

# CONTACT

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



## Urgent appeal to the UN and The International Community for the situation in Myanmar

Our Franciscans in Myanmar have witnessed firsthand the brutality of the security forces and the insecurity this has created. Reports on the ground, and the report of your Special Rapporteur, Mr. Thomas H. Andrews (March 11, 2021) confirm that coordinated violence continues to escalate on a daily basis resulting in the deaths of at least 70 civilians, arbitrary detentions of thousands of those engaged in peaceful protests.

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### ECOLOGY

Peru - Mexico- Chile  
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### MIGRATION

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Myanmar - South Korea



Volunteering in  
service of  
migrants and  
refugees



Sacred People,  
Sacred Earth



Towards the  
Laudato Si'  
Action Platform

# He made of them a way of life.

With joy, I present to you the latest edition of the “Contact” Bulletin, a digital medium that allows us to communicate, be informed and educated about the values of justice, peace, and care for creation. We report on the various activities carried out, seeking to transform our way of life towards a more respectful, supportive and fraternal way of being.

None of us has been untouched by the pandemic, especially its consequences, which are becoming more and more evident. During the last few months, we have witnessed the pain, helplessness, and distress of many brothers and sisters; we have been forced to change our plans and rethink our acting and organising. This has also been experienced by those who work for the promotion and living out of JPIC values. Being attentive to reality has enabled many to respond, locally where possible, to the urgent challenges presented by the health crisis. At the same time, to reflect more deeply on the multiple causes that have contributed to the rapid spread of the pandemic and how it has hit hardest and most lethally the world’s most impoverished.

This edition of “Contact” is a few months late, as we have had changes in our JPIC Office at the General Curia, which has prevented us from keeping up with the usual pace of work. This is understandable, as we are all living in a constant situation of change. I would like to share with you that our brother Rufino Lim, OFM, has left the JPIC Office after almost five years of service and has returned to his native country, South Korea, to assume the responsibility of Vicar Provincial. I thank him for all his dedication, discipline and commitment during the time we worked together. I take this opportunity to welcome Br Angel Cortez, OFM, who has taken over “online”, the place left by Rufino.

In the following pages of “Contact”, we share with you the news that has reached us in recent months: actions, declarations, formative material and projects that are being born following discernment and, above all, from listening to the daily events that constantly invite us to transform our own lives.

**Saint Francis “heard the voice of God, he heard the voice of the poor, he heard the voice of the infirm and he heard the voice of nature. He made of them a way of life. My desire is that the seed that Saint Francis planted may grow in the hearts of many.” (FT 48).**

**Br Jaime Campos F., OFM**  
JPIC Office - Rome





## Perú, Ecological Complex of St. Francis of Assisi

### *Achievement of the private mixed Franciscan college of Santa Clara*

**The Private Mixed College of Santa Clara is an educational establishment that is very aware of being part of the change needed to face the present environmental problem. For this reason it is working on the project called “The Ecological Complex of Saint Francis of Assisi”.**

This project is a dream we have: to be able to motivate love, care and respect for our common home in the children and young people of our educational community. And thus benefit the opportunities and life prospects of not only our own institution but also of the whole population of the Arequipa-Perú Region.

In addition, to strengthen the promotion of an ecological culture through the practice of new habits, activities and the formation of values in the members of the community. These are divided into teams, brigades and mini-companies to form leaders with a view to concrete actions: developing, experiencing and practicing a harmonious relation between humankind, nature and their Creator. They are guided by Franciscan values which are rooted in love of neighbour and respect for the environment so as to reach God.

In the year 2019 “The Ecological Complex of St. Francis of Assisi” took part in the competition of good environmental practice and obtained the “**RECOGNITION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT**” award. Because of the pandemic it was not possible to make the award in March 2020. Recently we received this award which was the only one to be awarded at a national level. The college and Franciscan family are proud of this achievement and are committed to continuing this project of caring for our common home and of recovering the green areas.

**Prof. Humberto Lozano Noa**





# The Franciscan Order in Chile takes part in the World Day of Global Climate Action

At 11 o'clock last March 11, under the slogan "Sacred People, Sacred Earth", the Franciscans rang their bells to tell the inhabitants of our planet that the climate crisis is reaching its peak and that citizens must be aware of its serious consequences. Thus, the Baha'í temple, the Lutheran Church in Chile (Santiago, Valparaíso, Valdivia, Osorno, and Puerto Montt), many parishes in the country, the Sefaradi Synagogue as well as other communities, joined us to raise awareness among the population.

Brother Máximo Cavieres, JPIC Head, pointed out that the participation and the call to raise awareness about the serious climate situation is "without a doubt important, because it is part of our Franciscan spirituality to care for creation, and also, in a significant way, to be able to do it together with the other spiritualities and religions in the style of Saint Francis".

He added: "As Franciscans, we can contribute by motivating reflection, awareness and, above all, putting into practice those attitudes and gestures that help reduce the effect we have caused in the destruction of our climate and our Earth".

Arianne van Andel, Coordinator of AIEC (Interreligious and Spiritual Alliance for the Climate), added that "we have a motto that says destroying the planet goes against my faith and that is what we want to say today. We all need each other, because we are all part of the same humanity, and we must all come out of this crisis." In addition, she specified that the meeting sought to appeal to the governments to make a u-turn and change their way of working on this issue.

The person in charge of the Program for the Environment, Risk Management and Emergencies

(MAGRE Program), of Caritas Chile, Catherine Mela, highlighted that "today we are summoned by the urgency to act in the face of the climate emergency, since the projections made decades ago on climate change have come true ahead of schedule, and on an alarming scale. In recent times we have witnessed how the weather conditions which are the result of climate change, are seriously affecting the most vulnerable population".

Source: Franciscanos Chile

## United State

Two postulants, Nolin Ainsworth of Sacred Heart Province and Domingo Martinez of Holy Name Province, joined approximately 40 people on the National Mall in Washington, DC to sound the alarm for climate change. The leaders of the local movement of GreenFaith read aloud the demands of the global faith-based climate; the group then sounded the alarm with bells, chimes, gong bowls and other noise-makers. Nolin and Domingo volunteer with the Franciscan Action Network (FAN), and participated in the global event as part of their ministry with FAN.



