present to an even greater commitment to its protection and care. He stressed that we need to rediscover the truth that everything comes as gift from God – the profit motive is not enough for an authentically human life. In a world where everything, even play, has become commodified we need to believe that although poetry, song, and beauty are not

‘useful’ in the usual sense, we cannot live without them. Reflecting on the life of St. Francis, Br. Michael said that the God of Francis is a suffering God — a God who shares in the suffering of being human, and who has given all of Creation an inherent dignity. This is the God of tenderness to whom the poetic soul of St. Francis responded in the Cantic — *Praise and bless my Lord and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility.*

Participation in the International Council of Formation and Studies.

The Secretariat of Formation and Studies has held its International Council at the General Curia from March 12th to 16th. The Council invited the JPIC General Office along with the Secretariat of Mission and Evangelization to hear about the works of the Office.

The Office addressed to the 16 members of the Council the JPIC according to the documents of the Order, the four main areas of the works of the General Office, the decisions of the last JPIC International Council in Verona (2016), and lastly, some examples of those general animation directions in the Order.

There were two suggestions made by the office in the presentation, regarding formation and studies. The first was about the integration of JPIC dimension in the course of the initial formation. The Office emphasized the importance of the social context and suggested an exposure program that allows the friars to live among the poor as the poor for several months. The second was the formation of specialists in ecological theology, peace studies, and NGOs.

It deserves particular emphasis that all the documents of the Order say that JPIC is the integral element of the Franciscan charism and is at the heart of the Franciscan identity. According to *Ratio Formationis* and *Ratio Studiorum*, the friars minor must become the defenders of the human rights and devote themselves in JPIC. It’s evident that JPIC should be integrated into every level of the formation to realize these ideas of the Order.

Br. Rufino Lim, OFM
JPIC General Office – Rome

Holy Land, an interreligious conference in Jerusalem on the *Laudato si'* encyclical.

Presenting the encyclical *Laudato si'* to Israeli and Palestinian societies and discussing “integral ecology:” this was the aim of the conference that took place on March 12 at the Notre Dame Center in Jerusalem. Almost three years after the publication of *Laudato si'*, the Pope’s call that was found within the encyclical to “every person who lives on this planet” was the starting point for the speakers, who came from the three different monotheistic religions, and who gave their viewpoints on the common theme of ecology. The event, which was organized by the Custody’s Commission for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, was attended by Christians, Jews, and Muslims, who attentively listened asked questions.



Nadim Asfour/CTS

Also, present [at the event] was Cardinal Peter Turkson, prefect of the Department for Integral Human Development. “Serving integral human development has many challenges, many of which are linked to ‘integral ecology,’” the cardinal said. “It is about exclusion, indifference, inequity, lack of solidarity and then the conflicts that are afflicting many countries and populations.” In the wake of what Pope Francis affirmed in *Laudato si'*, Mons. Turkson stressed that we must work for an “ecological conversion” that calls not only individuals but the community to action.

Respect for creation is a concept that is also highlighted in the Qur’an, as Prof. Mohammed S. Dajani Daoudi, director and founder of the Wasatia Academic Graduate Institute, explained in his speech: “The Holy Qur’an, which is considered by all Muslims as the main source of Islamic doctrine and beliefs, affirms that God created man on earth and that the earth itself is God’s creation, bestowed by the grace of its creator to humanity for us to appreciate it. It is [our] right and a responsibility to use the nature that God has bestowed upon us, and he wants us to protect it and preserve it.”

“The ecological task assigned to humanity is expressed in the Midrash in the book of Ecclesiastes (Kohelet Rabbah 7 Section 28),” said Rabbi David Rosen, international director of interreligious affairs (AJC). From that Midrash, three fundamental lessons can be derived: creation belongs to God who created it; humanity is, in reality, God’s partner in creation; and man has the responsibility of preserving creation. For this reason, to restore the relationship with the divine and the environment, Jews observe the precepts of the Sabbath rest and respect for the ‘sabbatical year,’ during which they cyclically leave land uncultivated land for a time.

Prof. Stefano Zamagni, Professor of Economics at the University of Bologna and member of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, then focused on the very mission of mercy in the field of economics: “that of giving ‘shape’ to the market, humanizing it. A society cannot make progress on the path of integral human development by keeping the code of efficiency and the code of fraternity disjointed from one another,” said the professor.

The conclusions of the day were made by Cardinal Peter Turkson. To better understand the message of *Laudato si’*, the Cardinal suggested putting the accent on ‘the seven Cs’: Continuity, Collegiality, Conversation, Care, Conversion, Citizenship, and Contemplation. Man’s objective is “ecological conversion” that leads to an “ecological citizenship,” respectful of the environment, for a contemplation of the wonders of creation.

Beatrice Guarrera





International JPIC Course 2018

April 9 - 16, 2018
Guadalajara, Mexico

9 APRIL

*Session for the new OFM JPIC
animators*

8.40

Welcoming greeting

Minister Provincial

9.00-12.30

Jaime Campos, OFM

Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation
Office

**“JPIC ANIMATION: A CHALLENGE
FOR THE FRIARS MINOR”**

15.30-19.00

Rufino Lim, OFM

Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation
Office

**“STRATEGIES TO MAKE AN
ANIMATION PLAN”**

10 APRIL

9.00-12.30

Gerardo Cruz González

Mexican Institute of Christian Social
Doctrine

**“SOCIOPOLITICAL HISTORY OF
IMMIGRATION IN AMERICA”**

15.30-19.00

Rafael Hernández López

President, the Civil Council of the
National Institute of Migration

**“SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, POLITICAL
VIOLENCE AND CLIMATE
CHANGE”**

11 APRIL

9.00-12.30

Katya Colmenares

Intercontinental University

**“INDUSTRIALIZATION OF
PRODUCTION: DISPLACEMENT
FIELD-CITY/PERIPHERY”**

15.30-19.00

Melissa Angélica Vértiz Hernández

Working Group on Migration Policy

**“THE UNFAIR DISTRIBUTION OF
WEALTH: SOCIAL INEQUALITY”**

APRIL 12

9.00-12.30

Tomás González, OFM

La 72 - Shelter Home for migrants

**“PHYSICAL AND SYMBOLIC
WALLS: PREJUDICE,
XENOPHOBIA, FEAR AND
DISCRIMINATION”**

15.30-19.00

Melissa Vértiz Hernández.

