

# CONSILIIUM PLENARIUM ORDINIS - MÉXICO 2001

# FRATERNITAS



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“Fraternity-in-Mission in a changing world” - The final document of the PCO

## Open Wide Your Tent

SATURDAY 18.11.2001

The Plenary Council of the Order celebrated in Mexico has just come to an end. For fifteen days the friars worked hard and shared their experiences, hopes, challenges and dreams. In the concluding document they expressed themselves thus: “The challenge of our experience in today’s world has laid out for us a particular path. It is a path of both inculturation and internationality, of territoriality and universality, of respecting our differences while at the same time creating a universal Fraternity-in-Mission. Confronted with a vitality which cannot be stifled, we need to fashion a new fraternal and institutional language which bridges the gap between our experience and our customary way of doing things. We need to change from our inherited structures of relating and governing to an interdependent and international style and structure. We need to unite in a new way our charism and our structures....The vocation of the Friar Minor who follows “in the

footprints of Jesus” who became our “Brother” necessarily leads him to become an evangelizing brother-in-mission and to create structures of life which give expression to this mission at all levels of his experience: the local, the provincial, and the worldwide. His relationships as brother are meant to be embodied in spiritual, juridical, and institutional forms... They are meant to give concrete form and shape to the fundamental values and living of the Gospel project. They make visible our service to mission and should not be copied from models of governments or other institutes of religious life. They need to come from within our own charism as an evangelizing and contemplative fraternity-in-mission. It is our hope that as we purify our structures they might embody even more strongly than they do an identifying light which “shines as an example before others.” (Mt. 5.15-16, 1 LF 10)...”

The complete text is already available at: <http://www.ofm.org/cpo/00/findoc>.

## THE CHALLENGE

“We too cannot procrastinate: it is no longer the time for “touching up” our house, our structures. We need radical changes. While destructive “worldly” pseudo-values are invading our “cloisters” we must make the world become once again our “cloister”, our world that is thirsty for God, justice, fraternity and peace. To know how to read and accept the urgency of the times we live is the historical challenge that awaits us; a challenge that we can only face up to in fidelity to our gospel project with simplicity and radicalism, making efforts to transmit it authentically. During these days we have had the grace of an experience of freedom in mutual acceptance, opening up to each other and overcoming the prejudices that obscure the image that God has placed in each man. This is the only path that allows us to escape from the dark blindness of our fears, of our insecurities, of our defences and our being closed in. (Gen. Min. closing speech)

From all the participants

## THANK YOU

The work of the PCO in Mexico was made possible not only through the preparatory work carried out by the General Secretary of the PCO (**Fr. Sebastiano Kremer**) and his assistant (**Fr. Juan Manuel Muñoz**) but also through the disponibility of the Franciscan Province of Saints Francis and James. We have been particularly surrounded by candidates in formation which has rendered very hospitable our stay at the “Valle de la Misericordia”, a valley cut off completely from the surroundings - an oasis amidst an industrial area on the outskirts of Guadalajara. Thank you also to all the ministers, friars and friends who have followed the PCO from around the world offering their prayers and support. The documents and other daily proceedings are still available at our website at: <http://www.ofm.org/cpo>.

## PARTICIPANTS

## Experience

“The Order today is dynamic and open to the challenges of the times. It is growing in its awareness of its identity and mission. There is the restlessness, and also the required energy and grace, for a dynamic and prophetic renewal of itself. The Order is going to play a very significant role in the affairs of the world through its emphatic living of the fundamental values of fraternity, minority, solidarity, poverty and contemplation. Although there may be resistance to give up what we are used to, which is natural, human and understandable, there is, in most Friars in all the Conferences, the courage and the truthful search for new horizons of meaning and significance. A *status quo* oriented life is not satisfactory to a friar minor today. He likes to die, disap-

appropriate, sell off everything, go through the world, living among people in solidarity and brotherly communion, in a spirit of exodus, *kenosis*, *sannyasa*, carrying all humanity with him to the fullness of life and freedom.”

“*The Order boasts of good health. It needs to question itself about its structures within the life project. I think this was a very positive meeting and a sign of the vitality of the Order.*”

“There is a real interest and openness between the friars on the one hand but also a fear to think freely along the existing structures and rules.”

