

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING FOR JPIC: NAIROBI, KENYA

20-26 February 2012

INTRODUCTION

1. The International Council for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (ICJPIC) celebrated its biennial meeting at the Portiuncula Franciscan Center in Nairobi, Kenya, 20-26 February, 2012. Participants included JPIC coordinators from all 13 OFM conferences; the Animation Committee for JPIC; the two friars who serve in the Rome JPIC Office; and the General Definitor who is liaison between JPIC and the General Definitorium. Council members were invited to the Africa Continental meeting for JPIC, which was held immediately prior to the ICJPIC. Ten members were present for at least part of the Africa meeting as a sign of support and solidarity.

2. The principal objectives of this meeting were to evaluate the work of JPIC at all levels (Rome office, Conference and Entity); to deepen our reflection on three mandates of the 2009 General Chapter (Ecology in our Daily Life/Environmental Justice, mandate 43.2; Peace-building and Reconciliation, mandate 43.3; Collaboration, mandate 30); and to design a plan for implementation of these three mandates. The meeting began with individual presentations of the participants, followed by a report on the reality and the JPIC work in each of the thirteen Conferences of the Order.

3. Participants then turned to consideration of the three mandates. Prior to the ICJPIC, a questionnaire was sent to all animators requesting information about work being done on the three mandates. Fifty eight (58) animators from around the world responded. During the ICJPIC, each mandate was studied using the same process: an hour-long presentation on the theme, followed by a short time for clarification of the issues; one hour in language groups to discuss the issues and begin to formulate proposals for implementation of the mandates at the general, conference and entity levels; a plenary session to present the work of the language groups; a synthesis of the work of the groups; presentation of the synthesis to participants two days later; language groups to finalize suggested proposals; a final plenary session to hear the proposals from each group and to comment on them. The Tarata document from the ICJPIC meeting of 2010 was a point of reference for the work in Nairobi, and it was made very clear that the document of Tarata should continue as an important element for ongoing JPIC work.

4. Members of the ICJPIC gave the task of reviewing the results of the meeting and preparing this final document to the Animation Committee. The first draft of the document was sent to those who participated in the Nairobi meeting for comment and correction. It includes the final synthesis for each of the three mandates, along with suggestions to all animators for implementation of the same. The ICJPIC insisted that the Rome office and all Conference JPIC coordinators make animators aware of this document, and encourage them to use it for implementation of the Chapter mandates. Animators are not being asked to implement ALL of the suggestions found in this document, but are requested to choose at least SOME of them, to create a concrete plan for their implementation, and then to share the plan with the administration of their Entity so as to make it a commitment

of the entity. The plan should then be shared with all of the friars, and with the people with whom we work in our ministries.

5. The JPIC Office in Rome will continue to provide materials to help promote the process of implementation of these mandates. Responsibility for implementation, however, belongs to all Conferences and Entities, since the commitment to JPIC is part of the DNA of our Franciscan lives (see report of Minister General to 2009 General Chapter, no. 171). We hope that this document will help us in the task of building God's kingdom of justice, peace, truth and love.

6. ICJPIC participants also considered the following issues:

- Timing of Continental meetings.
- Possibility of a future International Congress, perhaps in 2016; need to present request to next General Chapter.
- Possibility of organizing visits/experiences of animators from one or more conferences to another conference.
- Collaboration and support for the Africa JPIC Office in Nairobi.
- Proposal from Venice province to create traveling photo exhibition on the poor.
- Topics for future Rome JPIC courses.
- Participation at Rio + 20 conference in Brazil in June 2012.
- Communication.