# Urgent appeal to the UN and The International Community for the situation in Myanmar

**His Excellency Mr. António Guterres**  
Secretary General  
United Nations Headquarters  
New York, NY 10017  
United States

Rome, March 12, 2021

Dear Secretary General Guterres,

In the words of St. Francis of Assisi, May the Lord give you peace!

I write to you today in my capacity as the Minister General and Servant of the Order of Friars Minor (Franciscans), some 12,500 Catholic religious brothers and priests present and working in 116 countries, to express deep sadness and grave concern with the ongoing repression of millions of citizens in Myanmar following a military coup.

Our Franciscans in Myanmar have witnessed firsthand the brutality of the security forces and the insecurity this has created. Reports on the ground, and the report of your Special Rapporteur, Mr. Thomas H. Andrews (March 11, 2021) confirm that coordinated violence continues to escalate on a daily basis resulting in the deaths of at least 70 civilians, arbitrary detentions of thousands of those engaged in peaceful protests, destruction of legal protections, severe restrictions on access to internet and communications, and the subversion of the will of the people of Myanmar expressed in the November 2020 elections.

I wish to thank you for the actions that your office has taken to call attention to the situation in Myanmar, especially the work of your Special Envoy to the country. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that now is the time for the international community to act in a united, decisive manner to protect against further loss of life, destruction of property, and to ensure the restoration of the democratically elected government of Myanmar without delay. This should include requiring that the military junta immediately desist from using excessive force against the people of Myanmar, the release of those who are illegally detained, restoration of protections guaranteed by law, including the right to peacefully protest.

Our Franciscan men who are living and working in Myanmar have asked me to intercede for the people of Myanmar. I include in this mailing a letter they have asked me to forward to you.

May the people of Myanmar once again experience a return to democracy, and may the current crisis find a peaceful and lasting resolution.

Sincerely yours,

**Br. Michael A. Perry, OFM**  
Minister General and Servant



# OFM-EAC Solidarity Statement on Myanmar Political Crisis



*I will strengthen you; I will help you,  
I will uphold you with my victorious  
right hand. (Is 41, 10)*

The East Asia Conference Ministers and the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Office of the Order of Friars Minor follows with concern and great sadness over the events that followed the coup d'état which began on the morning of 1 February 2021, when democratically elected members of Myanmar's ruling party, the National League for Democracy, were deposed by the Tatmadaw—Myanmar's military.

We join the Myanmar people in their struggle for self-determination under a duly elected government. We are united with them in demanding for a peaceful resolution to the military take-over. We are with them in calling for the release of the democratically elected officials of government, of activists, and of the youth. We stand with them in their bid to defend human dignity and human rights.

The images and videos that have been successfully transmitted out of Myanmar portrays the suffering of a people who have long hoped and struggled for co-existence under a democratic rule. We are edified by the witnessing of the Myanmar people for truth and justice. We are humbled by their exercise of charity towards their brethren. We commiserate with their pain, and, together with the many Christians in Myanmar – priests, missionaries, and laypeople – we join them in praying that this period of darkness hovering over their land will soon end.

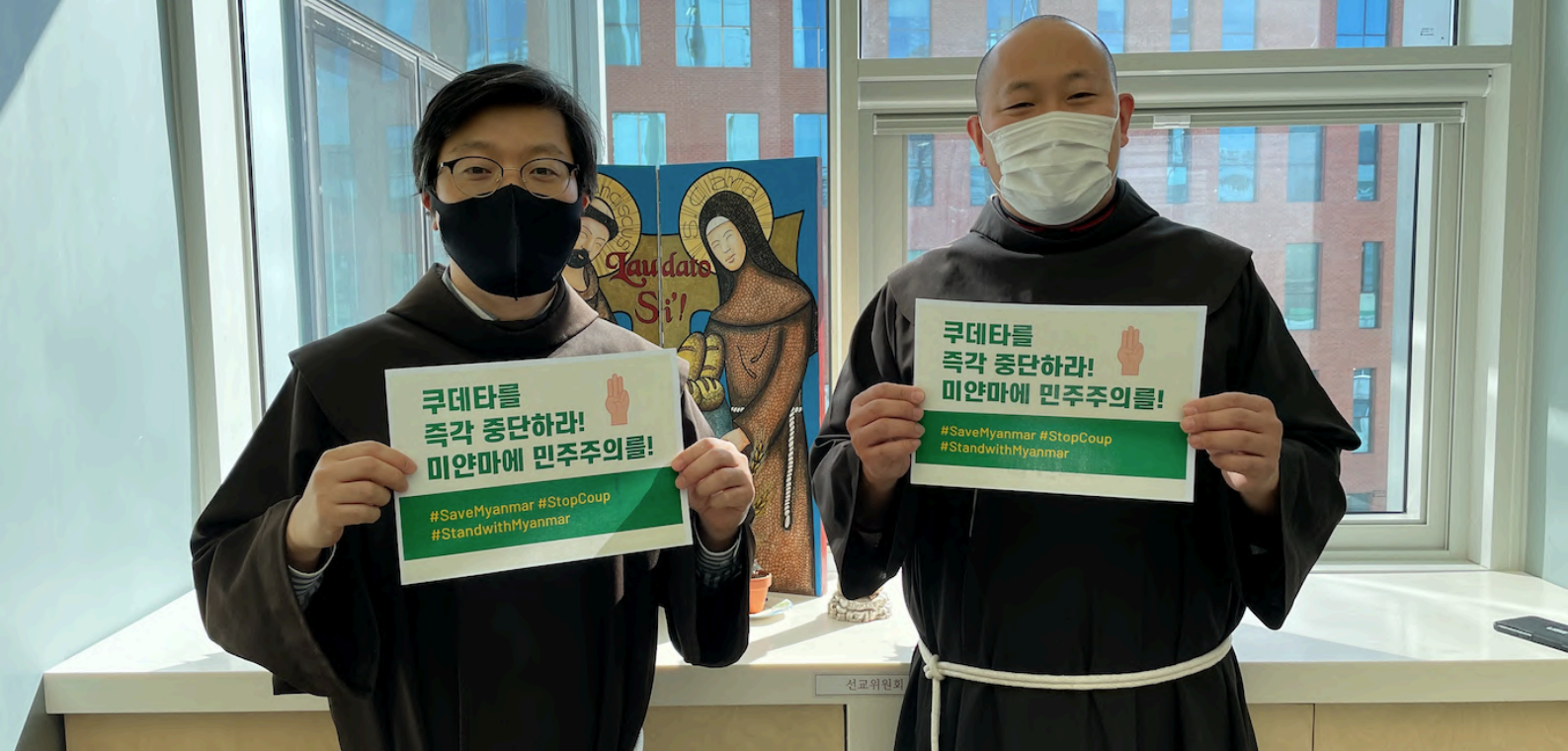
We implore the Tatmadaw: Behold your sisters and brothers. Behold the long-suffering Myanmar, victims of colonial greed, of oppression, of anger. Let us stop our hunger for blood. Let us desist from letting hatred reign in our hearts. Let us call upon the Lord, who promised to be near his people, so that justice and peace may reign in Myanmar, and the long overdue of reconciliation may begin.

