

CONTACT

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



Franciscan Amazon Conference at Antonianum



Colombia, Subsidy on Dialogue



Mozambique, Ecological Projects of the Custody

Justice and Peace: International JPIC Council in Jerusalem

The Custody of the Holy Land hosted the two-yearly planning meeting of the International Council of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) of the Order of the Friars Minor from 3rd to 10th June 2019. The JPIC Office has always dealt with everything concerning Justice, Peace and the Integrity of the Creation, recognized as founding values of Franciscan spirituality. These values are also to be found in the fight against climate change, the protection of Human Rights.

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ECOLOGY

Amazon - Brazil - Italy - Morocco - Mozambique

2

EDUCATION

Mexico - El Salvador - Indonesia

3

DIALOGUE

Colombia - Malta

The Amazon Project: "A Church with Both Amazonian and Native Face"

These are the words of Pope Francis in Puerto Maldonado (Peru), to mark the beginning of his Synod: "I had wanted to come and visit and listen to you, to be together in the heart of the Church, to join your challenges and reaffirm with you a sincere option for the defense of life, the defense of the land and the defense of cultures."

In Puerto Maldonado the Pope denounced the threats and aggressions against life and land:

- ▶ "On the one hand, the neo-extractivism and the strong pressure by big economic interests that direct their avidity on oil, gas, wood, gold, agroindustrial monocultures;"
- ▶ "The perversion of certain policies that promote the "conservation" of nature without taking into account the human being; movements that, in the name of forest conservation, monopolize large tracts of forests and negotiate with them generating situations of oppression of native



peoples for those who, in this way, the territory and natural resources that are in them become inaccessible;"

- ▶ "Devastation of the life that comes (...) with this environmental pollution caused by illegal mining;"
- ▶ Trafficking in persons: slave labor or sexual abuse. "Do not get distracted. There is a lot of complicity. "



The Synod for the Amazons is a reflection on these problems that currently represent the life of the Church. There have been many meetings around these themes, hopefully producing more than just documents that diagnose this region. This Synod is provoking new paths, new models of evangelization for facing the challenges of mission, especially in the Amazon region.

In this spirit, "The Amazon Project" is moving toward seeing THE HOW materialize from what was defined by the General Chapter of 2009 (mandate No. 24). We are generally clear on "what" is needed, but when it comes to becoming concrete in finding the most appropriate actions that allow to us gradually and progressively to achieve our objectives, it is still a challenge.

The two principles that guide us as a fraternity inserted in this part of the Amazon's triple border (Peru - Colombia - Brazil) are intertwined and we feel are truly responsive: 1) "Mission and Church with an Amazonian face" (build a lay Amazonian Church that lives and celebrates the ancestral values as an expression of the Kingdom of God) and 2) we want to be a fraternity of lesser brothers that in a process of interculturality can achieve greater commitment for the defense of life, justice and peace in the care of disenfranchised Amazonians through the practice of a comprehensive ecology.

We are also finding Human Rights to be an intervention that allows us to concretize the goals that guide us in mission. Even so, this tool is so very broad and complex and that is why we are focusing first on LISTENING to the cries of our indigenous Amazon brothers and in the creation that with what happens in the region so that they are the ones alerting us up front of to the role that we must play today in their reality. This is a role that we can not

do alone but in orchestration and articulation with A NETWORK with other social and Church groups with whom we meet, trying to mesh our work with theirs whenever possible.

Speaking concretely on the Synod for the Amazon, I see its main objective as discovering the human, religious and environmental reality of the Amazon, so it can really touches the essence of Franciscan Spirituality, its people, their way of life, their culture, religiosity, practices and customs,

ecosystems, challenges, threats, and exploitations. This is exciting for us as Franciscans being part of this larger Church event. It is talking about a reality very close to the heart of the Franciscan movement: "To walk together!" It affirms the friars who find justification for the words of our founder himself, because St. Francis of Assisi sensed the need for "walking together" as an expression of the Fraternity minority, requiring listening, looking at the perspective of the other, and dialoguing in order to bring about an understanding that puts us all moving in the same direction as a consequence of obedience to the Spirit, who manifests in the gathered community.

I make a SPECIAL INVITATION for you to consider participating with us in the "Amazon Project" whether it be for a few years or even temporarily for a months in order to strengthen us in our "walking together" in the defense of life in all its forms, listening to the cries of the Amazon which demands a real prophetic commitment from us toward the construction of a Church with both an Amazonian and indigenous face.

Br. José de Jesús Caro P, OFM
CaballoCocha Fraternity - Peruvian Amazon



People's cry reaches Pope Francis

Pope Francis receives photos with the names of 270 people killed in Brumadinho, Brazil

On May 3, Pope Francis was presented with the photos and the names of the 270 people killed by the crime of the mining company Vale in Brumadinho, by Dari Pereira, one of the survivors of the devastating catastrophe, and Fr. Rodrigo Peret, OFM of *Churches and Mining Network* and Mining Working Group of the CNBB.

The Pope was deeply moved for the victims, blessed the photos and expressed his solidarity to the families who lost their loved ones and all those affected. Immediately the Pope remained in front of the photos in a gesture of affection, respect and solidarity. On May 18, a representative of the Pope, Monsignor Duffé, will be visiting Brumadinho and getting to know the reality and the struggle of those affected.

The Pope affirmed during the audience that the precarious conditions of our common home are mainly due to an economic model that has been pursued for a long time. It is a voracious and profit-oriented model, with a limited horizon and based on the illusion of unlimited economic growth. Although we often see its disastrous impact on the natural world and people's lives, we are still reluctant to change. "Economic powers continue to justify the current global system where priority tends to be given to speculation and the pursuit of financial gain, which fail to take the context into account, let alone the effects on human dignity and the natural environment" (LS 56).

The Pope continued citing his encyclical *Laudato si'* in his speech: We are aware that "Yet by itself the market cannot guarantee integral human development and social inclusion" (LS 109) and that "environmental protection cannot be assured solely on the basis of financial calculations of costs and benefits" (LS 190). We need a paradigm shift in all our economic activities, including mining. Pope Francis called for attention to the Amazon Synod by

saying that it is "essential to show special care for indigenous communities and their cultural traditions. They are not merely one minority among others, but should be the principal dialogue partners, especially when large projects affecting their land are proposed" (LS 146).



He said, "I urge everyone to respect the fundamental human rights and the voice of the people of those beautiful but fragile communities. And in communion with the bishops of Latin America he denounced that extractivism is 'an unbridled tendency of the economic system to transform the goods of nature into capital.' The largest quantity of materials is being extracted in the shortest time possible, converted into raw materials for industrialized production, and transformed into products and services that others will commercialize. And corporates will consume them and, therefore, the nature will receive the rewards in the form of polluting garbage. All this is the vicious circuit of consumerism that is being created with increasing speed and risks."

The Pope ended his speech by not forgetting that "what is at stake is our own dignity. Leaving an inhabitable planet to future generations is, first and foremost, up to us. The issue is one which dramatically affects us, for it has to do with the ultimate meaning of our earthly sojourn" (LS 160).

This audience with the communities affected by mining and mining was given in Rome in the context of the meeting of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development.

(Source: www.ofmscj.com.br)

JPIC Office in El Salvador

This year, the JPIC Office has taken some crucial steps. One of them is the Franciscan Formation School, "Fr. Cosme Spessotto."

The Franciscan Province, "Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe" of Central America, Panama and the Foundation of "La Santa Cruz" in Haiti, has the JPIC Commission in the Province, which consists of a friar appointed for animation and coordination in each region of the actions of JPIC, together with the Franciscan Family. The Province has an evangelization project that includes four points for JPIC animation. They are, firstly, JPIC in initial and ongoing formation (formation program), secondly, JPIC in each evangelization settings (parish, rectory), thirdly, JPIC in the schools of the Province, and fourthly, JPIC office in each country. Even if there are JPIC teams of the Franciscan Family in some states of Central America, it's essential to have an office in each state.