7. The ICJPIC was a very fraternal experience, and the welcome provided by the friars of Saint Francis Province and by the staff at the Portiuncula Center added to the atmosphere. We thank the local provincial, Br. Sebastian Unsner, who presided at the opening Eucharist for both the Africa Continental meeting and for the ICJPIC. We offer a special thanks to Br. Joe Masumbuko and the staff of the Africa JPIC Office, who organized logistics and helped with the content of our meeting. May God bless the work of all of us as we struggle to bring about God's kingdom in our world.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE / IMPACT OF OUR LIVES

<p>"To examine the impact of our style of life on creation, especially regarding climate change, and promote environmental justice in order to highlight the relationship between social and ecological themes" (General Chapter 2009, mandate 43.2).</p>

MOTIVATION

8. When analyzing the causes of the environmental crisis, both natural and social, it is generally agreed that the causes are not only economic and political, but also cultural, ethical and religious. With the arrival of modernity nature was desacralized and became a "thing" for the exclusive use of humanity. People were no longer together with the other creatures, but above them. With capitalism and industrialization (and also with real

socialism), the economy was transformed into a system whose logic was no longer consistent with the idea of creation as the dwelling for humanity but, on the contrary, came to be seen as a source of profit and, therefore, of exploitation.

9. This exploitation of nature and natural resources caused by personal and group interests, by national interests and big business, by sectarian colonialisms and economic imperialisms, has produced and continues to produce concomitantly the deterioration of the environment, the poverty of more than half of humanity, and armed conflicts in many countries.

10. It is the absolutely desacralized vision of nature and the capitalist economic system that are producing the North-South divide and the exploitation of nature. This situation of excessive wealth in some countries and misery in much of the world is generating the current grave environmental deterioration. Rich countries are characterized by a consumerist lifestyle that depletes resources and produces an enormous amount of waste that the environment cannot absorb. Poor countries, seeking to survive and rise out of misery, indiscriminately exploit their resources.

11. This reality challenges us as Franciscans because respect and care for creation is a question of Fraternity and Minority. It is, therefore, at the heart of our spirituality and our Franciscan charism. We all know that in the writings of Saint Francis the Cantic of the Creatures holds an important place; it shows his love for God and all creatures which is highlighted in the first biographies (cf. 1Cel 77, 80-81; 2Cel 165; Assisi Compilation 88). Francis, in his way of being in the world, neither possesses nor dominates creation, but stands alongside her and treats her as a sister, because all creation comes from the hands of the same Father God. But if Francis is able to reverence, respect, be brother and see the love of the Creator in all creatures, it is because he lives in radical poverty and non-appropriation. Poverty frees love of all desire for possession and brings about fraternity.

12. All of this, which is part of our tradition and our spirituality, is found in the General Constitutions (cf. CCGG 1.2) and other documents of the Order. The challenge for us is how to live our spirituality today immersed in such a great ecological crisis. How do we translate spirituality into ethics, into a humanizing and restorative lifestyle, and into political action so as to tackle the underlying causes of environmental deterioration? How do Franciscans, in a practical and concrete way, have “a reverent attitude towards nature, threatened from all sides today, in such a way that they may restore it completely to its condition of brother and to its role of usefulness to all humankind for the glory of God the Creator” (GGCC 71).

13. To live fraternally with all creatures and in a spirit of non-appropriation, it calls us to a personal and communal lifestyle that is not consumerist, but rather simple, ecological and in solidarity with our brothers and sisters and with all of creation. We must be critical of all forms of exploitation and production that do not respect nature, but impoverish her irreversibly. We are called to promote education and environmental awareness in our pastoral work. We are called to foster a commitment to environmental justice, which highlights the profound relationship that exists between ecological issues and those of social justice, peace and the defense of the rights of persons and peoples. For example, environmental degradation generates poverty, loss of the means for survival, migration and displacement, especially among indigenous peoples. The global attack on the environment has become, in fact, an attack on the poor.

14. On the basis of these reflections, what can we do in the Order to encourage the practice of Mandate 43.2 of General Chapter 2009?

PROPOSALS TO PROMOTE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS MANDATE:

Ad intra

Rome Office:

15. The Rome Office, together with the other participants in the Peoples' Summit Río+20, should send a brief and practical synthesis of what is treated there to the coordinators of the Conferences and to the animators of the Entities, with proposals for action.

Conferences:

16. The JPIC Commission of the Conference should choose a common date for observance of an ecological celebration (Earth Day; World Environment Day; the Day when the Church remembers the Environment) and prepare materials for study, celebration and commitment. These can be used in all Entities, and should be distributed to fraternities and ministries.