In this process, may the prayer of the Holy Father Pope Francis, who himself was a pilgrim in your land, inspire all of us: “Lord, Father of our human family, move us to create healthier societies and a more dignified world, a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war.” (cf. Fratelli Tutti, 287).

May the God of Peace rest in all our hearts, and dwell in it deeply.



**ORDER OF FRIARS MINOR**  
East Asian Conference Ministers  
Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation Office



## Save Myanmar, Stop Coup Stand with Myanmar

The military declared a state of emergency to protect their power, making an excuse that the general election held in November last year was a fraudulent election) Myanmar's military has seized power after detaining Aung San Suu Kyi, other democratically elected leaders, and also civil society leaders, and blocked state broadcasting and communications. Tanks appeared on the streets of the capital city of Naepido and Yangon, and even martial law was declared. The military declared that it would rule for one year until the country stabilizes.

Myanmar's democracy, which has been regained hard after half a century of military dictatorship, is faltering again. Myanmar's citizens chose in the general election was not the military rule by force, but the progress of the civil government and democracy. Citizens opposing the coup began to resist. They protest by sounding a car horn and tapping a pot, holding three fingers high which symbolize resistance and sharing. Workers, students, and even civil servants came out to the streets, shouting that the military coup is unacceptable. We are worried that the bloodshed in 1988 and 2007 will recur.

The history of democracy in Korea is similar to that of Myanmar. The military regime, which

began in the 1960s, killed numerous citizens and pursued only their own self-interest. In the civil society of Korea, which is aware of the pain of the citizens of Myanmar, the campaign was carried out in prayer for the end of the violence of the military coup and the beginning of justice and peace.

The JPIC Commission of the Korean OFM Province and 17 civil society organizations were running a campaign to stop the coup in Myanmar. Many Koreans are joining the campaign by taking a picture of themselves with a sign says "Stop the coup immediately" or as they wish to say, and posting the picture on the campaign websight. The voice of solidarity from Korean citizens will be gathered and delivered to the media and to the citizens of Myanmar.

[▶ bit.ly/savemyanmar\\_kr](https://bit.ly/savemyanmar_kr)

[▶ #SaveMyanmar](https://twitter.com/SaveMyanmar)

**Fr. Louis Kim, OFM**  
South Korea





## Young Friars Focus on Laudato Si'

*The General Secretariat for Formation and Studies and the JPIC General Office jointly organized the online conference: The Global OFM – Laudato Si'. The meeting was planned to be an alternative offering for all the friars in initial formation of the Order during the time of the pandemic. Two online meetings were held in order to cover all the regions and time zones where the Order is present.*

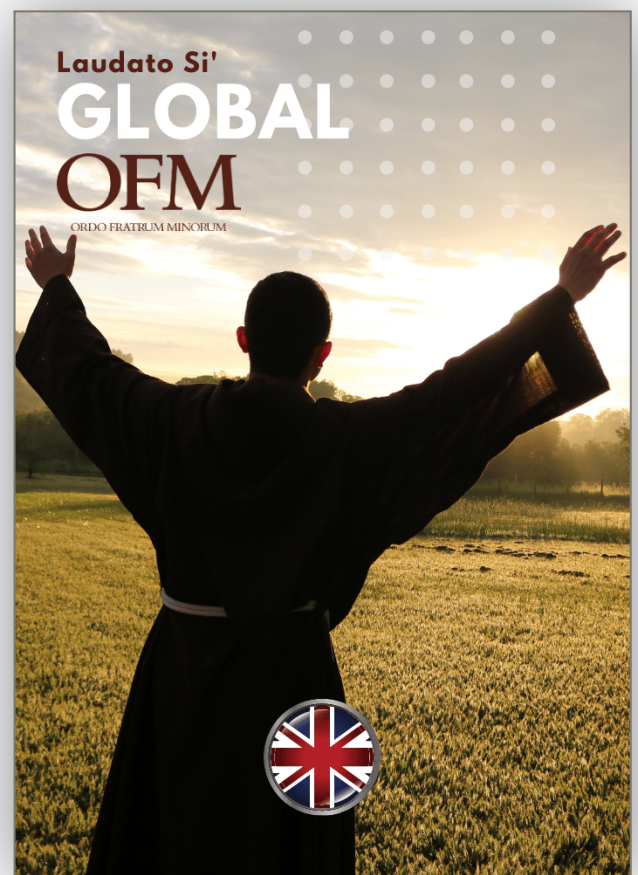
The goal was to deepen the challenge that Pope Francis has made to all Christians, but especially to us Franciscans, with his encyclical Laudato si'. We thought that it could be a further way to deepen the focus in the initial formation program on the themes of justice, peace and integrity of creation, as the Ratio formationis of the Order envisions.