In the JPIC Office in El Salvador, three friars are serving and encouraging, Br. Anselmo Maliaño, Br. Domingo Solís and Br. Rene Flores, and a lay person who is a facilitator-secretary, Carmen Martínez. It is the first office that was established in



the Province (in 1996) with the support of the same region, the Province and the *Misión Central*.

Through this structure of animation six objectives are developed: the formation on the basis of the spirituality of JPIC; constitution of JPIC teams in parishes, schools, fraternities; recreate a network of JPIC teams in the country; coordinate and act with civil organizations; encourage JPIC in the Franciscan Family; inform and train about JPIC through social networks. We seek to interact with the spirituality of JPIC in all these projects and lines of action.

Indeed, it is one of the smallest countries in Central America (around 20,000 square kilometers, with more or less 7 million inhabitants), but marked by a history of conflict, pain and wounds that have not yet been healed and reconciled yet. The social reality is marked by problems such as insecurity, violence, corruption in the public sector, extreme poverty, massive migrations and other series of situations that alarm.

This year, the JPIC Office, in conjunction with the Franciscan Family, has taken some crucial steps. One of them is the Franciscan Formation School, "Fr. Cosme Spessotto" with 45 students. JPIC of the Franciscan Family of each zone has responded with several brothers and sisters to the convocation. Few congregations are not committing themselves to this Franciscan spirituality and action. However, the response as a family to JPIC is broader, and the laity is responding as disciples of Jesus, like Francis of Assisi.



We evaluated our work with the help of SWOT diagnosis. Especially as we addressed the Encyclical *Laudato Si'*, we realize that it is urgent to take on some challenges seriously and foster an authentic and fruitful dialogue that would lead us to create more communion and fraternity in mission. There are important issues that we are facing and being called to answer such as the deterioration of the quality of life especially of the poorest, social inequalities that is very evident in this country, migration for the same social insecurity (gangs and organized crime), degradation of the environment for lack of laws and minimum protection. We need to avoid falling into waste and consumerism, the two evils that are contaminating us. That is why new lifestyles are required, which means being more sober, saving energy and water, recycling what we use, avoiding the use of plastics, using public transport and being more supportive of our brothers and migrant sisters.

Br. Anselmo Maliaño, OFM
JPIC Animator – El Salvador



Ecological Experience in Umbria

I have witnessed what Laudato si' tells us about our faith and science, i.e. we should also relate our faith with science.

My opportunity to meet people who are experts in the fields of biology, biotechnology, mycology, law, science & engineering of soil was made possible with the help of some brothers that are working in the General Curia. I was lucky to get introduced to a couple of Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist who live in Assisi, Sr. Mary Frances Traynor, soil scientist and former Professor at the University of Perugia and Sr. Agnese Hutchison, biologist and English Professor, who have been working as missionaries in Assisi and Perugia, Italy for more than thirty-five years.



On March 1, 2019, I met Sr. Mary Frances and Sr. Agnese, who invited me to a dinner with their friends and colleagues to discuss about integral ecology and plan an experiential tour for me. They were Prof. Roberto Venanzoni (Professor in the Department of Chemistry, Biology, and Biotechnology, President of the Interdisciplinary Council in Biological and Natural Sciences-University of Perugia), Prof. Paola Angelini (Associate Professor of the Department of Chemistry, Biology, Biotechnology, and an expert in Mycology from the University of Perugia), Dr. Gabriela Parodi (an environmentalist and lawyer working as Quality Manager of *Angelantoni* Industry, Massa Martana), and Br. Gianluca Zucaro, OFM (*Chiesa Nuova* fraternity in Assisi). Br. Gianluca worked as a scientist/engineer in Turin, Italy and New Mexico, USA before entering the Order of Friars Minor.

It was a great privilege and blessing to be with Sr. Mary and Sr. Agnese and their colleagues. Special thanks to them for arranging my two-day-ecological-trip with Prof. Roberto Venanzoni. I visited the *Eremo delle Carceri*, a Franciscan hermitage near Assisi where St. Francis and his companions retired for prayers, *Bosco Sacro di Monteluco* (Sacred Forest of Monteluco), where a Franciscan convent is located, and *Cascata delle Marmore*, the Environmental Education Center (*Marmore Falls*) with different levels of beautiful falls, located near Terni.

The first day of the ecological trip with Prof. Roberto Venanzoni started from Carceri of Mt. Subasio. He explained that there had been many reforestations made in different periods in which some new species of trees were introduced on the mountain. There are three zones in this area, the first



zone has olive trees scattered in between the forests of oaks. The second zone is the oak forest, and the third area consists of conifers (pines, fir, and cedar) and mountain pastures where there are grass species and herbs. He also explained the different kinds of rock formation at Carceri. I could see the movements and formations of different rocks, and erosive action of water. He pointed out some plant species like the ferns and mosses that contributes to the ecosystem. In terms of interventions, he noted the importance of considering the aesthetic of the area, e.g. putting a parking lot in an area that will not affect the surrounding nature. There were some signs of interventions being made by Franciscans like preventing the soil from eroding and the preservation of the place conducive to prayers, encounter with nature, and pilgrimages.

On the second day of the trip, we visited the Sacred Forest of Monteluco near Spoleto. Prof. Roberto and I came across a lot of hikers and bikers heading up to the mountain. He showed me the Sacred Forest of Monteluco of the evergreen holm oak trees. We arrived at a Franciscan convent dated 1218 and found the habit of St. Bernard of Siena, many caves and hermitages where friars used to pray, e.g. the cave of St. Anthony of Padua, which is located in a high area overlooking Spoleto. The Sacred Forest, like Carceri of Mt. Subasio, had a beautiful landscape of rocks covered by woods, plants and shrubs. After visiting Monteluco, we proceeded to the Marmore Falls and the Environmental Center nearby Terni. The center offered a guided tour along the side of the falls

which was of three layers and gave us some information about different animals and plants around the area.

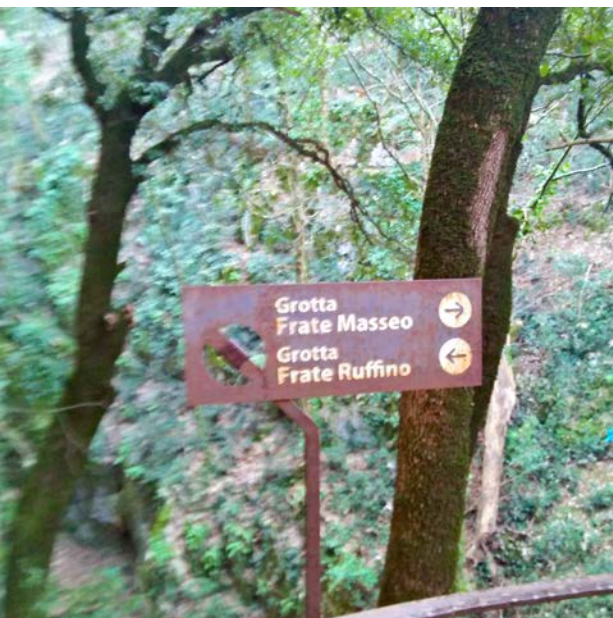
In conclusion to this wonderful experience of friendship and dialogue, I must say, first of all, that I have witnessed what *Laudato si'* tells us about our faith and science, i.e. we should also relate our faith with science. Secondly, Carceri and Sacro Bosco are a part of our rich Franciscan heritages. St. Francis and his followers were very much in communion with nature and made it home of encounter with God. For us Franciscans, we can develop here a project of Franciscan ecological spirituality and ministry. We can utilize the sacred sites in nature for our formation in Franciscan ecological spirituality and for visitors and pilgrims as well. With the various species of plants, trees, shrubs, and herbs, rock formations, landscapes, and the whole ecosystem, it will be a venue for scientific studies and its integration with our faith, awe, and spiritual aesthetics.

