

# CONTACT

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



## ***Laudato si'* Evening, shouting for Radical Ecological Conversion, in Brazil**

The third meeting of *Serata Laudato si'* took place together with the seventh celebration of the Franciscan Youth Missions in the city of Xaxim. It was promoted by the Franciscan Province of the Immaculate Conception of Brazil, bringing 800 young people together for five days to reflect on the care of our Common Home (from 29th January to 2nd February 2020).

**1**

### ECOLOGY

Malta - South Korea -  
Argentina

**2**

### MIGRATION

Central America - Italy

**3**

### HUMAN RIGHTS

West Papua - Holy Land  
- El Salvador



**Franciscan  
Mediterranean  
Network,  
First Executive  
Meeting**



**South Korea,  
Inauguration of  
Climate  
Coalition**



**Argentina,  
One Thousand  
Tree-planting  
Campaign**

# Get Ready for *Laudato Si'* Revolution

*Pope Francis, building upon the teachings of St. John Paul II and his call to ecological conversion, calls us to respond to "the urgent need for a bold cultural revolution."*

Eight centuries ago, a young man from Assisi was praying in the dilapidated church of San Damiano when he heard a voice speaking to him from the crucifix: "Francis, rebuild my house that is falling into ruin." He could have gone to a monastery and spent the rest of his life meditating on the meaning of Christ's words. But Francis responded by getting up, rolling up his sleeves, and picking up stones to repair the church. Others soon joined him, touched by his idealism and his ability to express his passion through concrete actions. In the later part of his life, Francis came to understand that the place where God dwells extended to the earth's community of life and beyond. For Francis, restoring God's house, in that context, meant reconciliation, peace, and harmony within the family of God's creation. It was that divine milieu that Francis celebrated in his *Canticum of the Creatures*.

This year marks the fifth anniversary of the promulgation of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'*. Heeding Pope Francis's call to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor, we read the signs of the times and recognize the gravity and urgency of the moral drama unfolding right before our eyes. The life-support system of our fragile planet is at the point of collapse. Besides the ongoing ecocide condemning thousands of species of plants and animals to extinction, several environmental tipping

points, coupled with the growing social inequality, raise the threat and the real possibility of a collapse of human civilization. At the same time, a new, alternative vision of the civilization of love begins to emerge. It is marked by values of solidarity, sustainability, and justice. It seeks to make room for all of God's creation in the banquet of life. As Franciscans, we must not remain on the sidelines in the peaceful, non-violent transformation but rather be active, creative and courageous participants in it. Pope Francis, building upon the teachings of Saint John Paul II and his call to ecological conversion, calls us to respond to "the urgent need for a bold cultural revolution" (*Laudato Si'* 114). In the midst of so many crises, our contemporary civilization needs Franciscan worldview and values. We must not bury them in the ground but take risks, creatively and courageously invest them to so that we can become troubadours of hope, artisans of the new, transformed society, and the living parables of the Kingdom of God.

**"As Franciscans,  
we must not remain  
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participants."**

Following up on the directives of the Plenary Council of the Order 2018 in Nairobi, we have taken up the challenge of truly accepting and living out *Laudato Si'* in prophetic ways as individuals and communally. Last year, the International JPIC Council of the Order met in Jerusalem. There, we have further developed and approved the plan for engaging our Franciscan communities in the issues of forced migration, exploitative mining industry and climate

crisis. We have also called on the local fraternities to be collaborative, creative, and courageous in Living out the *Laudato Si'*. Over the period between May 24, 2020, and the General Chapter of the Order in May 2021, we are to focus on energies on involving ourselves and the people we serve in *Laudato Si'* Revolution. Our JPIC Office in Rome has set up a page where we could share our ideas and resources:

<http://www.revolutionlaudatosi.org/>.





Here are a few examples of some of the efforts underway:

- Franciscan Interprovincial Postulancy Program in Silver Spring, Maryland, the United States – along with a nearby Franciscan parish – are now receiving their energy exclusively from wind power. In addition to it, they just began composting all the food scraps, diverting it from landfills and helping to curb methane emissions. It will have a significant, positive environmental impact.
- Many Franciscan Provinces are beginning to engage their young people in the social movements around the issue of climate justice. One specific initiative that has caught their attention and captured their imagination is Parachutes for the Planet project: <https://motherearthproject.org/parachutes/>.

Working together with various social movements and all people of goodwill, we as Franciscans could make a unique contribution toward rebuilding God's house. It is also a reliable path to revitalization of our fraternal life and ministry in the 21st century and beyond.



**Br. Jacek Orzechowski, OFM**  
JPIC Animation Committee  
Washington, USA

# *Laudato Si'* Revolution Campaign; the Logo



It was almost five years ago when the Pope launched his encyclical *LAUDATO SI'*. This encyclical is a re-affirmation of our Franciscan Spirituality of praising God through all his wonderful creation. *Laudato Si'* challenged us to embrace and own the gift that is already part of us. It is about taking the lead as Franciscans and show the world how we live our life responding to the call of ecological conversion — revolutionizing our lifestyle, putting our idealism into action, as we continue to care for our common home. As we prepare our communities for the upcoming General Chapter 2021 in Manila, Philippines, we come up with a one year campaign that will lead us to our innovation and creativity and making *LAUDATO SI'* alive. We will call this campaign LAUDATO SI' REVOLUTION.

In the logo, you will see a friar shaped tree in the middle. It represents us, FRANCISCANS. It highlights Integral Ecology as part of our FRANCISCAN DNA. It is already present on us, but we need to work more, embrace this spirituality, and own it as part of our life.

The three colored circles that serve as the shade or leaves of the tree symbolizes the evolution of our ecological ministry. It also denotes that it is a continuous process of discovering things that will help us understand and respond to the imperatives of CLIMATE CHANGE in a world that is fast phasing.

On the other side of the logo, you will see a smaller version of the tree, and it denotes that this initiative will be handed over to the next generation.

**DOWNLOAD LOGO**

**Br. Angelito Cortez, OFM**  
JPIC Animation Committee  
Manila, Philippines



## Pope Francis Invites Catholics to Celebrate Laudato Si' Week.

To celebrate the fifth anniversary of *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis invites Catholic communities to participate in *Laudato Si' Week*, from 16 to 24 May 2020.

The weeklong program coincides with the fifth anniversary of the signature of *Laudato Si'* and seeks to engage the world's 1.3 billion Catholics in ambitious actions to protect our common home. With about one-sixth of the world's population organized in more than 220,000 parishes around the globe, the Catholic Church plays a unique and vital role in addressing the environmental crisis.

In his video, Pope Francis reflects on environmental protection as a core theme of his papacy and encourages the faithful to participate in *Laudato Si' Week*:

“What kind of world do we want to leave to those who will come after us, to children who are growing up? Motivated by this question, I would like to invite you to participate in *Laudato Si' Week* from 16-24 May 2020. It is a global campaign on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the encyclical letter *Laudato Si'* on the care of the common home. I renew my urgent call to respond to the ecological crisis, the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor cannot continue. Let's take care of creation, a gift of our good Creator God. Let's celebrate *Laudato Si' Week* together. May God bless you and do not forget to pray for me.”

Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'* encyclical sparked prayer and action to protect the environment in thousands of Catholic communities and gave new impetus to the Catholic movement to care for creation. However, scientific analysis reveals that the pace of climate change and of mass extinctions continues to rise. To meet this challenge, more ambitious commitments are urgently needed.



Against this backdrop, Pope Francis and the Vatican's Dicastery for Integral Human Development encourage Catholic communities to reflect on their actions to date and to then take the next step. Ambitious actions will vary from community to community; a suggested guide to the most impactful actions is available at the *Laudato Si' Week website*.

The *Laudato Si'* anniversary coincides with other significant environmental events to take place later this year. In November, at the 26th United Nations climate change conference, countries will announce their plans to meet the goals of the Paris climate agreement. The UN's conference on biodiversity, during which the world will have the chance to set meaningful targets to protect creation, will take place in October.

As a leading partner in this initiative, JPIC-OFM is deeply committed to implementing the vision of *Laudato Si'*: “As individuals, fraternities, entities and as an international order, we feel strongly challenged to make a clear and radical option in the direction of the ways of living indicated by *Laudato si'*. We are called to a radical option to authentically live our charism and embark on a journey of ecological conversion to be a beacon of ecological hope” said Fr. Jaime Campos, OFM, director of the JPIC Office in the General Curia in reference to the last Plenary Council of the Order.