In the words of Fr. Michael Perry “Our meeting today is also a sign of the significant growth that the Order has made since the renewal of our specific charism after the Second Vatican Council. As you will recall, in article two of the General

Constitutions, we discover the full scope of an integrated vision of the life and mission proposed to us by St. Francis. I quote this article:

“The friars, as followers of St. Francis, are bound to lead a radically evangelical life, namely: to live in a spirit of prayer and devotion and fraternal fellowship; they are to offer a witness of penance and minority; and, in charity towards all mankind, they are to announce the Gospel throughout the whole world and to preach reconciliation, peace and justice by their deeds; and to show respect for creation.”

All the talks given at the Global OFM – Laudato Si' conference have been compiled in PDF and available to the brothers and the Franciscan family for download [HERE](#)





# The responsibility of business on human rights: Franciscan action at the United Nations from the perspective of Laudato si'

*Franciscans from the Philippines, Indonesia, Brazil, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guatemala, South Korea, Solomon Islands, Australia, South Africa and in several other countries have been witnessing the impact of extractive activities, in particular mining, on the environment and human rights. The current model of extractivism is devastating and destroying our common home.*

As a Franciscan voice at the United Nations (UN), Franciscans International (FI) has worked to promote respect for human rights in all business operations, in particular in the extractive sector. Working closely with Franciscans working in grassroots communities, together we are calling for greater accountability for corporate abuses, including access to justice for victims.

Franciscans International believes that the 2015 Papal Encyclical Laudato Si' has provided guidance in bringing the voice of the affected communities to the attention of the international community, in particular the UN.

As Franciscans, today, more than ever, we have the opportunity to think about a possible new world. In this context, we believe that the teachings of the Encyclical Laudato Si' can offer a more human and fraternal framework for thinking about an integral and more just development for the whole human race.



**“The responsibility of businesses on human rights”**

*Franciscan action at the United Nations*

*from the perspective of Laudato si’*

 **Franciscans International**  
A voice at the United Nations

 **Laudato si’**  
REVOLUTION



**Speakers:** • Angel Cortez, OFM • Benedict Ayodi, OFMCap • Rodrigo Péret, OFM  
• Moema Miranda, OFS • Sheila Kinsey, FCJM • Markus Heinze, FI • Budi Tjahjono, FI

Thank You  
Br. Rufino  
and  
Welcome  
Br. Angel!

THE LORD BLESS YOU  
AND KEEP YOU;  
THE LORD MAKE HIS  
FACE SHINE UPON YOU,  
AND GIVE YOU PEACE.



him for his four years of hard work and efficiency in bringing the JPIC mission and spirit alive. Thank you and may the Lord bless you Br. Rufino!

With the departure of Br. Rufino in the office. The minister general, Br. Michael Perry, OFM and the general definitory nominated Br. Angelito Andig Cortez, OFM of the Province of San Pedro Bautista in the Philippines to serve as the Vice-Director of the JPIC Office in the general curia. The said nomination was made during their session last December 15, 2020.

## Thank you Br. Rufino... Welcome Br. Angel!

It is with great joy to inform you that our Br. Rufino Lim, OFM, the current Assistant in the JPIC office in the General Curia was elected Vicar Provincial of the Province of the Korean Martyrs last October 6, 2020 at the Jeongdong Monastery in South Korea. He was elected with Br. Kim Sang-wook, OFM as Minister Provincial; Br. Moses Kim Il-deuk, OFM; Br. Andrea Hwang Ji-won, OFM; Br. Basilio Heo Jung-min, OFM and Br. Peter Kim Hyun-seok, OFM as provincial definitors.

Br. Rufino worked in the JPIC office in many capacities, talents and skills. He begun working in the office last April 3, 2016, as he also participated in the annual JPIC course at the Antonianum. Br. Rufino was working as JPIC animator in Korea. He got involved not only in JPIC animation but also in many issues such as anti-military base movement, peace march, anti-nuclear power plant movement, national park preserving movement, climate change (participating in COP21 Paris), and working in solidarity with the victims of Sewol ferry disaster which happened in 2014. As he assumes his new ministry as Vicar Provincial of his province he will be leaving the office with all the wonderful works that he contributed. The office would like to thank

Br. Angel is currently a member of the JPIC Animation Committee of the order. He is also the JPIC animator of their province and the OFM East Asia Conference. He is the chairperson of the Franciscan Solidarity Movement for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. He serves as the Executive Secretary and National JPIC Coordinator of the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines. He is very active in the Ecology, Laudato Si and Climate Change advocacy as he leads the Ecological Justice Interfaith Movement and Fellowship for the Care for Creation Association. He works closely with the Franciscan International in Geneva collaborating for Human Rights lobby work in Human Rights situation in the Philippines during the 42nd, 43rd and 44th United Nations Human Rights Council.

The office would like to thank the Province of San Pedro Bautista headed by Br. Cielito Almazan, OFM and his definitory for allowing Br. Angel to work for the office. Good luck and God bless you Br. Angel as you embark another chapter of your life as a friar minor.

The Lord indeed gave us brothers... Thank you Br. Rufino and welcome Br. Angel!





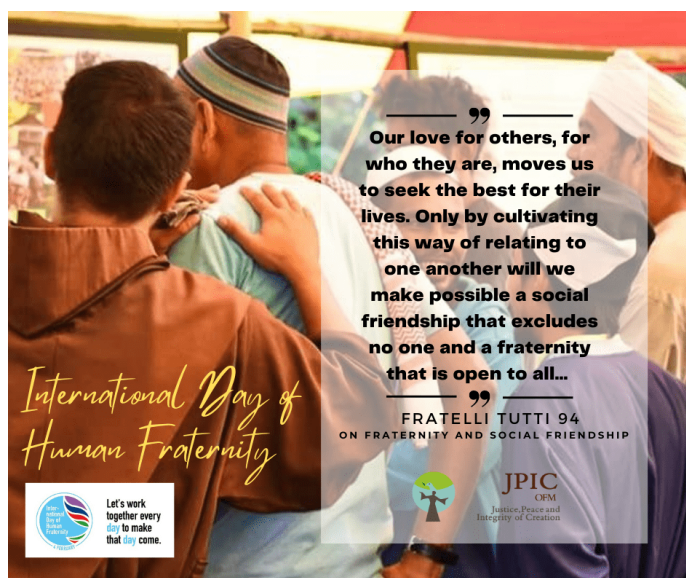
## February 4th: The International Day of Human Fraternity!