Br. Melito Pinili, OFM

JPIC Commission

Custody of the Protomartyrs of the Order

Morocco



Ecological Spirituality and Ministry

The first formation of the Ecological Spirituality and Ministry (ESM) group was held in the garden of the Church of the Holy Martyrs in Marrakech with oversea Filipino workers.

The first formation of the Ecological Spirituality and Ministry (ESM) group was held in the garden of the Church of the Holy Martyrs in Marrakech, Morocco with nine overseas Filipino workers. The session started with the “Canticle of Creatures” and was led by Br. Melito Pinili, OFM who is a missionary assigned to the church of the *Nuestra Señora del Pilar* in Larache, Morocco.

At first, the participants shared their expectations of the formation. Their objectives were: to learn more about ecology, spirituality and ministry, to take care of creation and environment, to learn how to pray in contemplation of the goodness and beauty of God and His creatures. The hope

is that after working in Morocco, they will return to the Philippines to be of service in healing Mother Earth that has been severely affected by industrial exploitations and pollutions.

Having listened to their expectations, Br. Melito led them into a discussion on the definition of ecology and spirituality (Catholic spirituality). Then, he gave a reflection about a Franciscan sanctuary in *Gubbio*, Italy which is known as the site of Francis’ taming of the fierce wolf that was terrorizing the villagers. They read the story from the passage in the *Little Flowers of St. Francis*. The last part of the



session was about a topic of “Ecological Consciousness-Interconnectedness and contemplating God’s creatures.” At the end, they prayed “*Lord make me an instrument of your peace,*” and the Canticle of the Three Young Men (Daniel 3:57-88).

The participants agreed to create a SNS group called “Ecological Spirituality and Ministry – Marrakech.” They planned to continue the formation meetings on the first Sundays with topics of water, energy, transportation, food, waste disposal, teaching of the Bible on ecology, St. Francis and ecology, Franciscan ecological spirituality and the Encyclical “*Laudato si’*.”

The vision of the group is to establish *Ecological Spirituality and Ministry* in different parishes in Morocco by the year 2020, where there are Filipinos and other foreign Christians who would like to discover the beauty and the goodness of God through contemplation and service of care for our

common home – Mother Earth. A group of twelve Franciscan Postulants from the six US Provinces along with a few friars and many dozens of Catholic from across Maryland marched down Francis Street in the city of Annapolis, the state capitol. A street sign with the black arrow

pointed: ONE WAY. Underneath, two people were holding up a large banner with a quote from Pope Francis’ encyclical *Laudato Si’*. It read: “The use of highly polluting fossil fuels – coal, oil, gas – needs to be replaced without delay.”

Br. Melito Pinili, OFM
JPIC Commission
Custody of the Protomartyrs of the Order
Morocco

CULTURE OF ENCOUNTER



Dear brothers and sisters

Peace and all Good!

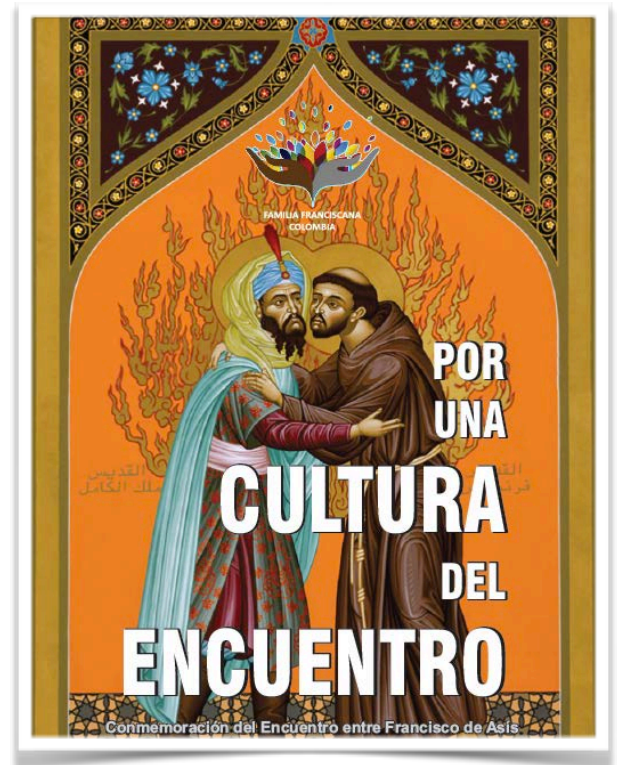
This year, the Franciscan Family of Colombia wished to dedicate its reflection to the Commemoration of the Meeting between Francis of Assisi and Sultan Al-Malik-Al Kamil 1219 - 2019, and on the occasion of this event to the animation of the construction of a true CULTURE OF ENCOUNTER.

Last year we dedicated our regional workshops to the political formation of our faith, and the booklet was titled: “*Politics, High Form of Charity*,” with which we wanted to encourage reflection so that in the elections we could vote with maturity and a Christian sense in favor of peace and the common good.

This year, with the theme that concerns us, *the Culture of Encounter*, we want to take up the words of Pope Francis in front of the presidential palace at the opening of his visit to Colombia in September 2017.

The Pope said in his speech:

“This meeting allows me to express my appreciation for all the efforts undertaken over the last decades to end armed violence and to seek out paths of reconciliation. Over the past year, significant progress has been made; the steps taken give rise to hope, in the conviction that seeking peace is an open-ended endeavor, a task which does not relent, which demands the commitment of everyone.



It is an endeavor challenging us not to weaken our efforts to build the unity of the nation. Despite obstacles, differences and varying perspectives on the way to achieve peaceful coexistence, this task summons us to persevere in the struggle to promote a ‘culture of encounter.’ This requires us to place at the center of all political, social and economic activity the human person, who enjoys the highest dignity, and respect for the common good.”

Franciscan Family of Colombia

"...where there is DESPAIR, let me bring HOPE."

Dear Br. Jaime and Rufino,

I am pleased to inform you about project progress in helping the victims of earthquake and tsunami in *Kampoong Sivalenta, Donggala*, Central of Sulawesi Island. Some activities that we have done are:

Firstly, Residence Construction Activity: We collaborate with the Institute of Construction named *PT ATMI KREASI PRIMA* as an expert in the public construction and then we have signed a "**Collaboration Agreement** between OFM and *PT ATMI KREASI PRIMA* dealing with the housing construction in Sivalenta Community."

Secondly, Visits: After signing the agreement, I went to visit the Sivalenta last March to see people talk with them, encourage them, strengthen the children and to work with them in building their houses. I went to the *Kampoong* (camp, community) of Sivalenta with the staff & building instructor from *PT ATMI* aiming at starting to build houses. I stayed there for five days and started to build the residences. Before we started the construction, we prayed together with the pastors of the Protestant Church and the whole people of the community.

Thirdly, Educational Assistance: I have listened to some stories of the parents about their anxiety for the education of their children. Only a few kids could have a good education in the community. In fact, they must walk to school 5 km every day. That is why I decided to bring some children to study in Jakarta for a better opportunity for education. Besides, we offered food and health service to people. The project is handled by a team of women of the community as organizers under the supervision of OFM JPIC.



Above is some information of working progress of rebuilding the Sivalenta community after natural disasters hit Palu, Sigi and Donggala, Central Sulawesi last year.

Thank you very much for your kind help and deep concern for the victims.

Br. Michael Peruhe, OFM

Minister Provincial of St. Michael Archangel
Jakarta, Indonesia



Franciscan Camps In México

The Franciscan camps began as an initiative of the Franciscan family in the Province of Saints Francis and James in Mexico, who was concerned about the lack of awareness among young people about issues around care of creation, social justice and the culture of peace.

The Franciscan camps were established in 2008 in the city of Monterrey, northeast México, by Fray Antonio Morán, OFM and the catechist, Blanca Ugarte, and as the years passed, they followed clearer guidelines and more specific goals.

The aim of these camps is to lead young people to an encounter with God through Sister-Mother Earth, by means of Franciscan spirituality and the values of JPIC. To achieve this the young people are brought into an environment which promotes more direct contact with nature and for this reason the site for the camp is carefully selected.