*Laudato Si' Week* is sponsored by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. More information about partners can be found [here](#).

## Global Catholic Climate Movement





# Climate Crisis and Coronavirus

*Preventing the spread of viruses that are deadly to humanity and protecting the health security of current and future generations are further reasons for us to respond to the Climate Crisis.*



**Junghee Min**  
General Secretary,  
International Climate and Ecology Network  
Seoul

We are now facing unprecedented challenges with the spread of COVID19. The argument has been made that climate change has had a significant impact on the development of infectious viruses such as Coronavirus.

In mid-February, Sonia Sha, an American scientific journalist and the author of *Pandemic*, made such a claim in *Nation*, a weekly journal, and also in an interview with the independent news organization, Democracy Now.<sup>1</sup> According to Sha, almost all viruses, including COVID19, were parasitic in wildlife. Climate change destroys ecosystems, causing wild animals that have lost their habitat to move closer to human habitation. Therefore, the possibility of contact with humans has increased and so the virus enters into the human body from the wild.

These viruses are not that dangerous when in the body of a wild animal, but once they enter humans, they become deadly because they have to adapt to a new environment. Over time, viruses evolve — if the host human being dies, then the viruses cannot survive. Therefore, they evolve into viruses that are not as lethal as once they were. This is also the case with COVID19, which has a low mortality rate compared to a very high infection rate.

She said that over 300 viruses, including COVID19, have been discovered over the last 50 years. 60% of these viruses come from animals, and 70% of animal viruses come from wild animals. Jared Diamond in his book, *Guns, Germs, and Steel*,

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.thenation.com/article/environment/coronavirus-habitat-loss/>; [https://www.democracynow.org/2020/2/27/climate\\_crisis\\_coronavirus\\_infections\\_disease\\_outbreaks](https://www.democracynow.org/2020/2/27/climate_crisis_coronavirus_infections_disease_outbreaks)



says that animal viruses have entered into human bodies ever since humans began farming and raising livestock. Tuberculosis, measles, and smallpox are viruses originating in cattle, whooping cough came from pigs, and influenza from ducks.

When Western powers colonized other continents, the viruses that they brought had a devastating effect on the local ecosystem and its inhabitants. Measles and smallpox entered the Americas with Europeans and killed most of the indigenous people. In 1817, the English East India Company moved thousands of people into the Sundarbans mangrove forests in Bangladesh (at that time a part of India) to deforest the area and cultivate rice. It was then that the bacteria found in the water moved into the people, and thus cholera began to be known.

Deforestation, urbanization, and the use of wild animals as gastronomic delicacies — all caused by growing population — are further causes of the spread of viruses. A 2017 study found that the Ebola virus is associated with bats and is more likely to occur in Central and West Africa, where recent deforestation has taken place. Also, mosquitoes that transmit infectious diseases to humans are more than twice as likely to be present in deforested areas. We know too that the HIV virus is associated with the practice of eating wild animals. In the early 1920s, HIV spread as Belgian colonizers established large-

**“Deforestation, urbanization, and the use of wild animals as gastronomic delicacies... are further causes of the spread of viruses.”**

scale plantations and railroads, and promoted urbanization in Kinshasa, the capital of Congo.

Last May, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) published a report that points out that about 1 million of the 8 million known species are endangered, and that climate change is a major reason for this. In addition, it said that about 6 million hectares of forests have disappeared worldwide every year since 2000. According to this report, if greenhouse gas emissions are not drastically reduced, and if the increase in the global average temperature rises by more than 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, then a virus that is more contagious than Corona may emerge, putting humanity into greater danger.

Preventing the spread of viruses that are deadly to humanity and protecting the health security of current and future generations are further reasons for us to respond to the Climate Crisis.





# Franciscan Mediterranean Network

*The first executive meeting of the Network was held at the General Curia.*

A first preparatory executive meeting for the Franciscan Mediterranean Network was held at the General Curia in Rome on January 23, 2020. The members at the meeting were Br. Jaime Campos and Br. Rufino Lim (the General JPIC), Br. Alonso Morales (General Secretary for the Missions and Evangelization), Br. Francesco Zecca (Coordinator of the Youth sector of the Network), Br. Mark Ciantar (Coordinator of the Migrants sector of the Network), Br. Antonio Lembo (JPIC counselor of COMPI).

It took place in a very fraternal atmosphere. It was essential to specify the objectives and decisions made at the meeting in Malta on September 6 – 8, 2019, which was the meeting of the Secretaries of Evangelization and the JPIC animators that came from almost every Entities around the Mediterranean sea to reflect on the possibility of creating this significant Network.

There was yet another gathering together with Marco Bartoli and Valeria Gutierrez (representatives of the St. Egidio Community), Massimo De Maio (representative of the “Fare Verde [Green It]” association) on the previous day. The participants arrived at an idea of establishing a collaborative

relationship between the Franciscan Mediterranean Network and the St. Egidio Community, to extend the “corridors” in the Italian territory, primarily through the Franciscan Entities in the region.

The work points were mainly three:

1. Organization of the Network: framework of coordination;
2. A structure of the individual sectors (Youth, Migrants, Dialogue and Peace) and related activities;
3. Internal and external communication of the Network’s activities.

The day ended with feelings of gratitude and the desire to weave networks in the Mediterranean to trigger new processes through the language of beauty and hospitality, against the culture of abandonment and exclusion.

**Br. Antonio Lembo, OFM**  
JPIC Animator, Province of St. Michael Archangel  
– Puglia Molise, Italy



# Franciscan Network in Honduras

*It Aims to Raise Consciousness and Take Action to Confront the Critical Migration Situation.*

The Franciscan Network on Migration's team in Honduras (RFM-Honduras) is composed of Franciscan and other religious and lay people who minister in different areas of the country. Members of RFM-Honduras represent some of the initial organizers of the Network and over the past year they have worked to consolidate their team. Despite great geographic distances, communication challenges, and many other practical and spiritual commitments, they developed together a vision and strategy for their work on behalf of migrants and refugees.

Honduras is one of the main sending countries for people headed for Mexico and the US. Extreme poverty and violence coupled with environmental degradation and political unrest have pushed individuals and families out of their homeland. Dreams of safety, refuge, and economic stability pull them northwards. RFM-Honduras is building a foundation upon which they can address the root causes of forced migration while at the same time providing emergency support to families who are being targeted and persecuted.

Sister Maria Elda described a time when people who live in her communities noted that within "15 days, 6 pastoral workers from the parish left, taking their smallest children with them but leaving the older kids with their mothers or with grandmothers. That is what moves my heart and what moves many of the hearts in this Network. We cannot remain indifferent to this reality, this emergency where there is so much need, because as I said, in truth we know the cause is violence. Climate change is also harming many people," says Sr. Maria Elda. "People have been left without their harvest, with so many high-interest loans. And when they fail to pay, they have to migrate to get a job and pay these debts because if they do not, they are threatened, the lives of their children are threatened, their own lives."



Life in Honduras holds many risks, and one of the greatest is violence and organized crime. Every day, the gangs are stronger, and this has generated an alarming level of poverty. Moreover, there few job opportunities, especially for young people. And although Sr. Maria Elda says that she doesn't live in a border region, she lives next door to many who are the victims of violence and forced migration. She comments, *"This is why I cannot remain indifferent. Everyday people leave, perhaps in a caravan, perhaps by groups of 5 or 10, it has not stopped even for one day. Every day Hondurans leave, Guatemalans leave, Salvadorans leave and people are leaving from my land, from my town, from my village, from my canton. I cannot remain indifferent, I cannot stand idly by with my mouth closed, I have to do something,"* she stated.

RFM-Honduras has forged a strategy with three pillars: organizing, formation, and advocacy. During their first year they have interfaced with JPIC, including hosting a visit from the JPIC director, Fray Jaime Campos, participating in the Migrant Way of the Cross with La 72 in southern Mexico, and convening an assembly of roughly 40 people to introduce the RFM in Tegucigalpa. Out of that assembly, a coordinating team was formed and has in turn organized local teams at Maximiliano Kolbe Parish, at the diocesan level in Juticalpa (three Franciscan parishes and one Franciscan conventual parish), as well as with the congregation of the *Hermanas Cooperadoras*. They are also working closely with CONFEREH (the Conference of Honduran Religious) and the Sisters of the Holy Rosary.