The Order of Friars Minor is one with the entire world and with the Holy Father in celebrating the International Day of Human Fraternity.

Pope Francis has encouraged everybody to join in the celebration of International Human Fraternity Day under the leadership of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. In the January edition of the Pope's Video, "At the service of human fraternity," the Holy Father highlights the importance of focusing on what is essential to the faith of all faiths: worship of God and love of neighbour. "Fraternity leads us to open ourselves to the Father of all and to see in the other a brother, a sister, to share life, or to support one another, to love, to know...

As Franciscans we are challenged to imbibe the teachings of the encyclical Fratelli tutti, which was inspired by the very words of our Seraphic Father Francis of Assisi: a dedication to fraternity and social friendship.

*Virtual meeting for the International Day of Human Fraternity*





## Towards the Laudato Si' Action Platform

Celebrating the fifth anniversary of the Laudato Si' Encyclical (24 May 2020), Pope Francis declared a special anniversary year, and the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development presented the proposed “Laudato Si' Action Platform”. They invited various institutions to get going and start a seven-year journey towards full sustainability. This multi-year initiative aims to make communities around the world fully sustainable in the spirit of Laudato Si's integral ecology.

As Franciscans, we have joined this great initiative through the JPIC Office. Let us recall that on the fifth anniversary of the Encyclical, the JPIC offices of the Order and the Franciscan Family joined the “Laudato Si' Revolution” campaign by carrying out various national, regional and international initiatives. Taking advantage of this momentum of the spirit, we wish to take part in the “Laudato Si' Action Platform”.

During these last few weeks, the JPIC Office has held some engagement and collaboration meetings with the “Care of Creation” section coordinated by Fr Joshtrom Isaac Kureethadam, SDB. In these online meetings, we have been able to share the various initiatives that the Order has been developing in the light of the Encyclical and the Plenary Council of the Order. At the same time, they

have shared with us and informed us how the process of the “Laudato Si' Action Platform” is developing. This has allowed us to join the “Religious Orders Laudato Si'” working team, and we have been invited to be part of the steering committee of the 7-year Laudato Si' platform.

Also, as a way of collaborating and being part of the “Laudato Si' Action Platform”, the JPIC Office has started to work on some proposals to offer to the whole Order and the Franciscan Family during Laudato Si' week on the sixth anniversary of the Encyclical. These proposals complement the campaign begun last year, as it is a new impulse to the work that several Entities in the Order have already started. We look to the future, with hope, to the “Laudato Si' Revolution: Integral Ecology in Action”.





# Laudato Si': from celebration to action

*The project "Laudato Si': from celebration to action" is an initiative by the Museum for the United Nations - UN Live, in partnership with the **Colombian Episcopal Conference** (CEC) and the **Franciscan General Office for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation** (JPIC-OFM). This initiative is inspired by the leadership of Pope Francis, drawing from his message of integral ecology and his platform for the implementation of the Laudato Si' Goals. Our purpose is to empower ecological spirituality as well as participation and action at the individual and community levels.*



We are hoping to meet communities of the Catholic faith in their most sacred celebration: Mass. We have invited Colombian musicians and producers to compose the Laudato Si' Mass, made up of eleven liturgical songs to be performed during the celebration of the Eucharist. In addition, an expert in environmental science will design a series of actions targeted towards social and environmental care, driven by the aim to engage followers of this from Mass with its mission, beyond the Mass itself. The mission is to take care of the Creation.

The Museum for the United Nations – UN Live, the CEC and the JPIC-OFM Office hope to reach all six thousand parishes and places of worship in Colombia on the eve of the Day of St. Francis of Assisi, on October 3. The goal is to spread the



Laudato Si' Mass throughout the country and inspire Catholic communities to take concrete actions in the mission of care for Creation. If other organisations in Colombia or throughout the world want to join this celebration, we will go above and beyond this goal. Please do not hesitate to take part.

We hope that this project in Colombia will serve as a pilot to showcase and replicate the Mass in other countries, to share with diverse religious communities, as well as to present to Pope Francis at the Vatican. We hope to find many to join us to move this project forward – **all are welcome!**

**Photo:** Catolítico , Cathopico



## Council for Inclusive Capitalism with the Vatican

*On 8 December 2020, an event took place that was of great significance in the Catholic Church, although little publicised. Pope Francis signed an agreement with large multinational capitalist corporations to take concrete actions towards a more humane and inclusive capitalism. (1)*

These large multinationals, which have a capital of more than 1 trillion dollars and 200 million employees in 163 countries, have formed the "Council for Inclusive Capitalism with the Vatican". The Council is chaired by Lynn Forester de Rothschild, which takes decisions from the group of 27 "Guardians of Inclusive Capitalism", which will meet annually with the Vatican. (2)

Capitalism is that economic system driven by financial profit, always thirsting for more money. It claims that the confrontation of different self-interests achieves equilibrium in the market. It would be difficult to find a chapter in a book on capitalist economics devoted to selfless action for the common good, human rights, ecology and biodiversity, respect for cultures, promoting democracy, the preservation of peace and justice, critical education for the population, or fraternity.

Let us consider some events in history, not too far back, about how large entities governed by capitalism operate: Afghanistan has been bombed for 20 years. Iraq destroyed. Syria destroyed, Libya destroyed, Yemen turned into pure famine: All of them linked to the goal of appropriating the resources of others, and with big arms companies making fortunes by selling bombs, missiles and planes, without any interest in stopping conflicts, and also encouraging governments to arm themselves and provoke more conflicts. The "crisis-scam" of 2008 was triggered by the speculative and fraudulent greed of big banks and corporations, with the collusion of crony governments. Ordinary citizens were forced to pay the price. After the declaration of the Covid pandemic, vaccines have been the object of speculation and shrewd gambles. Those who have paid the most, in the rich countries have been able to save their necks, at the expense of the population of developing nations, left to their fate. Forests, mines, seas and the environment are destroyed under the law of profit.