“Franciscan Camps” offers a space for games and interaction, where through healthy competition, the “campers” develop those religious,

moral, civil and Franciscan attitudes, which in a modest but enterprising way help to form men and women who are upright of heart.

To take part in a camp one needs to be between 15 and 30 years old, present a letter of good conduct from one’s parish priest, chaplain or school director and attend the prior meeting. It is worth noting that “Franciscan Camps” isn’t a kerygmatic or “first encounter” with God type of retreat, but is a different experience. Literally a camp. The young people bring their tents and sleeping-bags and share beneath Sister Moon and in the light of Brother Fire on the camp-fire nights.

The general dynamic of the camp consists in the participation of the *Domus*. The *Domus* (from ‘casa’ in Latin) are workgroups in which one shares nearly all the time. They are organized like a family which competes with other *Domus* during the camp to gain points.

Each *Domus* has a coordinator who is elected by the members of the Casa. This coordinator is called a *Simon*. This was the name of one of the first campers who stood out for his deep Franciscan spirituality and commitment to being a disciple of Jesus Christ; something similar to Simon of Cyrene, who helped Our Lord carry his cross. In the same way each *Simon* motivates and helps his companions in the *Domus* to tackle and carry out the camp activities. These activities are: swimming,

football and other sports, field games, dance, town planning, singing and JPIC formation themes.

The Domus are assigned names by the organizers which reflect the theme of the particular year. When selecting the theme and slogan the guidelines promoted that year by the UN and the Church are taken into account. For example in 2013 the UN focussed on water and for the Church it was The Year of Faith; so the slogan chosen for the camp was “*Immerse Yourself in the Water of Faith*”. In 2016 the Church celebrated the Year of Mercy and the UN focussed on seeds and vegetables; the camp slogan was “*Sow in Yourself the Seed of Mercy*”

To properly participate each “camper” brings a “*lunch box*”, which means bringing one’s own plate, glass and washable cutlery, so as to avoid buying disposables and single-use plastic cutlery. Part of the “*lunch box*” is for each camper to bring and cook one’s own food and so have a more real experience of camping.

The camp lasts for four days, in each of which it is hoped to achieve a specific *objective*: day one, *Meeting*. Day two, *Socialising and Getting to Know You*. Day three, *Learning and Conversion* (to God in the area of JPIC). And the last day, *Commitment*. The latter is greatly stressed as the camp will make

sense in the commitment which the “campers” make to caring for creation, including social justice and the culture of peace.

Ten years after its foundation, the last elective provincial chapter decided that “Franciscan Camps” would come under the direct control of the Provincial Office of JPIC. To date Franciscan camps have been held in the cities of Monterrey in Nuevo León, Ciudad Guzmán and Magdalena in Jalisco, Cancún in Quintana Roo, Zacatecas in the state capital, Rayón in *la Selva Negra de Chiapas*, Nuevo Laredo in Tamaulipas and Torreón in Coahuila. And together with the present team of active campers we will continue to promote them in the rest of the country.

Peace and all Good

Br. Enrique Arias, OFM

JPIC Animator, Province of Ss. Francis and James
Jalisco, México





Francis and Damietta

These scenes form the background for the encounter between Francis and Malek al-Kamil, a meeting of faith, listening and reciprocal respect: a model for us in making contact with other cultures and religions.

When the episode in the life of Francis related to his encounter with the Crucifix of San Damiano, and the task with which he was entrusted, “Go and rebuild my house which is falling into ruins”, is raised, almost always if not always, there is a reference made to the fact that the Church of that time, at least in respect of the temporal power it wielded, lived in luxury and was certainly not an example of integrity and in keeping with the Word which it was announcing.

What is not mentioned, however, is the problem of violence, which was very common in the Middle Ages and involved all levels of society, and thus, also the Church. The dominant culture celebrated a style, the style of chivalry, which was a model that was aimed at and imitated.

Whatever dispute or conflict found its solution not in dialogue or agreement, but in an armed confrontation that necessarily concluded with a victory for one side and defeat and annihilation for the other. The Church and the Empire were an example of this type of situation. It was almost self-evident that whoever could go armed and learn the use of arms and the relevant knightly code should do so. Francis himself, whilst a young man, dreamed of being a knight and of covering himself in glory on the battlefield.

His first meeting with hard reality came in the battle of Collestrada which recalibrated the romantic aspect when confronted with his concrete first-hand experience of raw hand to hand fighting and finding it necessary to kill in order not to be killed. His imprisonment in jail must have been terrible, and for what must have seemed an interminable year he had to reflect on the fact that his friends and companions had been killed while he because he was rich, was spared so that his family may pay a ransom.

All of this marked Francis deeply and was the point of departure for his conversion that the encounter with the leper and the episode with the Crucifix illuminated with new and profound meaning.

He was to embrace Lady Poverty directly as a result of these episodes, a poverty understood as the

search for and proposal of a new model of society that refuted money, which was used by the powerful as a means of subjugation and power, and recognized the dignity of all creatures, inasmuch as they were parts of creation designed as a universal fraternity.

And if all are brothers and sisters, creatures of God and his gift – and remember that he wrote in his testament: The Lord gave me brothers – then it must be the law of love and not violence and weapons that must rule the world. Francis, a down to earth man, realized this model in the fraternity that he suggested and lived.

But as we said this was a very violent period and one which saw the maximum engagement of the Church and the Catholic world in the Crusades, wars unleashed against Muslims which, with the motivation of the re-conquest of the Holy Sites covered other aims of territorial expansion, the dominion of the seas and economic profit.

The language that was used to motivate persons to adhere to the call is violent and raw and precisely the opposite of that which Jesus proposes in his Holy Gospel and lives in his death on the cross. The “*Quia Maior*,” the bull by which Pope Innocent III called for the Fifth Crusade, the one in which Francis would go to Damietta, promises the cross of glory and eternal salvation to those who go to battle and to kill heretical enemies and eternal damnation to those who refuse to do so. The battle becomes the test of one’s faith. The bull dwells a lot upon other similar motivations similar to this thesis, defining Evil in terms of the enemy and Good in terms of the Crusaders.

This reading and comment on it may be worthwhile, but they are not the subject of this reflection.

We are clearly on a different plain as to what Francis is writing about in the Canticle of the Creatures.

It is in this context that the message of brotherhood espoused by Francis and his presence at the crusades in Damietta, which the film the Sultan and the Saint analyses with a “modern” outlook digging in to the various psychologies of the protagonists and deepening their understanding by looking at all the contemporary documents and not just the hagiographical lives of Francis to discover a

fundamental event in his journey of faith which was misunderstood for many years.

It was at Damietta as well in the crusaders camp that Francis decisively refuted violence and invited the soldiers not to fight, whilst on the other side Sultan Malek al-Kamil also wanted to avoid bloodshed by proposing a peace which would give the Christian army Jerusalem and the holy places. Commercial interests induced the papal legate, commander in chief of the expedition, to refuse the proposal leading to defeat and the fall of Damietta and Cairo being surrounded. The defeat is rendered even more dramatic for the Christians when they find themselves stranded in a flooded marsh in which they had no way of defending themselves and were open to extermination only to receive from those which the Bull had described as “beasts, devils and contemptible beings” bread, water and forage for their animals up until the point they could recommence their journey and retreat.

These scenes form the background for the encounter between Francis and Malek al-Kamil, a meeting of faith, listening and reciprocal respect: a model for us in making contact with other cultures and religions.

To underline how listening and dialogue are fundamental, all researchers are in agreement in declaring that the faith and spirituality of Francis were reinforced and fulfilled by this encounter.

What was written by him after the return to Damietta is significant in this regard. The statements which we find in the Earlier Rule, in the letter to the Rulers of the Peoples, in the letter to a Guardian or even in the Praises to God the Most High, would not have been possible without this encounter and dialogue.