One member of the team, Vicki, explains it this way: "To organize as a network of Franciscans in attention to migrants is to seek to respond in an organized, systematic and committed way to the accompaniment of people forced to forced migration. This human sensitivity joins with our call to be disciples of Jesus, together with the Franciscan spirituality of JPIC that sends us to care for and defend life where it is threatened, to be with the most vulnerable of the Kingdom. From the guidance of Pope Francis, together with the local pastoral work, we seek to accompany, care for, promote and integrate people in migration. As a Franciscan family we are in different spaces and present in different ways in all the countries of the region, as we are very much a family, with diverse personal and professional possibilities, as well as resources in infrastructure that can be at the service and in solidarity with migrants."

In 2020, the team will focus on consciousness-raising that will generate commitments and inspire concrete actions appropriate to the local circumstances. By the end of 2020 they aim to have a team working on migration issues in every Franciscan parish in Honduras. These teams will be

critical to their success because they will determine the national objectives from the front lines. At present, the national team is creating a series of workshops to implement with the teams at the parish level. They aim to implement three workshops this year, one that will be offered broadly and two that will be offered regionally.

*"With all our heart and with all our enthusiasm we want to help in the best possible way and by organizing here in Honduras to be able to receive urgent cases that are presented to us, brothers and sisters who have to leave the country due to circumstances beyond their control because what awaits them is death, and persecution. That is why we as a conference are supporting this initiative."* -- Sr. Ludi

**Lori Winther**  
Executive Secretary,  
Franciscan Network on Migration

## Franciscan Network on Migration Launches Membership



With our vision to create a network of Franciscans and franciscan-hearted people who are working on migration issues, the Franciscan Network on Migration is pleased to announce the launch of our formal membership.

Participation in the Network is open to all of those assist migrants and refugees and who follow the many expressions of Franciscan spirituality. This inclusive effort aims to bring together all Franciscan-hearted-people who are running or serving in projects such as migrant centers and shelters, houses of refuge, parishes, and individual ministries, for mutual support, experiential learning, promotion of best practices and approaches, and coordinated advocacy efforts. The help provided reflects the reality in each country and region, and includes assistance in sending, transit, and destination/deportation countries.

Membership is free of charge but requires active participation so that all can benefit. Our members will appear on our member list and on a private google map link with the type of assistance noted, and members will have access to the link in order to communicate with others providing resources.

Our membership reflects our aim to aim to articulate, protect, train and disseminate the different Franciscan experiences of attention to migrants with the goal of being able to offer holistic accompaniment and to influence the transformation of the structural causes that originate and maintain the lethal human displacement in the region.

To sign up as a member of the network, please visit our website contact page **HERE** to find a link to our short membership form. You can also find more information and just sign up to receive our email bulletin. Find us on social media as well.



# Agenda of JPIC-Media for 2020

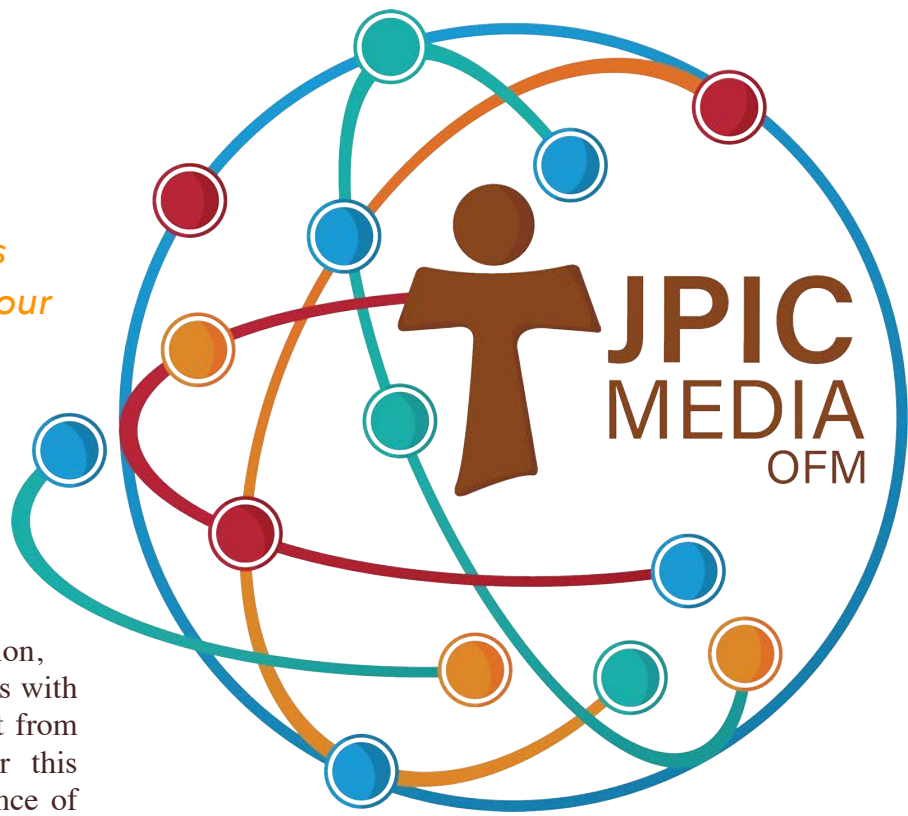
Currently, *JPIC-Media* has started its training and working strategy with four teams of collaborators according to languages, i.e., Spanish, Portuguese, English and Italian.

The socio-environmental crisis described in the encyclical *Laudato Si'* is a challenge for humanity to restructure its ways of relating to God, to the brothers and to creation, through an ecological spirituality, which begins with the insight into the whole creation as free gift from the Creator and its interconnectedness. For this reason, the JPIC Office has seen the importance of utilizing the social media and communicating the values of justice, peace and integrity for creation through it.

The JPIC Office considers the internet and Social Networks (SNS) as privileged space of encounter to live out universal fraternity and to share various experiences, life stories and initiatives. This is the reason why the JPIC-Media project was born with the mission of consolidating an international and intercultural network for formation, mediation and promotion of JPIC values from the heart of the Office and the directives of the Plenary Council of the Order (2018, Nairobi).

Currently, JPIC-Media has started its training and working strategy with four teams of collaborators according to languages, i.e., Spanish, Portuguese, English and Italian. The fifth team for the Arabic language will be launched soon. JPIC-Media mainly has two objectives, namely: to create digital contents and to create digital action networks. Here are some main activities for 2020:

1. Launch various campaigns for 2020 for international days such as World Days of water, land, environment, migrants and refugees, the Spirit of Assisi, the poor, etc. among others.
2. Promote and spread the content of the ***Laudato Si'* Revolution Campaign.**



3. Promote the online course “*Laudato Si'*, **Integral Ecology for Life.**”
4. Support the JPIC Intercontinental Meeting of the Americas.
5. Course “Evangelization in Social Networks” for Spanish speaking collaborators. It goes for four months, and 18 people from JPIC Media will take part in the course conducted by *Immission*. (a Catholic organization in Spain that promotes evangelization on the internet)

In conclusion, JPIC-Media believes that the Holy Spirit is still active in the Order of Friars Minor, the Church and all humanity as a new Pentecost and thus helps us be transformed into new human beings respond effectively to new challenges of the new era.

Coordination Team  
JPIC-Media



## "Laudato Si' Revolution!"

*The third Laudato Si' Evening took place in Brazil, bringing 800 young people together to reflect on the care of our common home.*

The third meeting of *Serata Laudato si'* took place together with the seventh celebration of the Franciscan Youth Missions in the city of Xaxim. It was promoted by the Franciscan Province of the Immaculate Conception of Brazil, bringing 800 young people together for five days to reflect on the care of our Common Home (from 29th January to 2nd February 2020).

This year, a group of friars from Argentina and Rio Grande do Sul, led by friars from the Province of St. Francis of Assisi, were present in addition to the young people of the Province. There were five days of great energy in this event which was evangelising, cultural, formative and celebratory. Numerous workshops dealt with themes related to the ministry of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC), with questions of ecology, justice, migration, respect for nature, good living and simplicity, values so characteristic of the Franciscan charism, which is much needed in our times.