According to the Council itself, this alliance shows the urgency of articulating moral and commercial imperatives to reform capitalism and transform it into a powerful force for the good of humanity.

How can this system coexist with the Gospel? What compromises can the Catholic Church make with the wealthiest 1% of the world's population, which hoards more than half of the resources of the entire Earth, and which takes advantage of disasters and misfortunes to pile up more money, increasing, even more, the gap between rich and poor?

After the Second World War, capitalism, fearing the spread of communism in Western Europe, gave up some of its profits so that the



population would turn away from socialist ideas and be content to live comfortably (the welfare state). When the socialist states fell, capitalism couldn't wait to proclaim the end of the story. In the absence of an adversary, it cut public services, took away jobs and benefits, cancelled collective bargaining agreements, made jobs precarious, privatised services and liberalised laws favouring speculators, thus exponentially increasing its profits and spreading misery and exploitation throughout the world.

In the Gospels, Jesus does not seem to have made many agreements with the powerful of his time - secular or religious - and he contrasted Yahweh with the money-god like day and night.

The Brazilian Articulation for the Economy of Francis and Clare (Churches and Mining Network) has published a text with this title: "Dry water, clean coal, hot ice, fraternal Nazism, inclusive capitalism...". (3)

Throughout history, we have seen the results of the hierarchical Church's links with the powerful, dictators and anti-democratic governments. Can it be expected that the present agreement will result in a positive step for the common good of humanity, beyond granting respectability and washing the face of the capitalist monster?

**Fr. Felix Askasibar OFM**

#### Notes:

1. <https://www.memo.com.ar/economia/papa-francisco-grandes-empresas-multinacionales/>

Pope's address to the Council for Inclusive Capitalism 11 November 2019: [http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2019/november/documents/papa-francesco\\_20191111\\_consiglio-capitalismo-inclusivo.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2019/november/documents/papa-francesco_20191111_consiglio-capitalismo-inclusivo.html)

2. website: <https://www.inclusivecapitalism.com/>

Council of Guardians: <https://www.inclusivecapitalism.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Guardian-Quotes-FINAL.pdf>

<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/se-lanza-el-dia-de-hoy-el-consejo-para-un-capitalismo-inclusivo-con-el-vaticano-una-nueva-alianza-de-lideres-empresariales-del-mundo-832775760.html>

3. <https://iglesiasymineria.org/2020/12/28/agua-seca-carbon-limpio-hielo-caliente-nazismo-fraterno-capitalismo-inclusivo/>



## Volunteering in service of migrants and refugees

The Franciscan Network on Migration (RFM) extends a warm invitation to all those who are interested in serving at migrant and refugee shelters associated with our network in Guatemala, Mexico and the United States.

On Christmas Eve, we launched our "Volunteer Campaign 2021." The application process is open to all people of legal age who speak Spanish at an intermediate level. Applicants should be open to giving their time and have the ability to stay at one of our seven houses. All of our shelters are in need of support and collaboration in order to continue the service they provide daily to migrants and refugees.

Volunteering is an unforgettable and life-changing experience. We are hoping that lay people, men and women religious, priests, students, and workers from different countries will take up this challenge that the present times have laid before us.

The houses and teams of Franciscan Network on Migration need help and volunteers. We ask that you will help us spread the word about this opportunity.

For more information about the current placements and requirements of volunteer service, we invite you to visit our website: <https://redfranciscana.org/voluntariado/>. Here you will find our application form and a pdf that you can download and share. Once you fill out the form, a representative from your preferred house will contact you

# Tearing Down the Walls Challenging myths about migration from a human rights perspective

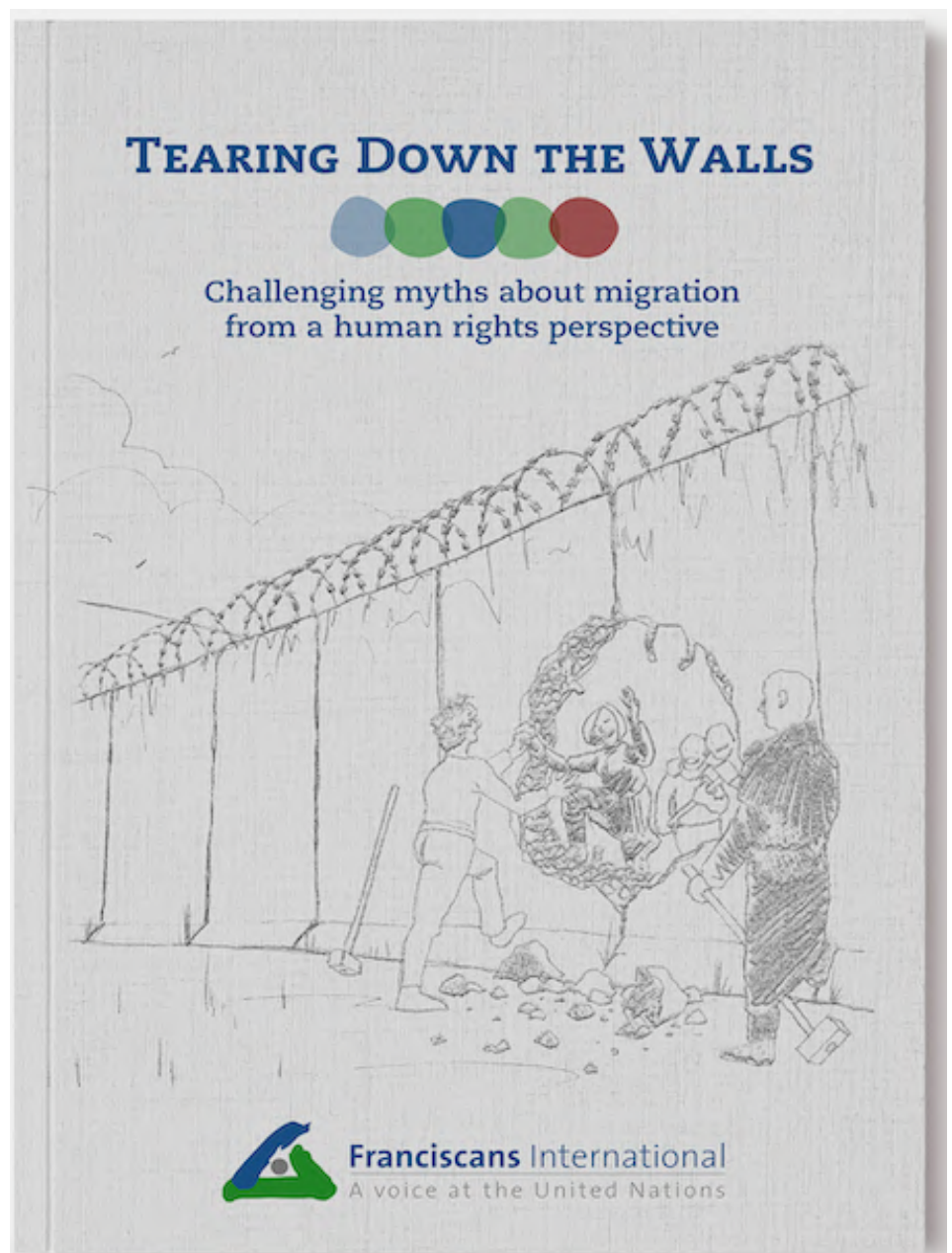
*Migration and the movement of peoples is a phenomenon that is as old as humanity itself. While persistent factors, such as conflict, continue to force people from their homes, climate change and other new drivers also fuel an increase in human mobility globally.*