These are only some points which may provide food for thought and an invitation to study the matter more profoundly but they are above all an invitation to continue to live the instruction which Francis left us in an article of the Earlier Rule: *...Let them not engage in fights or disputes but let them be subject to every other human being for the love of God, and let them declare themselves to be Christians...*

May the Lord give you his peace!

Br. Mark Ciantar, OFM
JPIC Team – Malta

MZF Symposium on Mission and Development



Most importantly, it was painfully and repeatedly called on for the urgent necessity of the total involvement of the Church in the global movement of climate action as its mission.



On March 27 – 29, 2019, a symposium on mission and development was held by *Missionszentrale der Franziskaner* in Bonn. On the auspicious occasion of its golden jubilee this year, MZF organized this three-day-seminar with the theme, “*Do not ask how to convert the world! Practical and Theological Challenges for Christian Development Cooperation,*” under the direction of Br. Johannes Freyer, OFM.

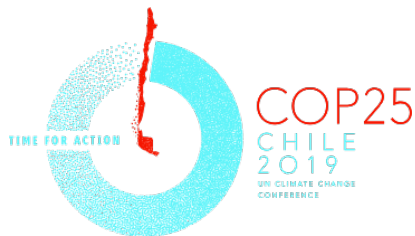
There were seven keynote speakers from India, Cuba, South Korea, USA and Germany for the symposium. They are missionaries, theologians of missiology, a government official and a scientist. They have given inspiring talks on the theology of mission and its development, the meaning of mission according to the comparative theology, the challenges and the future of the mission, mission as cooperation for the care of common home, and the development cooperation.

Around fifty brothers and sisters have participated in the symposium sharing their experiences and opinions on the questions: What does mission today mean theologically and practically? Which (tragic) story is behind the term mission? What is the relationship between today's understanding of mission and development cooperation? etc. And most importantly, it was painfully and repeatedly called on for the urgent necessity of the total involvement of the Church in the global movement of climate action as its mission.

Br. Johannes Freyer has concluded the whole session with a dialogue quoted from the *Sacred Exchange between St. Francis & Lady Poverty*. He emphasized that the Franciscan identity as brothers and sisters to every being in the world, which itself is the Franciscan convent is still relevant and even more crucial in today's mission of the Church.

Br. Rufino Lim, OFM
Assistant, JPIC Office – General Curia, Rome





Toward COP25, Santiago - Franciscan participation

The JPIC Rome office hopes this occasion could give the momentum to the Franciscans in the world to take the initiative for immediate climate action.

Recently, climate change has been renamed as “climate EMERGENCY” or “climate CRISIS” by scientists, the media, and even by Pope Francis. It’s known that multinational corporates preferred the term “climate CHANGE” to “global warming” as climate change sounds neutral and less “threatening.” Then, why is it named with the expressions such as emergency or crisis?

It happened after the publication of the Special Report on “Global Warming of 1.5°C” by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) last October. IPCC, which is an intergovernmental body of the UN, is considered quite conservative in their assessment reports and, paradoxically, because of this reputation, their reports are widely accepted and quoted in the world. The 1.5°C Special Report confirms four “scientific” facts on global warming.

Firstly, our planet has become warmer than the pre-industrial era by 1°C. Secondly, it’s due to human intervention (emission of greenhouse gases, etc.). Thirdly, once the global temperature goes up higher than 1.5°C, it’ll become almost impossible to control its course and its catastrophic impacts on humanity and the ecosystem. And lastly, to achieve the 1.5°C trajectory, the world needs to make hard decisions and realize radical system changes in economy, politics, and lifestyle within a decade.

We have to keep in mind that IPCC maintains a conservative viewpoint, and even then, those experts declared “climate emergency,” and their voice sounds like the great prophets of the Bible. Then, the following question would be what’s the response from policymakers and economic leaders, and have they made any significant decisions for the present and next generations. The answer is NO, not at all. Emissions are rising at their fastest level in close to a decade, leaving an ever-shorter period to prevent dangerous levels of global heating. And the most polluting countries and corporates are not willing to

pay the bill for the environmental destruction, which is the cost for their huge profit.

Charlie Chaplin once said, “Life is a tragedy when seen in close-up, but a comedy in long-shot.” The current situation seems tragically funny, or it’s so sad that it looks like a gigantic puppet comedy show with a tragic finale. And that’s why António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, has called for the UN 2019 Climate Summit on September 21 – 23 with the theme, ‘*A Race We Can Win. A Race We Must Win.*’ The Church also resonates to this call. The Pope declared a global “climate emergency.” He said that a failure to act urgently to reduce greenhouse gases would be “a brutal act of injustice toward the poor and future generations.”

The International Council for JPIC 2019 in Jerusalem has also chosen climate crisis as one of the central themes for the advocacy work in all the Entities. The JPIC General Office and the JPIC commission of *Provincia de Santísima Trinidad* of Chile are working together on the program of the Franciscan participation in the 25th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP25) is to take place on December 2 – 13 in Santiago. There will be a series of formation on scientific facts about global warming, historical facts about trade against climate, the history of climate negotiation, the vision of *Laudato Si’* and creating resistance in solidarity with the victims of global warming, the young generations and the planet. Prayer vigil for climate justice, a celebration of *Laudato Si’*, Franciscan climate conference, and public action in the climate march with the civil society are the items in preparation. The JPIC Rome office hopes this occasion could give the momentum to the Franciscans in the world to take the initiative for immediate climate action.

Br. Rufino Lim, OFM
Assistant, JPIC Office - General Curia

Convocation to JPIC European Continental Meeting



Dear JPIC Animators in Europe,

Peace and all Good!

We want to inform you on the **European Continental Meeting of JPIC Animators 2019** and to invite all the JPIC Animators of COTAF, COMPI, CONFRES, North Slavic and South Slavic to the meeting. The previous meeting was in Verona, Italy, 2016. Three years after our last meeting, we will meet in **Malta, September 2 – 5**.

As you may already know, the last Plenary Council of the Order in Nairobi has emphasized on the various dimensions of JPIC in our life especially

on care for our common home, migrants and refugees, and peace. We perceive that JPIC ministry and values have been taken up officially as a priority by the Order. So, we expect our meeting this year to be fruitful and meaningful.

The title of our meeting will be **“Realizing Franciscan Humanism in today’s European Context – ‘Go and Rebuild My HOME.’”** We request you to let JPIC animators be present in this momentous occasion for a fraternal and prophetic experience.

Hopefully, see you all in Malta this September!

Faternally,

Br. Jaime Campos F., OFM
Director, JPIC General Office

PROGRAM

September 2, Monday

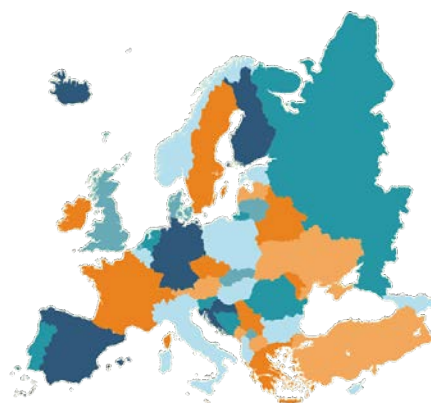
[Moderator: Br. Rufino Lim]

- 07:00 Opening Mass (Br. Richard Stanley Grech, OFM, Minister Provincial of Malta)
- 08:00 *Breakfast*
- 09:00 Welcoming Remarks
- 09:05 **Introduction and purpose of the Continental Meeting** (JPIC Rome Office)
- 10:00 **Review of the Continental Meeting in Verona, 2016** (JPIC Rome Office)
- 11:00 *Break*
- 11:30 **Report of the Conference** (North Slavic)
- 12:30 *Lunch*
- 14:30 **Report of the Conference** (South Slavic)
- 15:30 **Report of the Conference** (COTAF)
- 16:30 *Break*
- 17:00 **Report of the Conference** (COMPI)
- 18:00 **Report of the Conference** (CONFRES)
- 19:00 *Vespers* (North Slavic – IT)
- 19:30 *Supper / Recreation*