The prayer times recalled and decried the neglect of Mother Earth by humankind. In the evening prayer, on the first day, three young people lay down in the mud in a makeshift pool to remember the tragedies produced by the mega-mining in "Mariana" and "Brumadinho". With movements, they showed desperate people in search of rescue. "This tragedy, which has victimised so many families, is synonymous with murder. It is synonymous with greed, which has generated so many deaths. It is synonymous with bodies that are not buried by their families," said Br. Diego Melo, Promoter of Vocations and JPIC.

The training in the first days was intense. Br Jaime Campos, director of the General Office for JPIC, showed how this service is structured in the Order and all the Conferences in the world. He explained how it works to build a world where everyone can live as family, in love. Br. Jaime also spoke of the "Laudato si' Revolution", an initiative that will involve the whole Order throughout the world.

The anthropologist and lay Franciscan, Moema Miranda SFO, who was at the Synod for the Amazon held in Rome, also spoke about Laudato si' for our days, as well as its practical consequences in our lives. The youth coordinator in Brazil of the World Catholic Climate Movement, Igor Bastos, who is also a member of YouFra (Franciscan Youth), spoke about the importance of youth leading evangelisation.



On Friday and Saturday, the 800 young people were divided into family homes in 38 communities. They were able to experience hands-on practice of the themes chosen for this Mission: “And God saw that everything was very good” and “Guardians of relationships with God, with others and with our common home”.

The young people met again on Sunday at the closing Mass. The Vicar Provincial, Br. Gustavo Medella, presided over the celebration and, in sending the young people home, asked them to be in the presence of the “Jesus of the people”. In the ceremony, a young person shaved the head of another, to indicate the evil generated by pesticides. A wooden cross near the church was set on fire and, according to Br. Gustavo, “It is also our request for forgiveness. Christ was again crucified for our actions that destroy and attack our common home”.

There were acknowledgements, emotions and much gratitude, especially to the people who received the missionaries with great affection. According to Br. Diego, a tree is known for its fruits. “The Franciscan tree is filling this world with fruit.”

**Br. Dieto Melo, OFM**  
JPIC Animator,  
Province of *Imaculada Concepção* – Brazil

## *Serata Laudato Si'*



**WATCH THE VIDEO**





# Jerusalem Statement (1/4)

The JPIC Coordinators reached an agreement at the ICJPIC 2019 to implement these directives in their Conferences.

The International Council for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation of the Order (ICJPIC) 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'*.





# Querida Amazonía



## Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father Francis to the People of God and to All Persons of Good Will.

1. The beloved Amazon region stands before the world in all its splendor, its drama and its mystery. God granted us the grace of focusing on that region during the Synod held in Rome from 6-27 October last, which concluded by issuing its Final Document, *The Amazon: New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology*.

### *The significance of this Exhortation*

2. During the Synod, I listened to the presentations and read with interest the reports of the discussion groups. In this Exhortation, I wish to offer my own response to this process of dialogue and discernment. I will not go into all of the issues treated at length in the final document. Nor do I claim to replace that text or to duplicate it. I wish merely to propose a brief framework for reflection that can apply concretely to the life of the Amazon region: a synthesis of some of the larger concerns that I have expressed in earlier documents, and that can help guide us to a harmonious, creative and fruitful reception of the entire synodal process.

3. At the same time, I would like to officially present the Final Document, which sets forth the conclusions of the Synod, which profited from the participation of many people who know better than myself or the Roman Curia the problems and issues of the Amazon region, since they live there, they experience its suffering and they love it passionately. I have preferred not to cite the Final Document in this Exhortation, because I would encourage everyone to read it in full.

4. May God grant that the entire Church be enriched and challenged by the work of the synodal

assembly. May the pastors, consecrated men and women and lay faithful of the Amazon region strive to apply it, and may it inspire in some way every person of good will.

### *Dreams for the Amazon region*

5. The Amazon region is a multinational and interconnected whole, a great biome shared by nine countries: Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Surinam, Venezuela and the territory of French Guiana. Yet I am addressing the present Exhortation to the whole world. I am doing so to help awaken their affection and concern for that land which is also “ours”, and to invite them to value it and acknowledge it as a sacred mystery. But also because the Church’s concern for the problems of this area obliges us to discuss, however briefly, a number of other important issues that can assist other areas of our world in confronting their own challenges.

6. Everything that the Church has to offer must become incarnate in a distinctive way in each part of the world, so that the Bride of Christ can take on a variety of faces that better manifest the inexhaustible riches of God’s grace. Preaching must become incarnate, spirituality must become incarnate, ecclesial structures must become incarnate. For this reason, I humbly propose

in this brief Exhortation to speak of four great dreams that the Amazon region inspires in me.

*7. I dream of an Amazon region that fights for the rights of the poor, the original peoples and the least of our brothers and sisters, where their voices can be heard and their dignity advanced.*

*I dream of an Amazon region that can preserve its distinctive cultural riches, where the beauty of our humanity shines forth in so many varied ways.*

*I dream of an Amazon region that can jealously preserve its overwhelming natural beauty and the superabundant life teeming in its rivers and forests.*

*I dream of Christian communities capable of generous commitment, incarnate in the Amazon region, and giving the Church new faces with Amazonian features.*

**[DOWNLOAD THE DOCUMENT HERE](#)**

# JPIC Intercontinental Meeting of the Americas

*The convocation letter for this year's triennial JPIC meeting in Guatemala*



January 28, 2020, Rome

Dear JPIC Animators of the Americas,

May the Lord give you His Peace!

We greet you on behalf of the JPIC delegates of the Conferences of the Americas and the brothers of the JPIC Office of the General Curia in Rome. We hope that every one of you is well in the various occupations and animation services of the Entity.

We send you this letter to announce the “JPIC Continental Meeting of the Americas,” to which the JPIC animators and members of the JPIC Commission of the Entity, belonging to Latin America and the Caribbean, are convened. The Meeting will be held on September 1 – 5, 2020, in Guatemala City, Guatemala (Arrival on August 31, departure on September 6).

During the last JPIC Continental Meeting of the Americas in Anápolis, Brazil, we have agreed to extend the invitation to other JPIC groups that follow the Franciscan spirituality. We believe that the promotion work and the experience of JPIC values must be sustained together. And we know that many brothers and sisters work with passion and conviction in following Christ under the model of St. Francis of Assisi. Therefore, we have set out to work together to organize this event that will convene all the JPIC animators and the commissions of Franciscan spirituality in the Americas.

In the last 15 years, the work related to the promotion and experience of the values of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation has developed with greater strength and organization. It has not been easy to break through the internal barriers of the Church, nor of our Franciscan fraternities. However, if we look at history, we verify that there was progress, perhaps not at the pace we would like. That awareness has grown among us that JPIC is an essential part of spirituality because they are Gospel values.

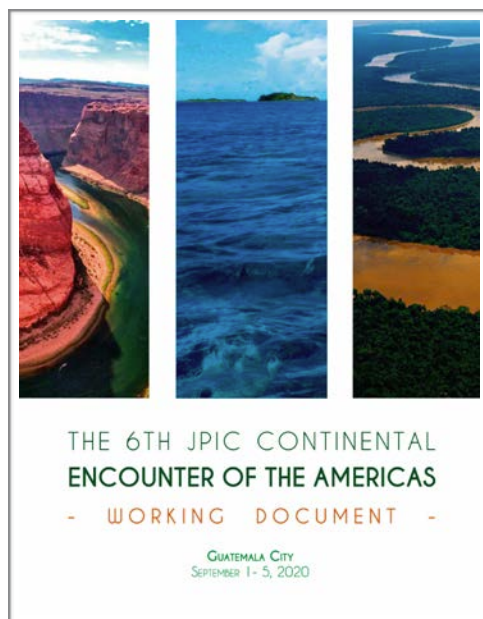
In this context, the objective of our Meeting is to share JPIC work experiences, to learn from the path taken during the last decade, to share positive as well as negative experiences. We will share our experiences to learn together from them. We will share our experiences to know ourselves and to support each other regionally. We will share our experiences to encourage each other to continue our struggles with more strength and creativity.

Sharing JPIC work experience means that we start from our reality, from what we are doing and our actual practices. It is not just about showing off the most significant or representative initiatives of successful cases, but about exchanging daily activities, about what “is” now, not what “should” be. Only by perceiving these realities, only by talking about them, analyzing and systematizing them, and interpreting them, we will be able to think together (synodically) in a participatory communion about new paths or methods of how to reinforce our present JPIC promotion work.