Today these old and new factors have created a shared context in which unprecedented numbers of people are moving across the world. Although international law is unequivocal that the enjoyment of human rights must not depend on one's legal status, migrants often continue to face obstacles and hostilities.

Numerous dynamics, such as rising economic and social inequalities in many countries and the current rise in various forms of national populism, have contributed to the development of an often xenophobic and racist discourse about migration and migrants. Repressive policies and 'security' priorities are dominating State actions, largely with complete disrespect for the human rights obligations that these same States have committed to. In this environment, the rights of migrants are threatened.

While States did come together in an attempt to address these concerns, and adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in 2018, the process and the Compact itself proved insufficient. The difficult

negotiations and eventual adoption of this agreement very clearly exposed the many 'myths' and misrepresentations of migrants and of migration found globally. It further highlighted that the protection of human rights in the context of migration, even if reiterated as a general abstract principle, is still not the number one priority of many States when implementing border control or other sectorial policies.





This publication aims at deconstructing predominant myths about migration and human mobility more generally, from a human rights perspective. In doing so, the paper reflects the lived experiences of Franciscans and our other partners who are focused on and support migrants, refugees, internally displaced persons, and victims of human trafficking. It also looks at binding human rights standards and the political commitments of States via the Global Compact on Migration. This paper is by no means exhaustive, neither in the myths or issues presented, nor of the international legal obligations that States have in regard to a particular issue.

Nevertheless, we hope that this publication may help Franciscans, other faith-based groups, and local civil society organizations to address and counter, with the general public and local authorities, misconceptions, xenophobic and racist discourses, and abusive policies on human mobility. Franciscans International underscores that States have legal obligations towards migrants' rights that must be respected, protected, and fulfilled. Their rights, including their lives and safety, should not be subject to political currents.



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Source: **Franciscans International**



# United in prayer and reflection against human trafficking

*The members of the Franciscan Network for Migrants gathered to celebrate together the World Day called by Pope Francis on the occasion of the liturgical memory of Saint Josephine Bakhita.*

On February 8, we celebrate the feast of Saint Josephina Bakhita, a Sudanese nun who suffered the dramatic experience of trafficking. Since 2015, at the initiative of Pope Francis, the Church has held a special day of prayer and reflection on this scourge that currently affects thousands of people around the world. *Talitha Kum*, the worldwide network of

consecrated life committed against human trafficking, provides a prayer every year so that many people can come together and celebrate this day.

At 9.00AM (Mexico / Central America) about 50 of us met through *zoom*. We stopped the daily rhythm of our workday to pray and reflect together for an **“economy without human trafficking.”** An intimate and communal experience was lived by several lay persons and religious who are linked to the work of the Franciscan Network on Migration through shelters, soup kitchens, and working groups on migration.

It has been a significant moment for our lives and for the work that each one of us has developed in favor of migrants who on many occasions are also victims of trafficking. Participation included RFM groups working in Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Mexico. We closed the session with the hope and conviction to commit ourselves to help **“proclaim the liberation of the captives”** (Lk. 4:18).







## Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean join in the Laudato Si' Revolution

*"When Pope Francis declared last year that we would celebrate the Fifth Anniversary of the Encyclical and invited us to live the Laudato Si' Year, the campaign came at an auspicious moment".*

*(Francis Wong, OFS -JPIC Nicaragua)*

*The JPIC organisations of the Franciscan Family of this region got involved from September 2020 with various initiatives in the Laudato Si' Revolution. In July 2020, motivated by the campaign for the Laudato Si' Revolution a movement begun – courtesy of a conversation via WhatsApp - involving the brothers and sisters of the JPIC commissions of the Franciscan Family in Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa and Haiti. According to Fray Samuel, JPIC promoter of the Province of the Holy Gospel in Mexico, "it was great being able to work as Spanish -speaking countries .... it was a big challenge to meet; obviously virtually, for reasons of the pandemic, a big challenge but a good work.*

The group began to be quickly set up, within a short time there were around 50 people involved and they organized and created a plan to bring forward the Laudato Si' Revolution, divided into three stages. All the organisation of the plan was done by virtual meetings. In September, together with the beginning of the Season of Creation the first stage called "Awareness Building" was launched. This proposed three initiatives: "Festival of Photography", "Festival of Drawing" and "Festival of Good Practice". They were widely supported: 240 drawings, 154 photos and 15 videos of good eco-friendly practice.