“*Even if we justifiably speak much of an aging Order I had the consoling impression of the dynamism and vitality of the Order today.*”

## Reflections - by the Minister General to the PCO

1. Often, when considering the limitations and the failures of a more or less recent past, saddened we come to a halt, as if facing a closed door, and we do not see the many other doors that open in front of us; we do not realise that lack of success can also become "theophany".
2. There is a crisis in regard to a past that was not integrated serenely, a present that seems lost and fractured, and an uncertain future that we cannot determine. The Friars and the Provinces have difficulty in recuperating the deep and ultimate meaning of their vocation and of their daily activity.
3. How can we overcome the dichotomy between theory and praxis, between what we profess and what we live? At the root of it there is a crisis of truth, of clarity, that paralyses our decisions. Francis shows us a life of fullness, of freedom, of joy: it is up to us to "take it by storm" (Mt 11, 12), with a radicality animated by trust in God. Faith and decision are indispensable for serious discernment, for a journey without fear.
4. How can we welcome new vocations and how can we ask them to live that which we do not live?
5. If our spiritual life is weak, we are missing a key to understanding what is clear enough to let us understand which structures should continue, which need to be reformed and adapted, and which must be created in obedience to the signs of the times.
6. To evangelise means to transmit that on which we live and that for which we live. How can we help an Entity that is unable to accept its own Gospel identity and which is concerned only with "administering" that which "has always been done"?
7. «In negotio religionis facilius possunt nova fundari quam vetera reparari» (Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny). In recent years new Franciscan groups that follow our Rule are separating themselves from the more traditional Families in search of renewal. Is this separa-

tion really inevitable? Is the time for prophets really past? (That is, those who could help us to discover new horizons, to re-orient ourselves towards the essential, to re-situate ourselves without painful "ripping.")

8. How can we be present in the places of "break-down", of tension, of division, of misery, without making them become "places of propaganda" or seeking publicity at all costs?

*Our Order is, in practice, strongly decentralised. The sense of belonging to an international Fraternity is not felt very much. This often puts the Minister General and the Definitory in situations of painful powerlessness in animating the Friars.*

1. We feel ourselves incapable of coordinating initiatives and projects that go beyond that of the Province. (And the Provinces ask for help!)



2. It is not known how to help Provinces in crisis as a result of a leadership unprepared for animating satisfactorily on-going and initial formation. In these cases the indications offered by the General Definitory before and after the Chapters are not always followed. Because of this, many Friars suffer at being unable to live a more Gospel life, while others (and they are especially the young) leave the Order.
3. Difficulties are encountered in animating international missionary projects or sustaining new foundations. We have many requests, and we have many friars ready to go. But the reduction in and ageing of the Friars push the Ministers

Provincial into considering the "salvation" of their own Provinces, with all their works and structures, as the primary mission. The mission ad gentes desired by Francis and by the Rule is desired also today by many Friars who, however, are not often supported by their Ministers, for the reasons stated above.

4. National and international Centres of study and research (like the Faculty of Biblical Studies in Jerusalem) are a fundamental resource for our Order; but the Definitory is finding it hard work to coordinate their functioning and to renew their structures and personnel.

5. In some areas of the Order there is a very great lack of the sense of belonging to an international Order according to the Rule and our GGCC. Forms of solidarity, of participation and of collaboration are lacking, and there exists not a little reluctance, even resistance, in regard to all that comes from outside. Luckily, these Entities do not make up the majority!

To accept once again the invitation to follow Christ, without "ifs" or "buts", leaving space for the Spirit within us, believing, obeying his voice and abandoning everything. This is indispensable to "re-situate" our path, to rehear the call and embrace it readily, to re-center our activity towards the harmony

of a theocentric and missionary life, in order to re-visit and give Gospel significance to the totality of our life.

This "widening the space..." is an indispensable condition. God has an incredible confidence in us; the people around us have an incredible trust. But we must be more authentic, more faithful in living the project of the Gospel. We must widen the tent of our desires, of our horizons, entrusting ourselves only to God. The future belongs to the one who has nothing to lose, to defend or to hold back. «The future of humanity lies in the hands of those who are strong enough to provide coming generations with reasons for living and hoping» (GS 31). ●

# Reactions to the report by the Minister General



the Doing”, different views come out. While one friar supported this expression, another friar emphasized on the harmony or balance between “Being” and “Doing”.

- \* We must become Gospel-Persons, and Disciples of Jesus, to be at the service of the Kingdom.
- \* Transparency rather than Efficiency must be emphasized
- \* It is important to look beyond one’s Province and respond to the needs of the Order, (appeals made by the Minister General), even if the Province feels that it has not enough personnel to meet its own needs.
- \* Revitalizing the Provinces that are stagnant and which has very little animation power within.