In order to achieve our goal, it is necessary to meet an indispensable requirement. We need all participants, individually (Animator) or as JPIC commission of the Franciscan spirituality, to share the JPIC work experience(s) they conduct in their country. It's because we can achieve any meaningful and communal learning only from the experiences (projects, practices, work plans executed, or in execution). Accordingly, we hope our Meeting in Guatemala this year to be a practical workshop for those who have specific practices in some of the five areas mentioned above. With this purpose in mind, we have developed the “*Instrumentum Laboris*” (**working document**) that is created especially for this Meeting. The participants must use this document (in the attachment) accordingly in their preparation process for the Meeting.

We implore God's blessing on each one of you and all those who work in the promotion and experience of JPIC values.



(To download the Working Document, click [\*\*HERE\*\*](#).)

Fraternally,

**Sr. Miriam Beccar, OFS**  
National Minister – Argentina

**Br. Darwin Orozco, OFMCap**  
JPIC Coordinator CCA

**Br. Jaime Campos F., OFM**  
Director of the JPIC Office – General Curia

**Br. Erick Marin, OFMConv.**  
JPIC Coordinator Central America

# March against Human Trafficking



Pope Francis has chosen February 8, the feast of St. Bakhita as World Day of Prayer and Reflection Against Human Trafficking since 2015. “Talitha Kum” is a network of religious Congregations against human trafficking. It has been promoting various activities throughout the world. This year’s theme was “Together against trafficking” since it is a problem that must be addressed by all.

There were two significant events held in Rome. Talitha Kum organized a prayer vigil on February 8 in the Basilica of San Antonio (Antonionum) and a public march on the next day from “Castel Sant’Angelo” to St. Peter’s Square. The participants in the parade also attended the Sunday “Angelus” after the march. Pope Francis announced human trafficking as “a true plague that exploits the weakest.” And he said that therefore requires “the commitment of all: educational institutions, associations, and agencies.”

**Br. Jaime Campos, OFM**  
Director, JPIC Office - General Curia, Rome





# Conference for Human Rights in West Papua

*The monthly meeting of the English Speaking JPIC Promoters was held on February 19.*



In this meeting, the West Papua Network in Rome introduced the human rights issues of the indigenous people (native Papuans) in West Papua (two Indonesian provinces in the west half of the New Guinea island).

West Papua Network in Rome is a network of the religious congregations which are present in West Papua. There, the native Papuans have been suffering from serious human rights violations since the end of the Second World War. The Catholic church has been accompanying the indigenous people mainly through the parish, education, and health care ministries. At the same time, the JPIC secretariats of the dioceses and religious congregations have been trying to promote human rights by networking with NGOs and local and national authorities.

Mr. Norman Voß from the International Coalition of Papua (ICP: [www.humanrightspapua.org](http://www.humanrightspapua.org)) introduced the recently published bi-annual human rights report of ICP. He focused on the issues of extrajudicial killings, torture, intimidation of human rights defenders, and health. According to the statistics, the situation of these areas is not getting better. For example, the number of reported victims (native Papuans) of extrajudicial killing in the past five years is 2013/8, 2014/12, 2015/14, 2016/6, 2017/10, 2018/23. Mr. Norman shared that because of the migration from other parts of Indonesia and the poor public services on health, education, hygiene, food, etc., the population of indigenous people in West Papua is now less than 40%. The native Papuans worry about their extinction.

Mr. Budi Tjahjono from Franciscans International informed how the Catholic Church is

reacting to the human rights violation at local and international levels. He shared that in West Papua, there is a network of JPIC secretariats of four dioceses and two congregations (Franciscans and Augustinians). This local JPIC network published its three-year human rights report in Indonesian, and the West Papua Network in Rome translated the report into English and published it. FI, together with many other NGOs established by religious congregations, bring the issue to the UN for advocacy actions. Mr. Budi said that the strength of the religious NGOs is the fact that they are linked with the local reality through the presence of religious in the affected areas.



Sr. Elly van Dijk, FDNSC, shared about the importance of promoting interculturality in the religious communities in West Papua. Her congregation has 30 sisters in West Papua, and 10 of them are native Papuans. The Sisters work in schools, hospitals, clinics, and parishes, and are often confronted with human rights issues. Sr. Elly said that it is not easy to talk about human rights since it is a sensitive issue and can quickly become a political debate. But we cannot keep quiet because the dignity of human beings is at stake. She then introduced the mapping project of an MSC Father, which protects the land and empowers the native Papuans.

The participants shared in the end that it will be useful to connect the issue with the outcome of the Amazon Synod as it deals with indigenous and environmental issues.

**West Papua Network in Rome**

**[DOWNLOAD THE REPORT HERE](#)**



## Romans VI Meeting

The members of the Inter-Franciscan JPIC Commission called Romans VI met at the JPIC Office of the USG (Union of Superiors General) & UISG (International Union of Superiors General) on February 25, 2020. Sr. Sheila Kinsey, FCJM [hostess], Br. Joseph

Blay, OFM Conv., Br. Rufino Lim, OFM, and Sr. Nancy Celaschi, OSF, were present physically. Still, Attilio Galimberti, OFS, took part in online due to the situation of COVID19 in Lombardy. Br. Joel de Jesus, OFM Cap. has joined in the Commission last October but was unable to be present due to his Italian study in Assisi.

The meeting began with a prayer for creation prepared by Sr. Sheila, which was followed by the approval of the minutes of the last meeting on Dec. 16, 2019, and quick updates of each member's recent activities and plans.

The first item on the list was about renewal and update of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Romans VI and Franciscans International. Br. Markus Heinze, Executive Director of FI, who joined the meeting by Skype, pointed out that the document of MOU was drafted in 2011 and revised in 2015. Romans VI has agreed to begin the process of revision since FI is currently engaged in a 4-year strategic planning process, working under a new charter that was developed in 2019.

Later, Simon Levey from the Grantham Institute at the Imperial College, London, joined us by Skype. Br. Joseph met him at COP25, Madrid, and was very impressed with the leaflet on climate actions and invited him to the meeting. The format was attractive and useful though it needs to be adapted for Romans VI. Simon willingly gave the Commission permission to modify anyway possible. All agreed to have a collaborative relationship between the two groups to raise consciousness on the issue of the climate crisis and ecological conversion.

Finally, the members decided to sign up as sponsors for "*Laudato si'* week", which is on May 18 - 24, promoted by Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM). The logo designed by Br. Joel was approved with some modifications as well. The next meeting will be on April 28.

## New Member of the JPIC Animation Committee

Recently, the General Definitory approved Br. Francesco Zecca, OFM from the Assumption B.V.M Province (Italy) as a new member of the Animation Committee of the JPIC General Office. Born in Southern Italy, Br. Francesco has obtained a degree, at the University of Florence, in "Peace operations, conflict management and mediation" with a thesis on: "nonviolent communication as an instrument of social transformation." He served the Order as a guardian, a formator, a Provincial Secretary for Formation & Studies and a Provincial Definitor.



JPIC was an area of his interest for long. He finally got appointed as JPIC animator in 2014 and JPIC coordinator of the Italian Conference in 2017. He organized an exhibition on the encyclical *Laudato si'* that covered various issues and locations in his Province. Currently, he resides in Taranto, where the largest steel manufacturing complex in Europe is in operation, causing severe adverse impacts on the environment. He works on launching new paths on integral ecology with entrepreneurs and, above all, towards the birth of a center for integral ecology of the Mediterranean: "*Oikos*."

Br. Francesco took part in the newly born Franciscan Mediterranean Network to promote JPIC values and initiatives at local as well as international level. The Office is grateful for his acceptance of this task, and his willingness to serve the Order. We look forward to his further inspiring service in JPIC ministry.

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



# Presentation of a book about Integral Ecology

“Todo está conectado (Everything is Connected).” It is the title of the book by prof. Martín Cabajo Nuñez, OFM, presented on February 27 in the Aula Magna of the Alphonsian Academy. Prof. Jules Mimeault, C.Ss.R., Vice-Principal of the Academy, recognized that this title expresses not only a theme that is a recent trend but also a commitment that makes us think about ecological issues.