17. Each Conference will offer opportunities for formation of friars and laity in ecological values, in collaboration with the Secretariats for Formation and Evangelization, and with our centers of higher education.

18. Regularly search the WEB for audiovisual resources that exist on these issues; pass this information on to the animators and encourage them to make use of it.

19. Consult with the Entities about what has already been done in this area and share the information widely; promote practical and specific actions that can give quick results in order to encourage participation in future activities.

Entities:

20. Animators and members of JPIC commissions should give witness in the small things: recycling, saving energy, making compost, walking, using a bicycle, using public transportation and buying products in fair trade shops.

21. Study in the fraternities the text: "Care of Creation in the Everyday Life of the Friars Minor"; based on this study, decide what concrete actions might be taken.

22. The animator should consult with the friars of the Entity (perhaps by means of a questionnaire) regarding the work already done in this field and publish the results; then promote practical and concrete actions with quick results as a way to encourage future activity.

23. Create and/or strengthen a JPIC team, composed of friars and lay people, which can create an Eco-Pastoral plan that deals with ecological problems from a faith perspective.

24. Study the possibility of celebrating certain liturgical feasts, for example Christmas, in an ecological way.

- 25.** Make use of special national and international dates, both ecclesial and civil, (Earth Day, Environment Day, or other local dates) to organize celebrations in the triple dimension of prayer; awareness-raising and cultural study; and promotion of concrete commitments.
- 26.** To deepen our theological and spiritual awareness, organize days of recollection and retreats on care of creation and environmental justice issues.
- 27.** To promote use of our resource materials (Pilgrims and Strangers; The Care of Creation in Everyday Life; and Environmental Justice), JPIC animators should: dialogue with the Definitory of the Entity; visit the fraternities; suggest to guardians that these resources be used in local chapters; provide copies to those responsible for Initial and Ongoing Formation.
- 28.** Raise awareness of friars who work in parishes, schools and other ministries about these issues; motivate them to include these issues in their work by giving suggestions and sending them appropriate materials.
- 29.** Address the issues of caring for creation at meetings of guardian and/or treasurers, since many ecological or anti-ecological behaviors depend on their decisions.
- 30.** Use audiovisual resources that already exist on WEB, regularly informing the friars about news related to these topics.
- 31.** Join personal commitment to local political action so as to work effectively to eliminate the causes of pollution and climate change.
- 32.** Provide information about the teaching of the Magisterium on these issues; pay special attention to the chapter on ecology in the Compendium of Catholic Social Doctrine.

Ad Extra

All levels

- 33.** Collaborate with the local Church, other Christian communities, and other religious and cultural traditions with whom we share similar goals, in the promotion of the care of creation and environmental justice.
- 34.** Collect and share information on the negative impact of transnational corporations and mega-projects on the environment.
- 35.** The Conferences, in collaboration with the Rome Office, will focus attention over the next two years on the problem of mining. We will promote three centers: Indonesia, Nairobi, and Latin America, and network with other Church and civil organizations.

PEACE BUILDING / ACTIVE NON-VIOLENCE

Promote active non-violence in our lives, with particular emphasis on the resolution of conflicts (General Chapter 2009, Mandate 43.3)

MOTIVATION

36. Being peaceful people and instruments of peace and reconciliation is part of the spirituality of the Beatitudes (cf. Mt 5: 1-12) and DNA of our Franciscan Spirituality (cf. Rule 3, 10-11; Testament 23; the document *The Lord Give You Peace*, n 13; and the presentation of the Minister General at the European Continental meeting of JPIC in Poland, 2010). For this reason, peace and reconciliation are very present in our Constitutions (cf. GGCC, 64, 68, 69.1-2, 98.2).

37. On the other hand there is much individualism in our daily lives and in our fraternities, and we have difficulty working in teams. There is lack of communication because we do not know how to accept one another. Nor do we know how to manage our different needs, or our generational, cultural, ideological or political differences. We are strongly influenced by our prejudices, which create division and other problems. All of this leads us to become increasingly isolated and, in the best of cases, to accept the attitude of "live and let live." There are cases of brothers who barely speak to each other. These situations are also found in our work and ministries (parishes, schools, etc.), and in our towns and neighborhoods.

