

Petropolis Statement



We, the delegates of the International Council for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (ICJPIC) coming from the different conferences of the Order of Friars Minor, gathered in Petropolis, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from November 21-27, 2022, to reflect on the challenges we face today.

The ICJPIC 2022 delegates reviewed and reflected on what the OFM-GPIC office has accomplished since the last ICJPIC in Jerusalem in 2019. Despite the time of pandemic, instability and uncertainty, the JPIC office continued to work on climate Justice, Integral Ecology, Human Rights, Migrants and Refugees.

The Minister General urged us to read with urgency and wisdom the signs of the times, such as the plight of migrants, the climate crisis, wars and other realities. He challenged us to reflect on them in the light of our faith, history and the principle of the Incarnation in order to propose concrete collective actions. Furthermore, he summoned us to deepen the theology of creation and create a strong synergy between the JPIC General office, the Secretariat General for Formation and Studies and the Secretariat General for Mission and Evangelization.

In Petropolis, theologian Leonardo Boff invited us, in this time of crisis, to take up again the dream of St. Francis that opens us to a path of fraternity with all living beings. The Pope invites us with his encyclicals, *Laudato Si'* and *Fratelli Tutti*, to urgently promote the Gospel values of fraternity and care for the common home. To safeguard all life we need to move from a logic of individualism to one of collaboration and cooperation. This opens us to the future that Christ inaugurated with his resurrection.

We celebrate together the works and mission of our brothers in the various Foundations, Custodies, Provinces and Conferences of the Order. We seek to strengthen our solidarity networks of cooperation with the Franciscan family, local churches and other social movements.

In Brazil we experienced the great beauty and abundance of Mother Earth. At the same time, we were inspired by our brothers living and ministering among the poor in the favela of Rocinha, Rio de Janeiro, subject to injustice and structural violence. We want to safeguard the Amazon and its people. We are grateful for their warm welcome and hospitality. In particular, we cherished the opportunity to interact with the temporarily professed friars in Petropolis.

Confronted by the realities we have experienced in Brazil, we want to continue our efforts in three major lines of action:

Conversion, Climate Justice and Integral Ecology

The climate emergency calls us to a personal and communal conversion of our lifestyles and to imagine new ways to inhabit our earth, not as owners but in a fraternal way, with a new economy, politics and spirituality. All this represents not only a challenge but also an opportunity to revitalize our evangelization efforts according to the paradigm of integral ecology and inspire young people to live out their faith and prophetic vocation in Christ in response to the signs of the times.

1. We ask entities to respond to ecological conversion by setting up a program for restorative justice, allocating a portion of their budget to a fund that will help with climate change adaptation and mitigation projects.
2. We call on all the entities of the Order to divest from fossil fuels and support the Vatican's Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.
3. We ask the various entities of the Order to offer concrete and creative ways for the youth and the friars in the initial formation to grow on the path of integral ecology.
4. We ask that the Pontifical University Antonianum and the Order's Study Centers promote training in integral ecology in different languages and in collaboration with other institutions.
5. We ask to accompany entrepreneurs according to the principles of integral ecology, committing ourselves through the involvement of our Franciscan Colleges and Universities to promote a new economy according to the principles of *Laudato Si'*.
6. In continuity with the 2019 Jerusalem Declaration, we commit ourselves to:
 - integrate and celebrate *Laudato Si'* in the liturgy, remembering the environmental martyrs, and developing creation care materials for catechesis and prayers, promoting Seasons of Creation.
 - promoting participation in movements working for climate justice such as Franciscan International, *Laudato Si'* Movement and NGOs working in this field.

Migrants and Refugees

The dramatic increase in human migration challenges us. As human beings and as Franciscans, we are deeply connected to the hopes, anxieties and sufferings of many migrants and refugees. We want to welcome them and receive them with kindness and generosity, according to the example of Christ and the spirit of St. Francis, who invites us to be happy when we live "among people considered of little value and looked down upon, among the poor and powerless, among the sick and lepers, among the beggars by the wayside (cf. RegNB 9:2)" (PCO 2018, 119).

1. Collect data among the Franciscan fraternities across the continents that welcome refugees and migrants to facilitate networks of collaboration.
2. Promote the celebration of World Refugee and Migrant Days and prayer against human trafficking.
3. Promote field experiences for friars in initial and ongoing formation in migrant centers.
4. We commit to defend the human rights of migrants and persecuted people and accompany the families of the disappeared.

Nonviolence and Peace Building

The tragedy of wars and the increase in violence call for urgent processes of reconciliation and constructive conflict management. The path to peace is achieved through an encounter with Christ and conversion of personal and structures of violence. We want to contribute to social change and take care of inner wounds and traumas to generate a true culture of peace. In various situations the sacrament of reconciliation can be a source of peace and bring about a change toward a life more in accordance with the Gospel. (Cf. PCO 2018, 126).

1. We commit to build the Franciscan Peace Network, particularly in Asia, promoting initiatives around nonviolence, and seeking opportunities for dialogue with other beliefs, cultures and traditions.
2. Create and support centers that heal the psychological wounds and trauma of war modeled after the one established in Aleppo, Syria.
3. Promote the study of nonviolence and implement peacebuilding in the spirit of Assisi.

We commit to pursue these lines of action by responding to Mandate 28 of the General Chapter of 2021:

“The Minister General and his Definitory, in collaboration with the JPIC Office and GSME, must continue to implement the Franciscan Network of the Mediterranean and the Latin American Franciscan Network for Migrants, and will continue to encourage and accompany similar projects and processes in favor of migrants in Africa, Asia and in all the Order’s border area”.

In accordance with this, we are working to consolidate and expand the Latin American Franciscan Network for Migrants. At the same time, we are activating the Franciscan Network of the Mediterranean together with the Center for Integral Ecology of the Mediterranean (OIKOS), while establishing the Franciscan Network for Peace in Asia.

We will celebrate the Franciscan centenary, particularly the 800th anniversary of the Canticum of the Creatures in 2025, by organizing events that promote the Franciscan vision of creation and make a positive contribution to addressing the climate crisis. We will do it in ways that are prophetically courageous, creative, and involving young people, social movements, and our interfaith partners.

We will convene a group of specialists from different regions of the world to accompany our actions and reflections in shaping the culture of peace, the culture of integral ecology, and the culture of hospitality and welcome.

As Franciscans, we commit ourselves to respond to the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth with a radical and integral ecological conversion.

"Brothers, let us begin again, for so far we have done little." St. Francis of Assisi.

International Council for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

Francesco Zecca, OFM
COMPI Coordinator

Ngoc Tiem Tran, OFM
COTAF Coordinator

José Fernando Vásquez, OFM
BOLIVARIANA Coordinator

Samuel López, OFM
N.S. GUADALUPE Coordinator

Alejandro Verón, OFM
Brasil-Cono Sur Coordinator

Russell Testa
ESC Coordinator

John Luke, OFM
Carlos Molina, OFM
Holy Land Coordinator

Fausto Yudego, OFM
CONFRES Coordinator

Jacek Orzechowski, OFM
Animation Committee

Angelito Cortez, OFM

Animation Committee

Daniel Rodríguez Blanco, OFM
JPIC Office – Rome