September 3, Tuesday

[Moderator: Br. Tedej Strehovec]

- 07:00 Mass (COTAF – EN)
- 08:00 *Breakfast*
- 09:00 **“European Context I”**
Fr. Andrzej Owca, CSSp, VIVAT International
- 10:30 *Break*
- 11:00 **“European Context II”**
Fr. Andrzej Owca, CSSp, VIVAT International
- 12:30 *Lunch*
- 14:30 **Field Experience**



September 4, Wednesday

[Moderator: Br. Francesco Zecca]

- 07:00 Mass (CONFRES – ES)
- 08:00 *Breakfast*
- 09:00 “**Franciscan Humanism**”
Br. Jose Antonio Merino, OFM
- 10:30 *Break*
- 11:00 “**Franciscan Humanism**”
Br. Jose Antonio Merino, OFM
- 12:30 *Lunch*
- 15:30 “**Go and Rebuild My HOME**”
(Group work according to Conferences)
- 17:00 *Break*
- 17:30 “**Go and Rebuild My HOME**”
(Group work according to Conferences)
- 19:00 *Vespers* (CONFRES – ES)
- 19:30 *Supper/ Recreation*

September 5, Thursday

[Moderator: Br. Jaime Campos]

- 07:00 Mass (COMPI – IT)
- 08:00 *Breakfast*
- 09:00 Group work according to arguments
- 10:30 *Break*
- 11:00 Group work according to arguments
- 12:30 *Lunch*
- 15:30 **Plenary Session**
- 17:30 *Break*
- 18:30 **Conclusion**
- 19:00 *Vespers* (COMPI – IT)
- 19:30 *Supper/ Recreation*

Toward the Synod for the Amazon



“**Voices of the Amazon: Land, people and religions**” is the theme of the day of listening and reflection that has been being organized for several months by the JPIC Office of the General Curia and the Pontifical University *Antonianum*. In addition, we have the support of the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) and the Pan-Amazon Ecclesial Network (REPAM).



In the run-up to the beginning of the Amazon Synod, this grand event will be held at the Auditorium of *Antonianum* on October 5. There will be present Cardinal Claudio Hummes, OFM, General rapporteur at the Synod, several representatives of the Amazonian people who will give testimonies, Mons. Héctor Cabrejos, OFM, President of CELAM (Latin American Bishops’ Conference), two ambassadors to the Holy See and the General Minister, Br. Michael Perry, OFM, among others.

We wish to bring to Rome the voices of the people of Amazon, the Church as well as the responses of governments. During this full day event, we will listen and reflect to follow up the process of the Synod through the “Tent of Common House”, a space that is being prepared by various religious and lay organizations present in Rome. We will keep you updated.

Br. Jaime Campos, OFM
Director, JPIC Office – General Curia

Meeting of the JPIC Animation Committee 2019

The meeting started with the assessment and sharing of insights about the ICJPIC 2019.



The JPIC Animation Committee of the Order of Friars Minor gathered in Jericho from June 10 to 14, 2019, soon after the International Council for JPIC in Jerusalem. The Animation Committee had a very good dialogue with the JPIC Commission of the Custody of the Holy Land headed by Br. Giorgio Vigna, OFM. The encounter between the two highlighted the works of the brothers in the Holy Land working for JPIC, especially with their ministry of presence and dialogue. The JPIC General Animator expressed his gratitude for the recently concluded International Council in Jerusalem with all the organization and logistical preparations that the Custody did for the friars. After which the four members of the Animation Committee were accompanied by Br. Mario H'dchity, OFM to proceed to Jericho for their meeting.

hopes for the JPIC direction of the Order that is being highlighted in the Jerusalem Statement, the final document of the said gathering. During these five days, they talked about how the JPIC Animation Committee could work in the areas of Formation, Coordination, Communication and Collaboration for the next three years.

The meeting started with the assessment and sharing of insights about the ICJPIC 2019. The four members expressed their appreciation and their

The Committee would like to thank the Custos, Br. Francesco Patton, OFM, the friars of the Custody of Holy Land for their warm welcome, hospitality and generosity. Special thanks to friars in Jericho for sharing their life, ministry and resources during the stay in their community. The JPIC Animation Committee has full of hopes and dreams for the Order. Its members concluded their meeting challenging one another.

Br. Angelito A. Cortez, OFM

JPIC Animation Committee - Manila, Philippines





Justice and Peace: International JPIC Council in Jerusalem

The Franciscan friars gave voice to the issues in the different places they represent.

The Custody of the Holy Land hosted the two-yearly planning meeting of the International Council of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) of the Order of the Friars Minor from 3rd to 10th June 2019.

The JPIC Office has always dealt with everything concerning Justice, Peace and the Integrity of the Creation, recognized as founding values of Franciscan spirituality. These values are also to be found in the fight against climate change, the protection of Human Rights and special attention to the problems and real violations existing in the 119 countries where the Order is present and works. “This meeting,” said Br. Jaime Campos, Director of the JPIC General Office, “allows us to evaluate the work that has been done and to plan, with our discussions, future work with constant attention to the contents of Encyclical *Laudato Si*’.

The session opened with the Celebration of the Eucharist presided by the Custos of the Holy Land, Br. Francesco Patton, followed by the presentations by the representatives of the various Conferences of

the Friars Minor. Coming from Australia, Chile, Colombia, South Korea, the Philippines, France, Italy, Mexico, Poland, the United Kingdom, Slovenia and the USA, the Franciscan friars gave voice to the issues in the different places they represent.

The contribution of three organizations which work together and proceed together in close contact with the JPIC Office was central: Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM), Pax Christi and Franciscans International.

Representing the GCCM, the Executive Director, the Argentinean Tomás Insua spoke of the Movement’s goal: to help the Church put *Laudato Si*’ into practice. To do this, it has to be lived and an “ecological conversion” has to be implemented which transforms both the relationship with the creation and lifestyles. The purpose is to help the Church be more sustainable and involved in the public debate on the climate crisis to protect our common home: “Sister Mother Earth”. During his





presence at the meeting, Tomás Insua said: "having the chance to be here is very significant for me: I grew up with the Franciscans and speaking to them about *Laudato Si'* is really an important opportunity. In addition, I see having the chance to pray immersed in the same Creation that saw Jesus when he prayed as a great gift."

Br. Markus Heinze, OFM, Executive Director, was present on behalf of Franciscans International. This non-governmental organization which represents the whole of the Franciscan family at the United Nations with offices in Geneva and New York, this year celebrates the thirtieth anniversary of its foundation. The mission of FI is focused on the defense of Human Rights. FI, together with the Franciscans, by listening directly to the people involved in the various countries where Human Rights are violated, takes on these issues, presenting them to the various UN agencies. "We work to inform about what is happening in the world and which is not usually shown, trying to raise awareness and eventually to lobbying the United Nations." Br. Markus commented: "Meeting here has been important and interesting for two reasons in particular: on the one hand, remembering the celebrations of the 800th anniversary of the meeting between St. Francis and the Sultan, on the other for the crucial role played by the Holy Land in an area where conflicts are an everyday occurrence."



The meeting concluded with the preparation of a final document and the celebration of the Solemnity of Pentecost. "Being here in Jerusalem is important," said Br. Jaime "in the past few years the Custody of the Holy Land has encouraged this Office by creating a commission that works intensely. Furthermore, the mission of the Franciscans in the Holy Land is a great challenge that also has an influence on our spirituality."



Giovanni Malaspina
 Communication Department
 Custody of the Holy Land

The final document of ICJPIC 2019

Jerusalem Statement

The International Council for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation of the Order met in Jerusalem, from June 3 to 9, 2019. Its members evaluated the past three years' work and mapped out the path for the general direction of our JPIC promotion effort for the next triennium. The JPIC Coordinators of the Conferences has provided decisive leadership in that effort that paves the way for effective implementation of the decisions of this year's meeting.