Working Group on Migration Policy

Víctor Hugo Carlos Banda

Human Rights Center of Miguel Agustín

Pro Juárez

**“CORRUPTION OF AUTHORITY:
WHO TO TRUST?”**

APRIL 13

9.00-12.00

José Luis González Miranda

Centroamericana “José Simeón Cañas”-

UCA University

**“A BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION OF
THE PHENOMENON MIGRATORY:
TO OVERCOME WALLS THAT
PREVENT THE FRATERNITY”**

14.30-19.00

Shelter Home, “El Refugio”

Shelter Home, “FM4 paso libre”

**“MEETING WITH MIGRANTS AND
REFUGEES”**

APRIL 14

9.00-12.00

Pedro Pantoja Arreola

Shelter Home Saltillo

**“THE SLAVERY OF THE 21ST
CENTURY: KIDNAPPING, HUMAN
TRAFFICKING, SEXUAL AND
LABOR EXPLOITATION”**

15.30-19.00

Irazú Gómez

Sin Fronteras

**“MIGRATORY POLICIES: NATURAL
PERSON VS CORPORATION”**

APRIL 15

9.00-12.30

Martin Carbajo, OFM

Pontifical University Antonianum

**“CARE FOR SISTER EARTH:
COMMON GOOD AND THE RIGHT
NOT TO MIGRATE”**

15.30-19.00

María Bobadilla

Director, Scalabrinianas Mission for

Migrants and Refugees

Ramón Márquez

Director, La 72 - Shelter Home for the

migrants

**“RELIGION AND CULTURE:
OPPORTUNITY FOR ENCOUNTER,
DIALOGUE AND WELCOME”**

APRIL 16

9.00-12.30

Martin Carbajo, OFM

Pontifical University Antonianum

**“EXPERIENCE OF WORK AND
COMMON GOOD IN THE
SPIRITUALITY OF SAINT FRANCIS
OF ASSISI”**

15.30-18.30

Juan Rendón, OFM

Franciscan foundation of S. Thomas

Moro - Colombia

**“FRANCISCAN HUMANISM: CALLS
FOR SOCIO-POLITICAL
ADVOCACY”**

19.00

Certificate delivery

JPIC Office - General Curia



Encounter with FI & Participation in UNHRC session – Geneva.

The 37th session of the UN Human Rights Council was held on 26 February to 23 March 2018 in Geneva. The UNHRC established in 2006, consists of 47-member states and is a subsidiary body of the UN General Assembly holding three regular sessions every year. Br. Rufino Lim, OFM attended the session and several side events for two days (1 and 2 March) with the invitation of the *Franciscan International* (FI). The objectives of this visit were to experience mechanism of UNHRC directly and to visit FI deepening the understanding of its work that connects the oppressed people in the world with the UN regarding the human rights issues.

The session of UNHRC attended was on the global situation of the human rights defenders. The 47 delegates of the member states and the representatives of various NGOs listened to the reports of UN Special Rapporteurs and discussed on them. The reality reported by the special rapporteurs was astonishing. The 70% of those who oppress the human rights defenders is the governments or the public institutions. The human rights defenders are incredibly vulnerable to the systematized state violence, and even many of them have been persecuted. The situation is not so different whether in Asia or Europe.

Later, several side events co-organized by FI were attended. They were on human rights defenders in Asia, the relationship between human rights, SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) and climate change, and other issues such as rights to food and adequate housing, and the issue of child soldiers in the war zones in the Middle East and Africa, etc. The Franciscans International and other NGOs have been working on the integration of human rights such as rights of equality and life into the “*Paris Rulebook*,” which will be a historic cornerstone for legally binding international measure against climate change and global warming. It’s because climate change is one of the most significant factors that undermine human rights.

This year's session of UNHRC was particularly meaningful because it's the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by UN General Assembly in 1948. The Declaration is the political implementation of the Gospel spirit from the Franciscan perspective. In fact, the official documents of the Order mention the issue of human rights as one of the integral elements of our Franciscan identity. "The Friars Minor seeks to become aware of and work for the elimination of every form of injustice and dehumanizing structures that exist in the world. He makes an explicit option for the poor, becoming a voice for those who have no voice, an instrument of justice and peace and the leaven of Christ in the world" (*Ratio Formationis*, 25b).

The visit to FI and UNHRC helped the office understand their mechanism, the gravity of the human rights situation in the world, and the duty of the Franciscans and the JPIC animators, in particular, to listen and convey the voice of the voiceless. It's crucial to keep in mind that the Gospel we preach should be expressed in our solid effort to protect the rights of the oppressed and the Earth.

Br. Rufino Lim, OFM
JPIC General Office – Rome

International days – April to June, 2018

April 22	International Mother Earth Day
May 1	International Laborer's Day
May 12	World Fair Trade Day
May 22	International Day for Biological Diversity
June 5	World Environment Day
June 8	World Ocean Day
June 12	World Day against Child Labor
June 17	World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought



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General Curia – OFM

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