Prof. Mario Boies, C.Ss.R., moderator of the meeting, spoke of the joy of being online, a topic raised by this new book. Prof. Maurizio Faggioni, OFM, and Br. Jaime Campos, OFM, were the two speakers at the presentation. Br. Jaime showed the experience of a Facebook page that works on the web for the good of the whole network, that is, a social media that becomes a privileged place to reduce distances and encourage dialogue. There is a group of young people on the internet called JPIC-Media (Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation). According to the words of prof. Maurizio Faggioni, everyone in the group promotes “the life of the network and the network of life” on the internet.

**“The network is a mode of human activity...  
The starting point is the Franciscan perspective: communion and harmony, therefore, a holistic vision of reality.”**

Faggioni repeatedly emphasized that the book offers us the opportunity to reflect on two very different realities: the biosphere and the “mediasphere.” In other words, this book invites us to think about the two ways that constitute human existence. “The network,” Faggioni continued, “is a mode of human activity, a way of being with the other. The starting point is the Franciscan perspective: communion and harmony, therefore, a

holistic vision of reality.” In this sense, Faggioni continued, “Awareness becomes to take care of oneself and the relationship with others, of others and nature.” The book is the second in a trilogy, which began with *Sister Mother Earth* and ended with *St. Francis in the digital age*. The book is composed of three parts, which correspond to the method: “see, judge and act.” Each part is divided into two chapters, each quadripartite into sections (God, self, the other and nature).

It is an excellent Franciscan reading of the ecological theme in dialogue with the science of communication. In the end, prof. Jules Mimeault rightly said that “this book, rather than bringing only a trendy reality, helps us to think.” We conclude with an invitation to read this valuable work: *Everything is Connected — Integral Ecology and Communication in the Digital Age*.

Luiz Albertus Sleutjes



(Source: <http://www.alfonsiana.org/it/>)



# Inter-religious Dialogue in Croatia

## *800th Anniversary of the Meeting between St. Frances and the Sultan celebrated in Croatia*

The 800th Anniversary of the meeting between St. Francis and the Sultan Malek al-Kamel was celebrated in the capital of Croatia, Zagreb, and in Split, which is the second largest city. It was remembered and celebrated in Zagreb, 28 – 29 October and in Split, 24 – 29 November.

**Exhibition.** At a two-day program in Zagreb (28 – 29 October) there was an exhibition of 50 works of art. They were first presented at the Islam Centre in Zagreb, and afterwards at the Franciscan Friary at Kaptol, Zagreb. It is the same exhibition which was first exhibited at the Sacred Convent in Assisi 2019 and afterwards in several other countries. It includes artefacts from the 13th to 21st century, from several European countries, including the Holy Land and the USA, featuring famous artist from Gotto to Marko I. Rupnik. The original exhibition has been supplemented by reproductions of two frescos from a chapel at the Franciscan friary at Kaptol in Zagreb. It attracted a lot of interest. After three weeks in Zagreb, it was presented in Split from the 24th November to 14th of December.

**Round tables.** The first-round table, with the theme: From the Meeting of St. Frances and the Sultan to the Declaration of human brotherhood

(Pope Frances and the great Imam al Tayyb, Abu Dhabi, 2019), took place at the Islamic Centre in Zagreb. Three scholars participated: Mufti Aziz Hasanović; Historian Danijel Patafta, ofm; and Prof. of Religions at the University of Zagreb, Tomislav Kovač. They elaborated on the historical encounter of St. Francis and the Sultan, as well as the historical and modern importance of that event, drawing a parallel with the significance of the initiative by pope Frances on the Declaration of human brotherhood. Around a hundred and fifty people attentively participated at the talks. Along with representatives of all the relevant religious communities, the Apostolic Nuncio to the Republic of Croatia, Msgr. Georgio Lingua, also took part. The event at the Islamic Centre in Zagreb ended of the first day with a meal organised by the Muslim community.

The second-round table meeting on the theme of Contemporary Persecutions of Christians and Interreligious Dialogue was organized at the Franciscan friary Gospa od Zdravlja, in Split, on November 29th. The participants were – Mrs. Mariana Petir, former MP at the EU Parliament, Tomislav Kovač, Zagreb and Ante Vučković, ofm, Split. They highlighted the fact that most persecuted believers in today's world are Christians and that this should motivate fellow Christians in particular, to be more active in protecting the most vulnerable groups in society and encourage a more intensive interreligious dialogue.

**The Play “Temptations”.** Franciscan students from Sarajevo presented a drama written by a Muslim writer Dževad Karahasan – “Temptations of fra Anđeo Zvizdović”, both at the Islamic Centre in

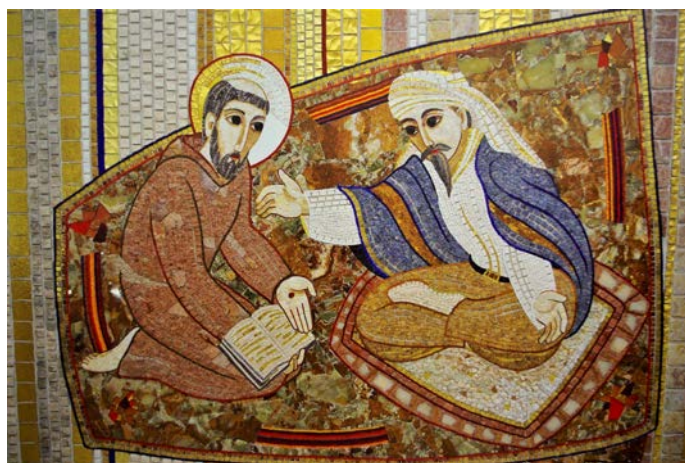


Zagreb, as well as in Split. The production was lauded for its very high level of proficiency. The drama evokes a historical event in Bosnia in 1463, namely, that the provincial of the Franciscan province of Bosnia, fra Anđeo Zvizdović, who was faced with a dilemma, as whether to encourage the people to flee before the Ottoman occupation or to look for ways to coexist. He then met with the great Sultan Muhammad II, who conquered, Bosnia, at Fojnica, in 1463. He acquired the Aghdnama (a document given by the emperor, which is now kept in the Franciscan Museum in Fojnica) in which the Sultan protects the rights of the Franciscans to be pastors to the Christian population. For this reason, over the centuries, Franciscans had been the only Catholic clergy and religious in Bosnia. It was also a pivotal decision for the survival of a Christian population in those areas for centuries. That somewhat controversial decision by the provincial Zvizdović in his time, and even today (due to consequences of the recent war between Muslims, Orthodox Serbs and Catholic Croats in Bosnia), is in a way a repetition and an actualisation of the meeting of St. Francis and the Sultan in 1219. This most likely helped the Franciscans in the Middle East to maintain custodial services in the Holy Land up until the present time.

***Interreligious prayer meeting.*** Since the whole celebration was carried out on the occasion of the annual interreligious dialogue meeting in the “Spirit of Assisi”, all the representatives of the different religions in the Republic of Croatia took part in this prayer for peace. It was celebrated at the Franciscan church at Kaptol in Zagreb, 29th Oct. The church was packed to capacity. At the end of the celebration participants were invited to look around the exhibition and to participate at the common meal, prepared by the local OFS at the Friary.

All the events were organised by the Franciscan Institute for the Culture of Peace, Split, Croatia, together with the local OFS of Zagreb, and were well covered by the national and other media.

**Br. Bože Vuleta, OFM**  
JPIC Animator,  
Province of the Most Holy Redeemer – Split



# 'Everything is connected' – A great weekend in Rome!

*Integral ecology was presented not as one option but the only option and path humanity must thread upon in order to have healthy political and economic systems.*

The weekend in Rome organised by the Conference of Friars Minor of Italy (COMPI) in the The Pontifical University 'Antonianum' was based on Pope Francis' encyclical 'Laudato Si', giving life to St Francis' views of beauty, fraternity with all of creation and Earth being our mother and sister. The weekend was full of input sessions and discussions on integral ecology where St Francis views were seen as solutions to today's challenges of environmental degradation, decrease in the quality of life, increase in poverty, increase in the refugee population and immigration through creating healthy human societies that promote beauty, cultural diversity, dignity and justice for all across generations.

The weekend was for youths who, in their own way, all are potential seeds that can make a difference and bring about positive change in their workplace, their home and their locality. The format of the weekend was partly theoretical and partly experiential in the form of visits to organisations that are helping the poor and support the environment. The weekend workshop challenged the participants' values and perspective for a shift in paradigm, a deep change in the way we live through

an increase in awareness of the interconnectedness of all.