Challenged by the 2018 Plenary Council of the Order, "We desire to dream and, at the same time, be prophets of hope, capable of proclaiming the Gospel for the building of the Kingdom, denouncing and fighting concrete situations of injustice and violence in our present world. This attitude will make us bear much fruit as consecrated persons." (Cf. *PCO/18*, 177)

***Laudato Si'*: Integral Ecological Conversion**

Inspired by the papal Encyclical *Laudato Si'*, we strongly feel that "a sober lifestyle and sensitivity in regard to ecological and social solidarity are expressions of the Franciscan charism, and that our commitment to ecology in an integral part of our (vocation). Each fraternity, in its project of life and mission, is to draw up an ecological program that promotes concrete styles and choices of life which demonstrate respect and care for creation." (Cf. *PCO/18*, 114 – 116)

With the challenge raised by the PCO 2018 document and *Laudato Si'*, we propose the following:

- ▶ Renew our prophetic presence in today's world through a radical process of an individual and communal ecological conversion.
- ▶ Adopt the methodology of active non-violence and just peace.
- ▶ Collaborate in a more comprehensive way inside and outside the Church.
- ▶ Engage with the *Pax Christi International* on its "Catholic Non-Violence" initiative.
- ▶ Integrate *Laudato Si'* in liturgy and put it into practice.
- ▶ Promote the knowledge of the encyclical through retreats and *study* circles.
- ▶ Commemorate the environmental martyrs.
- ▶ Collect, create and share the relevant resources (homiletic, catechetical, practical).
- ▶ Use creatively multimedia and social networks to promote *Laudato Si'*.

Climate Crisis

We, the members of the ICJPIC are deeply troubled by the ecological disasters we witness all over the world and by their devastating effects on the poor and vulnerable. We recognize that our misguided human actions are destroying the vital climate system of our common home. There is little time left for humanity to change its course, if we are to avoid catastrophic consequences for Earth's community of life. In this existential crisis, we must hear the voices of young people clamoring for climate justice. Therefore, we resolve to:

- ▶ Promote and celebrate the *Season of Creation* in liturgy and through actions of solidarity.
- ▶ Collaborate with the Global Catholic Climate Movement.
- ▶ Engage in the Divestment Movement from the dirty fossil fuel industry and reinvest in clean, renewable energy.
- ▶ Participate in global and local mobilization efforts for climate justice.
- ▶ Raise the awareness and deepen our understanding of the issues discussed in *Laudato Si'*.
- ▶ Collect and share the stories of the best practices around ecological conversion.
- ▶ Promote holistic alternatives to the culture of hyper-consumption.
- ▶ Partner with civil society, government authorities and social entrepreneurs to advocate for climate justice.
- ▶ Plant trees.

Socio-Environmental Crisis

We are also aware of many incidents of devastation brought upon the environment and the poor people by various extractivist activities such as mining and fracking as well as monoculture farming. "Too often the techniques of mining, the displacement and disempowerment of people, the poisoning of soil and water, corruption and arrogance of many mining groups and the unjust sharing of the wealth of mining prompt us to question their true worth." (*Verona Statement*) We believe that as Franciscans, we are being called to solidarity with the affected communities in Amazonia and in other places around the world impacted by extractive industries. We seek to promote "a different kind of economy: one that is inclusive and not exclusive, humane and not dehumanizing, one that cares for the environment and does not despoil it." (Pope Francis' invitation to the event, "*Economy of Francis*," 2019). We will strive to oppose, reduce and repair the social, environmental and economic damage done to our common home. Therefore we commit to:

- ▶ Oppose the throwaway culture of irresponsible consumption.
- ▶ Show solidarity and advocate in support of the victims of extractivism.
- ▶ Join the "Right to Say No" campaign.
- ▶ Adopt strategies for product boycotts.
- ▶ Divest from the corporations involved in the environmental/human rights abuses and reinvest in sustainable projects.
- ▶ Collaborate with Franciscans International & Thematic Social Forum on Extractivism.
- ▶ Encourage Entities of the Order to work with NGOs on the issue.
- ▶ Engage with schools of business, proposing alternate economic models that support corporate social responsibility, ecological conversion and climate justice.

Migration Crisis

We see migration as a global phenomenon caused by multiple factors, among them: violence, social inequity, political, economic and climate crises. Its sheer, growing scale all over the world challenges us, the sons of Saint Francis to respond. “Franciscan vision of life, rooted in biblical revelation, shows us that we have only one Father and that we are all brothers and sisters; that all of us are linked by unseen bonds, together forming a kind of universal family with all beings in the universe. Therefore, we cannot remain indifferent to the serious crisis of human movement and we cannot be indifferent to the situation of our migrant brothers and sisters.” (Cf. *PCO/18*, 122 – 123) Hence, we pledge to:

- ▶ Help create a culture of hospitality and common humanity by accepting, welcoming, and caring for migrants as our brothers and sisters.
- ▶ Open our homes to welcome, listen to and dialogue with migrants.
- ▶ Celebrate World Days of Refugees and Migrants, and Prayer against Human Trafficking.
- ▶ Volunteer at existing migrant centers.
- ▶ Promote field experience at migration centers for friars in the Initial and Ongoing Formation.
- ▶ Organize immersion camps for the youth and friars.
- ▶ Promote campaigns to overcome prejudice against migrants.
- ▶ Engage in Franciscan Network on Migration in America.
- ▶ Disseminate legal tools for migrants.

We have witnessed and affirmed the great contribution that our brothers of the Holy Land Custody are making. They sow peace and protect human rights, despite the continuing violence and conflict in their region. We also realized that, as Franciscans, we have “to work to be instruments of peace and reconciliation, continuing to be present in places of war and violence and not abandoning those who are suffering.” (Cf. *PCO/18*, 168) With a deep concern for the political crisis and incredible violations of human rights that occur in some countries, we express our solidarity with the oppressed, the least, the lost and the last.

The International Council for JPIC has read and discerned the signs of the time. As Franciscans, we ought to respond to cry of the poor and cry of the earth with an *integral ecological conversion in a radical manner*. It includes the spiritual, social, economic and political dimensions. As a contemplative fraternity in mission, we seek to dedicate ourselves to action through contemplation and prayer, solidarity with the poor and the Earth. We implore all the friars in the Franciscan Order to deepen our vocation and respond to this call to conversion in the 21st century.



Pope Francis welcomes the Franciscan Mission Center (MZF) in Rome

On Saturday, April 6, 2019, the Pope has met the staffs of the MZF on the occasion of the 50th anniversary.

“It is beautiful,” said the Pope to his guests of MZF, “how you, as a community of religious brothers and committed laities, address all people of good will in the world to motivate them to help the poor, the needy and the marginalized to a better future.”

On Saturday, April 6, 2019, the Pope has met the staffs of the MZF on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the relief organization. More than twenty staffs of the MZF General Office, together with its first director of many years, Fr. Andreas Müller, and the current president, Fr. Matthias Maier, participated in the audience of the Pope.

Br. Matthias Maier, President of the MZF in his address to Pope Francis has said, “We are grateful to be able to see a work that supports the entire Franciscan family throughout the world in their work with the poor. This would not be possible without the generous support from our donors, and we are very grateful.”

The Pope also praised the beginnings of the Franciscan institution by St. Francis of Assisi: “St. Francis was always an example to you who wanted to live as a poor man and let himself be touched by the poverty of the people. Thus, he found the peace of Christ and became a providential gift. Out of this spirit, your missionary headquarters has been able to grow from modest beginnings into a worldwide network of charity, solidarity and brotherhood.”

His commitment to the poor had also fallen into a time when the church was in a bad state. “Even today, we suffer on the margins of the church,” says Pope Francis. Renewal will be possible only “if we listen to the Lord, let ourselves be transformed by Him and continue to do good with him.” Pope Francis continued to encourage the staffs of MZF to “persevere” for the “good of all, and the integrity of creation.”

(Source: <https://mzf.org/>)



Letter from The Conference of the Franciscan Family

*On the occasion of the 30th anniversary
of Franciscans International*

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Warm Franciscan greetings to all! It is our pleasure to write to you during the 30th Anniversary celebration of Franciscans International (FI).