The second stage was prepared by around 20 people and was carried out in November and December. 6 thematic forums were offered online, which treated of the COVID-19 pandemic, eco-theology from a Franciscan viewpoint, migration and the ancestral peoples as guardians of creation. *“It was an experience which united our horizons and made them more shared and hope-filled”*, commented A. Victoria López in *YouTube* during the transmission of the summary of the forums.

At the moment we are in the third stage which began with the webinar “Combining the Stages”. During the month of February the next activities will be carried out; these aim at putting into effect what was seen and reflected on in the previous stages. *“We cannot live on the margin of reality, we are called to pause and reflect and respond to the cries of the present moment”*, comments Fr. Anselmo.



Fr. Jaime Campos F., OFM  
Oficina JPIC- Rome



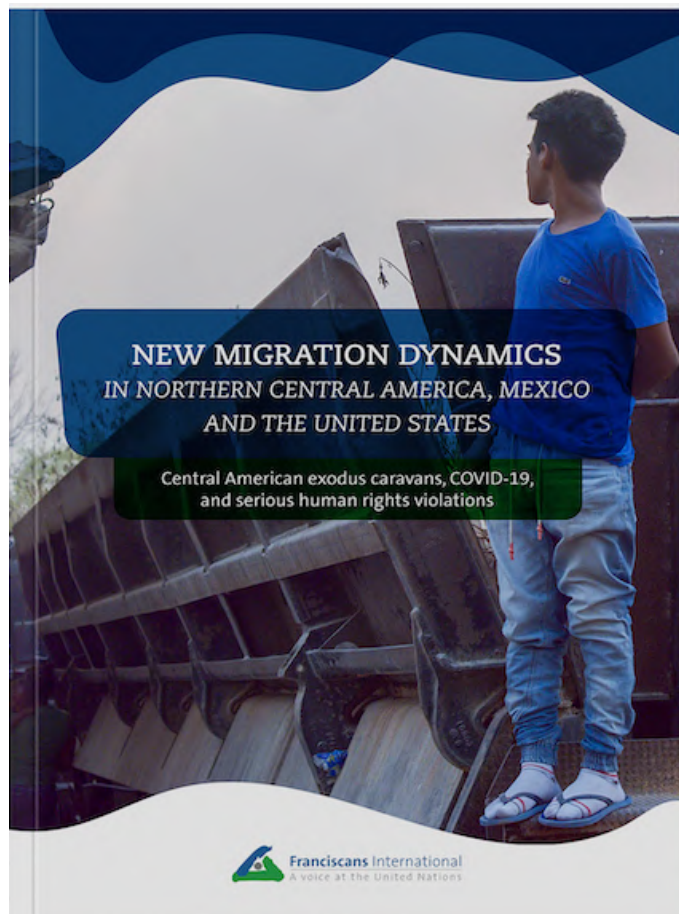
# New migration dynamics in Northern Central America, Mexico and the United States

*Franciscans launch an advocacy diagnosis examining Central American exodus caravans, Covid-19, and massive human rights violations.*

Every year, more than 300,000 people attempt to reach the United States from countries in Northern Central America. Driven from their homes by violence, extreme poverty, climate change, and a number of other factors, they are forced to embark on a journey that itself fraught with danger. Along this road, Franciscan brothers and sisters are trying to support and protect migrants as best they can. They do so by providing direct assistance, but also by documenting the stories of those that pass through their shelters.

This advocacy diagnosis combines these testimonies with a review of the most recent information from relevant literature, as well as with interviews with other key actors. It provides a general overview of new trends in Northern Central America, aiming to expand the debate on possible ways to deal with this phenomenon. Beginning with the caravans of 2018 and 2019, we identify the changes that have taken place in migration dynamics and highlights both structural problems in the subregion as well as the violence and impoverishment in previously productive rural areas that drive migration.

We also considered it essential to report on the issues faced by actors who care for migrant populations – both in their countries of origin and those of transit – to be able to analyze possible opportunities and challenges in the future. This focus on actors who support migrants allows us to move beyond simply describing problem, instead helping to visualize the best ways for regional articulation and coordination.



When we started our work, the first consequences of Covid-19 measures and State responses to migratory flows were already becoming clear. This allowed us to include a section dedicated to considering new dynamics that have started to emerge as a result of the ongoing pandemic.

This diagnosis is the result of the collaboration between Franciscans International and the Franciscan Network on Migration in Central America, Mexico, and the United States.





## Global Catholic Climate Movement & JPIC: Common collaboration of faith and actions

In an effort to promote ecological conversion and spread the message of *Laudato Si'* in the Church, the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) has collaborated closely with the Office of Justice and Peace and Integrity of Creation of the Order of Friars Minor General Curia, successfully carrying out several campaigns in recent years. Some of these past collaborations include, to mention a few:

World Youth Day in Panama (2019).  
Animators Training  
*Laudato Si'* Revolution

To continue this collaboration in a formal way, the Memorandum of Understanding has been jointly signed, a document that reaffirms their commitment and collaboration of both parties to realize new strategies.

Both organizations maintain an inspiration centered on Gospel values and the vision of St. Francis and Clare of Assisi, as well as a vision that focuses on environmental and social justice, among other common elements.

In addition to the conviction of caring for our common home, they share areas of collaboration that will allow them to strategically advance and identify potential needs for mutual support between the two organizations.

This commitment implies working together to promote effective programs, maintaining constant communication and ongoing training, which will be fundamental elements in this process.

With faith and enthusiasm, we trust that collaborative work will lead us, hand in hand with God, to achieve our common and particular goals thanks to the actions derived from this initiative to care for our common home.

### **Photo:**

Tomás Insua, GCCM's Executive Director, and Br. Jaime A. Campos F., JPIC Director



# International days – April to June, 2021

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



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