One of the perspectives that was challenged was the anthropological. The way modern man has lived has given rise to an increase in individualism, self sufficiency, gender issues and disconnectedness from nature. The way education and modern culture has been developing created a gap between humanity and nature. By living the perspective that man is at the centre of creation, man's relationship with nature has been distorted and has put him in a position to control creation, which resulted in man misusing and destroying natural resources, and simplifying the relation with nature to that of consumerism and market goods.

Another challenge posed was a theological one. Apart from the destruction of the relation of man with nature, western modern man has also a distorted way of perceiving God. Our present ecological crisis will get worse if we do not reject

the axiom that nature has no reason for existence other than that to serve man. Therefore the perspective challenge consists of understanding that if we are to love one another, we are also to love and take care of what God created, since taking care of nature - our common home - is taking care of others. A question was also posed as to why protect

indigenous people and the Amazon in particular. Given that the Amazon supports global common life including the quality of air we all breathe and the amount of fresh water on our planet, then it is up to all of us to protect and support this region.

The indigenous people's culture respects the Amazon and nature in general, and given that modern man has a capitalist mindset where nature is an object of manipulation and is used to accumulate material wealth, mediation between the two cultures becomes important for understanding the need of returning to the right mindset and have humanity as





part of and not the centre of creation. This is the change in paradigm that modern man has to go through to be able to solve global issues. Unlike globalised, international companies that promote the 'colonialist way of creating economies' ('thinking globally and acting locally'), integral ecology challenges us to start 'thinking locally and acting globally'. In this new paradigm, local communities such as indigenous tribes in the Amazon whose lifestyle embraces the care of nature, can be respected and we can also learn from them to apply their knowledge and wisdom in order to address and act upon global issues.

Just like God created and is the father of everything, thus making us humans brothers and sisters with every other human and creature on earth, 'Madre terra' is the mother figure, just like Mary the mother of Jesus. She is a mother of all, and a representation of the importance of the feminine for nurturing and upholding humanity, an idea that has been in the past shunned out in the post modern and modern society.

The experiential part of the weekend seminar included visits to social organisations such as 'Emmaus', where environmental and social needs

are met by recycling unwanted material such as paintings, furniture and jewellery for reuse. A visit to 'Comunità Sant'Egidio' highlighted the fundamental importance of cultivating genuine friendship relationships with the excluded.

Through discussions and experiential learning in various social organisations, integral ecology was presented not as one option but the only option and path humanity must thread upon in order to have healthy political and economic systems supported by the right spiritual insight that integrated all cultures and created a balance between man, culture and the environment. The weekend workshop was an enriching experience on all levels, also making one realise that the beauty, joy and happiness that was shared in the group and the places visited are also a requirement for humanity to realise that the sacredness of life is in time, in the moment. A big thanks to the franciscan friars of Italy for inviting us over to this great initiative, for which we were also accompanied by Fr Loreto Zerafa OFM and Fr Mark Ciantar OFM.

**Sarah Faith Azzopardi**

Leander Duca

Malta



**'Croce e via al tramonto'**, by Giuseppe Siniscalchi (2014), exposed in the *Pinacoteca Museo Sant'Egidio*, Convento di San Pasquale of the Friars Minor of Taranto. The *'fronteversismo'* is an artistic, philosophical and cultural movement initiated by this lawyer and painter from the puglia region; it underlines the necessity to go beyond appearances and delve deeper in every field, in order to regain an integration with oneself, others and creation.



# Climate Movement of the Franciscans in Korea

## Inauguration of GCCM Korea

**“The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all” (LS 23).**

The JPIC Commission of the Province of the Holy Korean Martyrs took part in Global Catholic Climate Movement Korea (GCCM Korea). It helped the Movement to organize the mass in the Franciscan Education Center, Seoul, for the care for creation and the climate action along with the people of goodwill on September 5 and 21, 2019, which were followed by climate marches in the city center of Seoul. Msgr. Peter Woo-Il Kang, who presided the mass, officially proclaimed the present situation as the climate crisis at the mass. These events have awakened up the Christians in South Korea of their vocation to take immediate action on the climate crisis. As a result, three months later, two round table discussions followed, leading to the decision to inaugurate GCCM Korea on January 20, 2020.

GCCM is an international Catholic NGO that consists of more than 900 organizations and a million faithful Catholics, and that has been facilitating the participation of the Church in action for climate justice since 2015. In case of South Korea, there are more than thirty Catholic organizations, dioceses and three hundred Catholics that take part in GCCM Korea, and it's ever-expanding with other Catholic institutions in Korea. Its objectives are to,

1. Raise consciousness about the climate crisis, being firmly based on the Catholic Social Teachings and of the Encyclical *Laudato si'*,
2. Spread the movement of ecological conversion in collaboration with other national and international NGOs,
3. Work in prayer for climate refugees and indigenous people who have got affected by the climate crisis,
4. Raise prophetic voice to those who are publicly responsible for the crisis, such as government and corporations, for the employment of bold climate policies.

South Korea is one of the countries that are marked out as climate villains by Climate Action Tracker (CAT) in 2016, along with Saudi Arabia, Australia, and New Zealand. It means these states were the most irresponsible in CO2 emission and negligent in the efforts to reduce it. Moreover, Korea was rated as the 58th among 61 countries in the Climate Change Performance Index 2019.

It seems a bit too late for the Church in Korea to take concrete action for climate justice. But, the member organizations of GCCM Korea would instead look forward to this year with various programs to inspire the Catholic believers as well as the Korean society toward radical ecological conversion. The program includes climate action school, Cine-Talk round tables, ecological spirituality school, climate strikes, public fund-raising in solidarity for climate affected areas in Mongolia and Myanmar, and participation in COP26 Glasgow.

**Br. Aloysio Jong-Hwa Kim, OFM**

JPIC Animator, Province of the Holy Korean Martyrs – Seoul



# Prince says his prayers are for Holy Land peace

Before arriving in Bethlehem Prince Charles spoke at the World Holocaust Forum, which was held at the World Holocaust Remembrance Centre in Jerusalem.

He said, to quote: “The lessons of the Holocaust are searingly relevant to this day. 75 years after the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, hatred and intolerance still lurk in the human heart, still tell new lies, adopt new disguises, and still seek new victims.”

I was pleased when I read that Sky quoted officials representing the prince as saying he was trying to remain ‘neutral’ in the course of his trip – his first official visit to Israel and the Palestinian territories.

I was also in Jerusalem many years ago, when his father, Prince Philip, came to visit his mother’s tomb at the Russian Orthodox Church of St Mary Magdalene on the Mount of Olives. And, in fact, he referred to his grandmother, Princess Alice of Greece, who was posthumously honoured for protecting a Jewish family during the Nazi occupation of Greece.

The prince also met with Israeli President Reuven Rivlin at the Israeli presidential office in Jerusalem. I can say from the several occasions I have met the president, both at his home and this year he came to visit us at our monastery, he is a charming man. Sadly, shortly after his visit, his dear wife Nechama died, whom I also knew very well. She was very interested in art and knew about Franciscan art in great depth. I was able to provide her with a book we have produced on some of our artwork we have cared for over many centuries. We spoke about our plans for the Terra Sancta Museum. What a wonderful lady she truly was, may she rest in peace.

The prince’s visit to Bethlehem was very poignant. He visited the mosque in Manger Square. I was there to meet him alongside the Armenian, Greek

and Anglican Church representatives. It was also special seeing that we were altogether in the Week of Christian Unity. The Catholic scouts were out in full force with their drums and bagpipes and, despite the rain, it was a very joyful atmosphere.

We led him to the Basilica and when we arrived at the manger in the Basilica of the Nativity, the Custos led the Prince down to that very spot where Christ was born and where his mother, Mary, had laid him in the manger. Seeing as there were only a few of us present at that moment it was quiet and calm. He had space and time and was able to spend some tranquil moments in prayer. It was obvious he was visibly moved.

We then made our way to the Catholic Parish Church of the Nativity where the relic of the crib recently brought from Rome at the request of President Mahmud Abass was on display. His Royal Highness also met the other members of the fraternity.

After this we made our way to the Chapel of St George where he attended an unprecedented ecumenical service. This was, his official residence, Clarence House, tweeted, the ‘first time that the three Christian churches have collectively held a service to celebrate the contribution of Christian communities across the Holy Land



and wider Middle East’.