## Italian speaking group

- The group expressed its thankfulness for the perspectives opened up by the Minister General on the identity of the Fraternity: the review of structures should respond to the petitions of a Fraternity on mission.
- There is tension between belonging to the Order and to a Province: such tension should not take on a conflictive nature but be constructive.
- The Report of the Minister, in the first part, seemed perhaps too pessimistic, but it also held a positive stimulus in order to encourage personal creativity.
- The reading of our reality by the Minister is provocative, fruit also of his missionary experience: it could cause reactions in both the Provinces of older traditions and in the younger Entities, more used to receive than to give. Our Order is a very broad and varied Fraternity, in which itinerancy goes along with stability in so many departments of pastoral activity. It is necessary to instil a new mentality in the Ministers Provincial and, through them, in the Province: in light of this missionary experiences and initiatives, which are different and new in respect to the traditional ones, must be promoted.
- The relationship between the territorial and personal elements is very delicate: the Minister stressed the person more than the territory.
- The present critical relationship between the worldwide and the local dimensions within our Order could be improved, thanks to a re-assessment of the intermediate structures, espe-

cially those of the Conferences of Ministers Provincial.

## Spanish speaking group

- The message is very clear, coherent, appropriate to the present time and, above all, provocative (to re-read the Rule from a present-day point of view);
- It comes principally from experience and not from cold and intellectual reflection;
- It places the topic of structures within the gospel project very well, considering them as means or instruments;
- It clearly shows the crisis of truth and faith that is lived in the Order and the need to get to the essential (radicalism in living the vows).

## English speaking group

- The Report offers a lot of challenges to the friars
- It is expressive of the genuineness of Bro Giacomo himself
- There is a lot of truth in what is pointed out in the Report
- We need to think seriously on the points raised in the Report
- The Report has also brought out the beauty of the Franciscan life: itinerancy, fraternity –in-mission, etc.
- A comprehensive and a profound report.

*A few key expressions are to be underlined and which need our ongoing consideration:*

- \* To whom do we belong?
- \* Fraternity-in-Mission
- \* Decentralization of the Order
- \* Regarding Minister General’s words “Priority belongs to the Being, not to

## German speaking group

- The report of the Minister General, Giacomo Bini, was, in general, received positively. The separation of our Franciscan identity from its environment accentuates the evaluation of itself. Despite this, both the identity and the environment must be considered as a whole. Although it is certain that the values of the Gospel, in themselves, are not subject to place, its announcement is. In a vision of totality it is necessary to pay attention and be open to one’s own value and to the environment in which it is developed.
- The development of the religious life is not reduced to the dimension of service alone. Rather is the very meaning of this form of life that seems to lead to service. The overcoming of the division between theory and praxis, life and work, being and doing is absolutely necessary. The priority of Being over Doing appears questionable. Facing up to the demands of our vocation to live a life according to the Gospel always implies a Doing or at least an honest effort, it implies a pursuit of a spiritual increase and maturity. According to our understanding the Being and Doing should not be separated.
- We considered the danger of accentuating the Doing and how it can lead to an irredeemable activism on the part of the individual or community.
- The experience of impotence that the Definitory General perceives in its function of animation of the Friars is new. There is some perplexity in regard to this point in the Report of the Minister General. ●

# PCO 2001: THOUGHTS

## 05.XI.2001

**Br. Giacomo Bini** (opening liturgy): *During these days we have a decisive responsibility: to start off a radical and disinterested revision, if necessary, of our structures. The challenge is grave and urgent: we either know how to respond to them by concretely providing suitable structures or we will not have anything to say to the world of today. The world will continue along its path and we will continue to speculate about the quality of our structures, with the risk of them becoming our tomb..*

## 06.XI.2001

**Fr John Vaughn:** *Francis reminds us of what the Gospel tells us about how to live in the world: as strangers to its false values, by not clinging to things, people or opinions, because it is this appropriation which leads to quarrels and arguments, wars and jealousies.*

## 07.XI.2001

**Fr. Joseph Chinnici:** *Given the revitalized understanding of our own form of religious life in the Church in the last forty years, the revision of structures should tend principally to promote the outlook of fraternity, participation, belonging, mission, and responsibility for the Order in its globality on the part of every one. Structures should develop and support fraternity-in-mission and therefore exist with a view to communion and sharing, in accordance with a style of government by participation which aims at functionality and efficiency, maintaining flexibility and simplicity, avoiding the desire to centralize or bureaucratize.*