38. Conflicts are normal, and they are present whenever two or more people come together. What we need to do is learn how to deal constructively with conflict so that we can grow and mature personally, communally and socially.

39. We also find much conflict in society and in the world, in the struggle for justice, in our work for human rights and in defense of the poor. We friars are called to know and better understand the reality of conflict and violence in all its dimensions, learning to recognize and analyze it. As Franciscans we have an important role as builders of peace and agents of reconciliation. We are called to use active non-violence in facing all types of conflict: cultural, religious, social or political.

PROPOSALS TO PROMOTE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS MANDATE:

Ad intra

Rome Office:

40. Prepare a workshop on "Peace-building and Reconciliation" for JPIC animators and other interested friars.

Conferences:

41. Organize a workshop on constructive conflict management for JPIC animators, other friars, and other interested people, to help improve fraternal relationships on the provincial and local levels.

Entities:

42. Continue to promote the Spirit of Assisi with prayers and celebrations in our Fraternities, but above all by adopting a lifestyle based on dialogue and reconciliation.

43. Promote training in constructive conflict management in order to improve fraternal relationships on the provincial and local levels.

a. Propose to the government of the Entity and to the Moderator of Ongoing Formation a workshop on constructive conflict management for all the friars, but especially for those responsible for animation activities.

b. Propose to guardians that local communities use a house meeting to evaluate fraternal dynamics; this should include listening skills and the level of communication in the fraternity. Pay special attention to power relations and to possible conflicts, in order to improve the quality of life and the authenticity of relationships.

c. Make use of materials that already exist to promote peace and reconciliation; make use of mediators or facilitators, including those from outside the community, who can help our fraternities resolve conflicts.

d. Help friars become aware of the various types of conflict: socio-economic, cultural, political and ecclesial, and learn how to analyze them.

44. Promote an in-depth study of the theme of peace-building from the perspective of our Franciscan spirituality, and in a more academic and scientific way in our study centers.

45. Consult with those responsible for Initial Formation to find ways to include this theme in the formation program, offering as a resource the workshop prepared by the Rome Office.

Ad extra

Entities:

46. Work in defense of human rights, collaborating with the laity, with organizations dealing with human rights, and especially with Franciscans International.

47. Organize meetings with people of other religions, and work with them to promote the common good.

COLLABORATION

The General Chapter proposes that in the next six-year period collaboration and interactive processes between Secretariats, Offices and Commissions be deepened or initiated. This collaboration should be coordinated by the Definitory on the general or provincial level, and is meant to assist our life and our evangelizing mission (Mandate, 32)

MOTIVATION

48. Collaboration between the services of Animation is indispensable because the different dimensions of our charism are transverse, that is, they are intimately related, are interdependent, and demand the presence of one another. For this reason the GGSS 42 state that for the values of JPIC, “which are evangelical values” (BGG 30) and form part of our Franciscan identity (cf. GGCC 1.2), to become part of the life and mission of the Order, it is necessary that JPIC work in collaboration with Formation and Evangelization. While it is true that JPIC cannot disregard Formation and Evangelization, the opposite is equally true. Formation cannot disregard JPIC values since formation is meant to promote a comprehensive living of the charism, and JPIC values are an essential part of the charism, as is evident in the Ratio Formationis Franciscanae (RFF). Likewise Evangelization cannot disregard JPIC values because the first way to evangelize is by an authentically Gospel witness (cf. GGCC 89.1), which includes solidarity with the poor and work for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Furthermore, if we do not want to be reductionist in our approach to pastoral work, we must recall that evangelization “is not only the explicit announcement of the Christian Message, but also the authentic promotion of people, the struggle for human rights, the commitment to justice and peace” (General Secretariat for Formation and Studies, *Our Franciscan Identity: For the Reading and Study of the GGCC*, Rome 1993, p. 89; cf. *Evangelii nuntiandi*, chapters II and III).