Finally, he gave a speech at a reception held in our Franciscan guest house, the Casa Nova for pilgrims. He was relaxed and so were the many people gathered there to meet him. He spoke with as many people as he could, and everyone was delighted with the occasion.

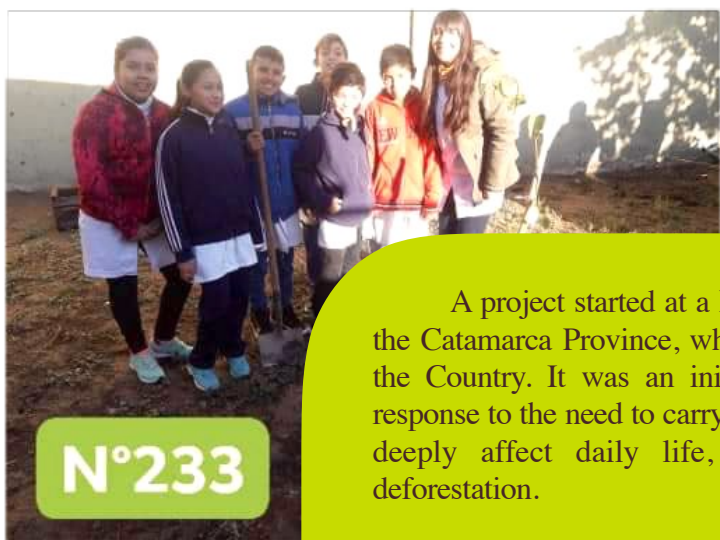
He concluded his time with us by saying: “And I can only join you, and all communities, in your prayers for a just and lasting peace. We must pursue this cause with faith and determination, striving to heal the wounds which have caused such pain.”

He then added: “It is my dearest wish that the future will bring freedom, justice and equality to all Palestinians, enabling you to thrive and to prosper.”

**Fr. John Luke Gregory OFM**  
Custody of the Holy Land – Rhodes

# 1,000 trees of native species Campaign

*Colegio Quintana - Catamarca - Argentina*



A project started at a Franciscan college in the capital of the Catamarca Province, which is located in the Northwest of the Country. It was an initiative of a group of teachers in response to the need to carry out concrete actions on issues that deeply affect daily life, such as global warming and deforestation.

The Franciscan spirit led to the design of a long-term project of tree planting to be carried out at schools at first. Its objective was to plant 1,000 trees of native species, contributing to the identity of the people and their origins.

Every time they carried out tree planting activities within the framework of the project, the events proved the reason why it is publicized so much through social networks to celebrate together the joy of planting one more tree. Currently, not only members of the educational community but those interested in the project have participated and made consultations and contributions, making the project go beyond the school.

By giving each planted tree proper number, one can easily identify each one of them and thus accompany it afterward. In some cases, the trees were given specific names. It was a gesture to honor those who are meaningful to the life of the participants in the project.



**Br. Franco Rodríguez, OFM**

Pastoral Coordinator, Franciscan Education Center Padre Ramón de la Quintana  
Catamarca – Argentina

( For other photos of the project: <https://bit.ly/2U2U4d3>)





## Calls for a law from the victims, El Salvador

A group of organizations representing the victims of the civil war again presented a proposal for a law, which the commission of the National Assembly had rejected in May 2019. This commission is in charge of making a proposal for a “reconciliation” law, which would be presented to the legislative branch. In December 2019, “The Bureau against Impunity in El Salvador, the Management Group for a Comprehensive Reparations Law and the Pro-Historical Memory Work Commission” made a statement. It alerted that the commission of the legislative branch sought to make a “quick” process in the elaboration of the law. And, what is worse, they did it without hearing the testimony of the victims. It means that they intentionally rejected to include the voice of the victims and their truth in the legislation process. What worries us is that this commission seeks to enact a law of “impunity,” not of “reconciliation” from the victims. We were concerned that, in January 2020, the Legislative Assembly would be sought to approve such an “impunity” law.



The Franciscan JPIC team has been accompanying human rights organizations. These days, we are careful that a law that favors the perpetrators is not abruptly approved before February 28, 2020, with an excuse that the term given by the Constitutional Chamber to the Legislative Assembly is for finalization. The voice of the victims was intentionally not listened to throughout this process. Moreover, they were reluctant to resume the proposed law made by human rights organizations. It offers an act of reconciliation, which includes truth, justice, compensation of the damages, and security of non-repetition.

In this fight for truth and justice, the JPIC commission is united to the roaring demand from the victims for righteous legislation, which leads to paths of peace, where revenge is not sought. Still, that truth, reconciliation, and justice embodied in the law allow us to rebuild this society from the care and defense of the most fragile and affected by the same political, economic and military system of the country. Besides, the law could contribute to the truth to be recognized by future generations by keeping alive the historical memory of the victims.

**Br. René Arturo Flores, OFM**  
JPIC Team, Our Lady of Guadalupe Province  
El Salvador

# JPIC Commission Meeting of the *Santa María de Guadalupe* Conference



As Franciscans, we are called to read the signs of the times in continuous contemplation and action for the values of the Kingdom, i.e., Justice and Peace.

In response to the constant reflection of our reality and the Jerusalem Statement of the JPIC International Council 2019, the brothers of the JPIC Commission of the Santa María de Guadalupe Conference have gathered together for a meeting on February 24 and 25 in Acámbaro Guanajuato, Mexico. The members of the Commission worked together to respond to the challenges that the Statement invites them to create action plans for Entities and the Conference. They also had a fraternal meeting with the president of the Conference, Br. Flavio Chávez García, OFM.

The attendees were the JPIC animators of the *Santo Evangelio* Province, the San Pedro y San Pablo Province, the San Francisco y Santiago Province, the San Junípero Serra Province and the Custos of the *Nuestra Señora de la Esperanza* Custody, Br. José Santos Pérez Castillo, OFM. The JPIC animators of Central America and the animator of the *San Felipe de Jesús* Province joined by online to elaborate the action plan of the JPIC Commission of the Conference and to be present at the meeting with the President of the Conference.

Br. Juan Antonio Orozco Alvarado, OFM, JPIC Coordinator of the Conference, encouraged the brothers to keep in mind that JPIC is not an isolated Commission in which we should fill out work schedules, planning, and events. The brothers might feel tempted to make a plan and not execute what was planned. JPIC is the Franciscan social doctrine, the way to live out the values of the Kingdom with the impetus of our father, St. Francis. The essential parts of the JPIC Animation Guidelines and the Jerusalem Statement are presented to contextualize the meeting and project us to concrete actions, such as the Conference Action Plan.

Br. Flavio Chávez motivated the brothers, indicating that this Commission is the face of the Friars Minor, and we must fight to show it amid chaos in the society that continually confronts us. Again, he reminded the JPIC Commission of the important task entrusted to it, namely, Franciscan Network on Migration. The brothers know well of the situation of our region and are called to be instruments of peace and not to remain indifferent to these facts.

In response to this mission and the Jerusalem Statement, the results of this JPIC Commission meeting were:

1. Migration Crisis: Franciscan Network on Migration. Put effort in the projects of the Franciscan Network on Migration as active participants.
2. Climate Crisis: Celebrate Season of Creation (September 1 – October 4). An initiative of a Youth JPIC Gathering on the Conference level will be presented to the Provincials on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the presence of the Order in America. The objective is to renew our prophetic presence through ecological conversion.
3. Socio-Environmental crisis: Workshop on “Mining: Reality and Consequences.”
4. Crisis of Violence: Participatory workshop on “Violence.”

There were moments of reflection, fraternal coexistence, and prayer. The participants celebrated the Eucharist “for justice and peace,” wishing peace and good to all the people.

They concluded the meeting with gratitude and were sure that the road traveled isn’t much, but convinced that they need to be instruments of peace and justice, resonating in them the words of the Seraphic Father Francis: “Let us begin to do doo, for as yet we have done little.”

**Br. Juan Antonio Orozco Alvarado, OFM**

JPIC Coordinator of the Santa María de Guadalupe Conference  
México



# International days – April to June, 2020

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

## Agenda

**May 21**  
**May 25 – 29**

Webinar in English on migration  
Community retreat of the General Curia

**June 12**

Webinar in English on 'Eco-Pastoral'  
project in Indonesia



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