## 22.X.2001

**Fr. Hermann Schalück:** *The new situation of the world presents us with new challenges. Topics such as population growth, structural injustice, violence and non-violence, the infringement of human rights, ecology, the need for inter-religious dialogue, among others, should be understood as challenges to our charism. Besides, in my opinion, ecumenism, the situation of women in the Church, the participation of the laity in our charism and the "complementary nature" of the inter-Franciscan family should also be taken up... the "Fraternity" continues to be defined and lived at times in a way that is too intimate, too local or even too national (in some cases, unfortunately, even in a "nationalist" way). (letter)*

## PARTICIPANTS

### General Definitory

**Br. Giacomo Bini** (*Min. Gen.*)  
 Br. Estevão Ottenbreit (*Vic. Gen.*)  
*Definitors*  
 Br. Kapistran Martzall  
 Br. Seán Collins  
 Br. Antonio Riccio  
 Br. Gerard Moore  
 Br. Peter Williams  
 Br. José Rodríguez Carballo  
 Br. Peter Schorr  
 Br. Xavier Yu Soo Il  
 Br. Antonio Franjic (*Secr. Gen.*)

### Elected members

Br. Vumile Nogemane  
 Br. Giovanni Battistelli  
 Br. Finian J. McGinn  
 Br. Larry Dunham  
 Br. Gilbert Schneider  
 Br. Scaria Varanath  
 Br. Peter Cheng-Yen Ho  
 Br. Luis Gerardo Cabrera  
 Br. Caetano Ferrari  
 Br. Raúl Allimant Jiménez  
 Br. Jean Normant  
 Br. Leó Páll  
 Br. Ulrich Zankanella  
 Br. José González González  
 Br. Francesco Bravi  
 Br. Saverio Biasi  
 Br. Luigi Ortaglio  
 Br. Alberto Tosini  
 Br. Juan Ignacio Muro Aréchiga  
 Br. José Victor Aguilar Flores  
 Br. Adam Sikora  
 Br. Józef Czura  
 Br. Mijo Dzolan

### Elected by the Miniser General

Br. Hermann Schalück  
 Br. Amaral Bernardo Amaral  
 Br. César Santrich Bermúdez  
 Br. Guy Marie Nguyễn-Hong Giao  
 Br. John Vaughn  
 Br. Nikolás Zumalde Ugarte  
 Br. Theodorus van Adrichem

## Historic Excursus

- 1st PCO, 2nd June- 5th July 1968:**  
 General Curia: study and revision of the General Constitutions.
- 2nd PCO, 25th May- 9th June 1969:**  
 General Curia: the practice of poverty.
- 3rd PCO, 8-30 October 1970:**  
 General Curia: "the spirit of prayer and devotion".
- 1971:** the celebration of the extraordinary General Chapter in Medellín, Colombia. It was decided not to hold the PCO in 1972.
- 1973:** celebration of the Ordinary General Chapter in Madrid, Spain.
- 4th PCO, 4-28th November 1974:**  
 General Curia: Justice in the Order (ad intra): the concept of justice, of authority, of obedience, etc. It was decided not to hold the Plenary Council in 1975.
- 1976:** Celebration of the Extraordinary General Chapter in Assisi, the so-called Chapter of reflection: Franciscan Spirituality. The Chapter decided to celebrate only one Council before the next General Chapter.
- 5th PCO, 20th Febr.-16th March 1978:**  
 General Curia; principal subject: knowledge of the GGCC on the part of the friars, the local chapter; life with God.
- 1979:** Celebration of the General Chapter in Assisi.
- 1980:** a dispensation having been sought from the Holy See, the PCO was not held.
- 6th PCO, 22nd Oct.- 7th Nov. 1981:**  
 General Curia: Formation in the Order. It was decided not to hold the PCO in 1982.
- 7th PCO, 5- 25th August 1983:**  
 Salvador (Bahia), Brazil: Evangelisation (The Gospel challenges us). It was decided not to hold the PCO in 1984.
- 1985:** Celebration of General Chapter in Assisi. In this Chapter the new GGCC were redacted and it was decided to hold the PCO once in every six-year period.
- 8th PCO, 1-21st May 1988:**  
 Bangalore, India: renewal of the Pontifical Athenaeum Antonianum and the increase in the importance of the six-year plan.
- 1991:** Celebration of the General Chapter in San Diego, USA.
- 9th PCO, 8-20th May 1995:**  
 Malta: Contemplation and Evangelisation.
- 1997:** Celebration of General Chapter in Assisi. The Chapter asked that in the next PCO, a revision of the Structures of the Order be carried out.
- 10th PCO, 5-17th November 2001:**  
 Guadalajara, Mexico: revision of the Structures of the Order.