As you know, FI is the only common ministry project of the Franciscan Family. It was created thirty years ago from the grassroots up, based on the vision of various sisters and brothers who were inspired by a dream of sharing our Franciscan message and values at a global level through the structures of the United Nations (UN). In the last three decades FI has undergone various changes, but it has continued its commitment to serve peace, the poor and the planet.

In the not-too-distant past, FI passed through a difficult period and was challenged to undergo a thorough review and renewal. We are happy to report that this process has been completed. Financially, expenses are down, and income has been re-directed in such a way that two-thirds of our receipts are now spent on the advocacy program. Our dedicated and competent staff is guided by a four-year Strategic Plan that was adopted two years ago, and which has recently been reviewed and updated for a further two years. The International Board of Directors (IBD) has been streamlined; it now consists of eight members (OFS, IFC-TOR, TOR, Anglican Franciscans, OFM Cap, OFM Conv., OFM, and the Executive Director of FI). The IBD works well with the staff and has a good relationship with the Conference of the Franciscan Family (CFF). You might be interested to know that recently FI received an award from UNICEF, recognizing it for best use of UN structures/processes in its work on “witch children” in Benin.

As we celebrate this 30th-Anniversary, we are thankful for the work of so many who have made FI into an organization that is highly respected at the UN: by the UN staff, by country delegations, by other religious groups, and by fellow NGOs and



other civil society organizations that work together with us. At the same time, we need to look to the future. While the current situation of FI is “balanced”, finances are still tight and challenging. We do not look to become a huge organization, but we would be able to do our work at the UN more effectively if the staff were not so pressed to find the time to request the resources needed to make our operation run.

In this spirit we ask first of all for your continued prayers for the success of FI. The spirit behind FI is what keeps our work vibrant and effective. At the same time, we ask that you consider supporting FI financially. You might want to make a one-time contribution during this 30th anniversary celebration, in addition to a yearly donation to FI’s work. You might also know of others who would be interested in supporting the work that FI is doing at the UN; please approach them and share with them our vision of defending the human rights of our sisters and brothers throughout the world, in the perspectives of our Franciscan values. The staff of FI and the members of the IBD are ready to provide you any information you might need in these considerations.

We thank all who have been contributing generously to FI throughout these 30 years. We appeal to all members of the Franciscan Family to join together in supporting the work of FI, contributing spiritually and financially, thus seeking to promote the Reign of God in our midst today!

Tibor Kauser, OFS
Minister General, President CFF

Sr. Deborah Lockwood, OSF
Minister General

Br. Roberto Genuin, OFM Cap
Minister General

Br. Nicholas Polichnowski, TOR
Minister General

Br. Marco Tasca, OFM Conv
Minister General

Br. Michael Anthony Perry, OFM
Minister Generale

On the Occasion of the Jubilee of Franciscans International



In 1982, Br. Dionysius Mintoff, OFM, of Malta, and Sister Elisabeth Cameron, OSF, of USA, wrote to the Franciscan family in the United States about the possibility of a Franciscan presence at the United Nations. It led to a joint project of the Franciscan Family, which resulted in the creation of the Franciscan Non-Governmental Organization, *Franciscans International*, for cooperation with the United Nations. Its vision statement identified three main goals: to be aware of the interconnectedness of the entire creation and thus of the commitment to the environment, the commitment to peace and the poor. Later, a conference of the Franciscan Family has been organized in our General Curia, set up by our Office of Justice and Peace, to spread the idea within the Franciscan Family. This is how “Franciscans International,” which was formerly a grassroots organization of Franciscans with a small office in New York, has begun. Later, the Conference of the Franciscan Family (CFF) assumed the patronage as the official organ of the six General Ministers, those of the three First Orders, TOR, the Franciscan sisters and OFS. Franciscans International seeks to bring spiritual,

ethical and Franciscan values to the United Nations and other international organizations.

Thirty years ago, Franciscans International had been recognized by the United Nations as an accredited NGO and received the General consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1995, which has been granted only to 134 among more than 5,000 NGOs recognized by UN. In 1997, together with the *Dominicans for Justice and Peace*, a second office was opened in Geneva to work on human rights.

In Geneva, the first celebration of its 30th anniversary began on the 15th and the 16th of March 2019. On March 15 evening, a reception was held next to the office. The staff of FI, members of the various branches of the Franciscan Family, members of other NGOs, and ten representatives of diplomatic missions have participated. As the CFF Representative, Br. Michael Perry, OFM, Minister General, pointed out that the Charter of the United Nations grounds on the impulses of our founder, St. Francis. Br. Joseph Rozansky, OFM, President of the Board and Br. Markus Heinze, OFM, Executive Director, explained the responsibilities of their two offices in Geneva and New York, all working on human rights as well as peace and ecology.

On March 16, the celebration mass took place in the “Nicholas of Flue” church near the Geneva office, presided by the representative of the Vatican at the UN, Archbishop Ivan Jurkovič. He stated: “Your commitment is also our commitment.” Br. Michael A. Perry, OFM said in his homily that Franciscans International is as committed to the 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights as it is to the gospel, and that, in the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount, FI works for that enemies become friends. The reflections of Br. Markus Heinze, OFM on the FI’s commitment to human rights based on the prayer in the spirit of Francis of Assisi has concluded the holy mass.

On July 16, another celebration of the Jubilee will be in Rome, and later on this year the last one in the New York office of FI.

Br. Jürgen Neitzert, OFM
General Definitior – General Curia, Rome



Ecological life in Mozambique: *Let's Protect Our Common Home!*

On the occasion of World Environment Day, June 5, the friars participated in some activities to mark the day. In the formation house in Chimoio City, the friars and the students participated in an environmental campaign to plant trees. The ceremony was held in one of the primary schools around the city.

The parish run by the friars called *Santa Inês of Nhamadjessa* in collaboration with the municipality of the city of Chimoio organized a clean-up in the market *Mapulango* located in the *Centro Hípico* compound, outskirts of the city of Chimoio. We also planted some trees in the field of new facilities of the parish on June 8.

A lecture on the environment after the Sunday mass at the parish on June 2 preceded this project. The facilitator of the lecture was a parishioner working at the Ministry of the Environment. These activities have raised public consciousness among the local Christians on the care of the environment of the city where garbage took over most of the streets. The situation is worse in the markets.

To respond to the Pope Francis' appeal for the care of our Common Home in the Encyclical *Laudato Si'*, the parish, on the guidance of the parish priest, adhered to a concrete experience of their Christian duties on the care for creation. When the president of the municipal council had just taken office, he vowed not to rest until he would see the city of Chimoio cleaned up and to facilitate and provide us with tools for the collection of garbage.

Br. Agostinho Julieta Matlavelle, OFM
JPIC Animator – Mozambique



International days – July to September, 2019

July 17	World Day for International Justice
August 9	International Day of the World's Indigenous People
August 23	International Day of the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition
August 29	International Day against Nuclear Tests
September 1	World Day for the Care of Creation
September 1 ~ October 4	Season of Creation
September 16	International Day for Preservation of the Ozone Layer

Agenda

July 3 – 10	Participation in the National Meeting JPIC in Cochabamba, Bolivia (Jaime)
July 11 – 14	Meeting with the JPIC Animators of Peru (Jaime)
July 16	Celebration of the 30th Anniversary of <i>Franciscans International</i> , Rome (Rufino)
August	Summer Vacation
September 2 – 5	European Continental Meeting, Malta (Rufino, Jaime)
September 2	<i>Webinar</i> in Spanish on <i>Laudato Si'</i>
September 6 – 8	Meeting for the Franciscan Mediterranean Network, Malta (Rufino, Jaime)
September 9	<i>Webinar</i> in English on <i>Laudato Si'</i>
September 16	<i>Webinar</i> in Italian on <i>Laudato Si'</i>
September 25 – 27	International Seminar on Extractivist Industry, Rome



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