49. While collaboration is taking place both ad intra and ad extra, our experience ad intra is proving more challenging. At each level, JPIC needs to take the initiative to begin/continue a process of collaboration. We need to be patient since attitudes take time to change. We might suggest to the Provincial administration that collaboration is important and needs to happen. We might also make suggestions about collaboration to those responsible for Formation/Studies and Missions/Evangelization. Collaboration is essential for our life and ministry; it has much to do with minority, accepting differences and the capacity for learning from others.

PROPOSALS TO PROMOTE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS MANDATE:

Ad Intra

All levels (Rome Office, Conferences and Entities):

50. Take the initiative to collaborate with the Secretariats for Formation/Studies and Missions/Evangelization.

51. Encourage the friars to incorporate the social dimension into their Fraternal Projects for life and mission (BGG 29).

52. Promote the translation of Pilgrims and Strangers into other languages.

Rome Office:

53. Make our JPIC documents more visible in the official publications of the Order, like *Fraternitas* and *Acta Ordinis*.

Conferences:

- 54.** Promote joint meetings with the Secretariats for Formation/Studies and Missions/Evangelization at the Conference and Entity levels at least once a year.
- 55.** Prepare within Conferences that speak the same language specific materials on JPIC themes (including minority) for parishes, schools, and sanctuaries; share these materials as widely as possible.
- 56.** For Ongoing Formation, provide information to the friars about JPIC-related programs offered by the Franciscan Family and by the dioceses.
- 57.** Share concrete experiences with other animators regarding different areas of our JPIC work, e.g., interreligious dialogue.
- 58.** Prepare materials or provide already existing materials to the Entities on mandate 43 of the 2009 General Chapter, and share them more specifically with the Secretariats for Formation/Studies and Missions/Evangelization.

Entities:

- 59.** Promote in each entity the cross participation of members of the commissions for Formation/Studies, Missions/Evangelization and JPIC; the participation of members from different commissions, even if on a limited basis, will promote better communication and collaboration.
- 60.** Promote JPIC values at all levels of Initial Formation, including vocation promotion, so that those in our formation programs can understand from the very beginning that these values are not optional but form part of our DNA.
- 61.** Encourage provincials, secretaries for Missions/Evangelization and those responsible for Initial and Ongoing Formation to study and promote use of Pilgrims and Strangers.
- 62.** Prepare specific materials about JPIC and Minority for use in parishes, schools, sanctuaries, etc.
- 63.** Organize meetings between the Provincial administration, the Secretariats for Formation/Studies and Missions/Evangelization and the JPIC Animator on Mandate 13 (General Chapter, 2009).
- 64.** Prepare within Conferences that speak the same language specific materials on JPIC themes (including minority) for parishes, schools, and sanctuaries; share these materials as widely as possible.
- 65.** Share with the friars concrete experiences in different areas of our JPIC work.
- 66.** Organize study sessions on the meaning of collaboration; consider inviting outside specialists to lead some of these sessions.

Ad Extra

All Levels:

- 67. Collaborate with the Franciscan Family and Franciscans International (cf. GGSS 44, 2).
- 68. Collaborate with Secular Franciscans (OFS) and with the Franciscan Youth (Youfra).

Rome Office:

- 69. Continue to collaborate with Romans VI.

Entities:

- 70. Collaborate with the local Church.
- 71. Study the Tarata document from the International Council meeting of 2010, paying special attention to the sections on Formation and Evangelization.
- 72. Promote experiences with the excluded at all levels of Initial and Ongoing Formation.
- 73. Together with the Secretariat for Missions/Evangelization, promote a greater knowledge of Catholic Social Teaching (cf. GGCC 96; Tarata 1:12), making it an important part of our pastoral work.
- 74. Promote a “shared mission” with the laity; share our spirituality and discern with them how to respond to the challenges of society, in order to create a better dialogue between the church and the world (Tarata 1.8; BGG 25).
- 75. Seek to incorporate laity into JPIC Commissions and teams.
- 76. Promote Social Movements and Civil Society Organizations that share our JPIC values.
- 77. Encourage our Entities, Fraternities and ministries to support and participate in social movements and NGOs that share our JPIC values.