## the Mexican Province of SAINT FRANCIS AND JAMES Zapopan - Jalisco

### NOTABLE DATES

- 1524:** Official arrival of the Franciscans in Mexico.
- 1535:** Creation of the Holy Gospel Province.
- 1565:** Foundation of the Michoacan-Jalisco Province.
- 1580:** Arrival of "Barefoot Friars" or "Dieguinos".
- 1604:** Foundation of Saint Francis Province of the Zacatecas.
- 1607:** Creation of the State of Jalisco Province.
- 1666:** Foundation of the Immaculate Conception Convent in the State of Aguascalientes.
- 1707:** Foundation of the Apostolic College of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the State of Zacatecas.
- 1816:** Foundation of the Apostolic College of Our Lady of Zapopan.
- 1908:** The Sacred Congregation of Bishops authorized (December 2, 1907) the General Minister Fr. Dionisio Schuler to restructure the Franciscan Provinces of Mexico, a restructure which was commenced on March 19, 1908 with 65 friars.
- 1921:** January 18. Pontifical Coronation of Our Lady of Zapopan.
- 1934:** February 7. Proclamation of Our Lady of Zapopan as Patron of the Province.
- 1942:** November 8. Inauguration of the Seraphic College in San Agustin (town in the State of Jalisco).
- 1951:** Restitution of the Ordinary Status of the Province.
- 1953:** Foundation of Santa Clara mission in the Huichola zone (in the State of Tepic).
- 1962:** January 13. Institution of the Prelatura del Nayar.
- 1979:** January 29. pastoral visit of His Holiness John Paul II to Our Lady of Zapopan Basilica.
- 1989:** October 11. Our Lady of Zapopan is declared Patron Saint of the Archdiocese of Guadalajara.
- 1993:** March 23. Decree of foundation of the Blessed Junipero Serra custody, a new entity stemming from the Saints Francis and Jacob Province.
- 1997:** Institution of the Blessed Junipero Serra Province. ●



At the end of this Plenary Council, the Eucharist being celebrated wishes to express, first of all, our thanks to the Lord for the grace of the fraternal experience of these days, for the help of His Spirit, for the commitment of all in the search for the way to live our Franciscan vocation projected towards the future.

The Gospel page that we have heard proclaimed makes us exclaim with St. Francis: "Let us begin, brothers, to serve the Lord Our God, because up to now we have done little" (LMj 14,1). Indeed, the Gospel proposes the experience of the Poverello with the lepers, the experience of meeting with the lowest, with the poorest. Poverty was for Francis, with a disconcerting clarity and conviction, the place of the epiphany of God, of the encounter with Jesus of Nazareth, humble and totally given over into the hands of men. Francis, right to the end, wished to be faithful to the gospel "foolishness" and to follow Christ without hesitation or compromise.

Poverty is, for the Poverello, the consequence of a transforming encounter and the condition for a gratuitous and disinterested service, to the very depths.

If we wish to be brothers of Francis, we too are asked to make poverty the privileged epiphany of God today. It is to accept and choose the way of total expropriation as a place and space of meeting with the Lord and with the poor.

All the Franciscan Fraternity in the entire world is called on to become, in its being and in its doing, the epiphany of God, a manifestation of Him, a martyrdom, a witness to His loving presence among men in this our world. Epiphany and martyrdom: to become a "readable"

sign, understandable, with an authentic, gospel life, with our actions and with our more significant structures.

The concrete way to meet with others, with the poor, are suggested by three verbs used in the gospel parable, typically Franciscan verbs: "Visit... come to... serve...". Which signify: go towards the other, to the marginalized, the needy, without waiting for them to come to us; to be able to see and meet Jesus in these poor presences; to place ourselves at the service of all, excluding all forms of interest, of power, of control and domination.

This is the choice of Francis, a choice that is an indication of the way for us also. Only in this way can the Fraternity become possible, with that form of Christian Fraternity that St. Paul describes in the first reading. Adam and Eve had wanted to take on divine nature, "to become like gods", and they were discovered "nude", fragile, undefended. Christ, on the contrary, distributes generously the treasure of His divine nature and, because of this, He is exalted by the Father. This is the way of Christ and of Francis: expropriating self, forgetting self in order to open one's eyes to the necessities and needs of the other.

We have experienced some of this Fraternity during these days in which we were preoccupied with the way to live and express our vocation in this world in which the Lord has put us. Together, today, while this experience is coming to an end, let us ask the Lord to give us the same passion that guided us during these days, the same interest in the good of the brothers, the same joy that we experienced in asking ourselves about our identity and mission. ●

## MEXICO 2001



### Guadalajara

situated to the East of the country, is the capital of the state of Jalisco, one of the most prosperous regions of Mexico thus permitting it to become a strategic commercial area. Located in the valley of Atemajac it lies 1,560 metres above sea resulting in a tempered climate with an average temperature of 19 degrees. The Metropolitan area embrace also the municipalities of Zapopan, Tlaquepaque and Tonalá. These last two are considered as the two most important artisan centres of the country.

### Santa Anita

An area in the municipality of Tlaquepaque to the south of Guadalajara, outside of the metropolitan area with a population



which reaches 15,000 inhabitants. It has mainly an agricultural economy. The people are very religious and their indigenous origins go back to the times of Br Antonio de Segovia. In this town there is a great veneration to the Virgin of Candelaria (called "de Santa Anita") which is contemporary to the sacred image of Zapopan (1543). The sanctuary, erected in 1732 is dedicated to the Virgin and the friary is a formation house for candidates without a clerical option.

### San Agustín

A town very near to Santa Anita with a population of approximately 12,000 inhabitants. It's economy is mainly based on the textile industry, agriculture, farming and furniture making. It belongs to

the municipality of Tlajomulco de Zúñiga, Jal. The franciscans have been present since its foundation and today it house the Postulancy of the Province. The parish was canonically erected in 1998 and the people have great respect towards the friars minor.

### Tlaquepaque

The meaning of this word comes from "hills of clay", a name coming from the náhuatl language which gives it the name



of Tlaquepaque. Clay, has been molded by the able hands of the inhabitants in the most magical forms and gave Tlaquepaque an international renown as the main artisan centre of Mexico. It also offers precious work of blown glass an art which is the main activity of the population of this centre and which has made it a world recognised centre of handcraft.

### Zapopan

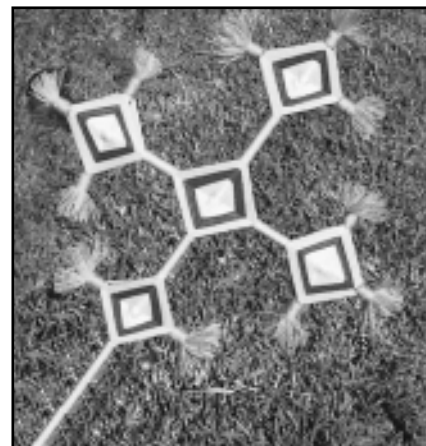
One of the largest municipalities of the State of Jalisco and of the country, situated to the North of Guadalajara with a population of 1,002,239 inhabitants. It is consi-



dered the most important religious enclave of Western Mexico. In the Basilica, adjacent to the large Franciscan Friary, the miraculous image of Our Lady of Zapopan is venerated by the locals and friars alike. The friary is also the seat of the Provincial Curia of the Province of Saints Francis and James and serves as a study centre for the students of Philosophy. Another important attraction at Zapopan is the municipal palace which served initially as a school and transformed as the seat of the Municipality only in 1968. It houses also the famous mural by Guillermo Chávez Vega, "Las revoluciones del Universo" (the revolutions of the universe).

## Tsikuri

(Eye of God)



*"The gods made their Tsikuri and they placed them in the four cardinal points and one in the centre; in order to calm the anger of Nariwane (the corn) so that it comes back to live with them; then it rained a lot and the earth was prepared for sowing. For that reason children need five tiny good eyes, because this is how Nariwane was born, the new corn, it was born blue, white, red, yellow and spotted. Then the people met to celebrate tatei Nerra's holiday, the holiday of the corn and the tender pumpkins, holiday dedicated to the children."*

For the Huicholes the soul resides in the center of the head. When a child is born, the fontanel or depression in the superior part of the skull represents the fifth bone, to complete the cranial vault. They believe that during the first five years, the infant is in danger of losing his/her soul through this hollow and for this reason it is necessary to protect it with a Tsikuri whose rhomboidal design resembles the shape of the missing bone.

During the opening Eucharist of the PCO the Minister Provincial of the Province of Ss. Francis and James gave a Tsikuri (in vivid colours) to all the participants as a well-wisher for their impending work under the protection of the *eye of God*. ●

## Fraternitas

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