



The re-foundation of the Franciscan Life

Meeting of the Minister and Definitory General with the Presidents of the OFM Conferences

The meeting of the Presidents of the Conferences of Friars Minor with the Minister and Definitory General was held in the General Curia, Rome, on the 24th and 25th May. This meeting, which will take place every year, replaces the Plenary Council, as the General Chapter (2003) decided.

The 15 Presidents briefly presented the situation of the Conferences. They in turn were informed about what the General Definitory had done in compliance with the decisions of the 2003 Chapter during their first year of work. The Minister General presented the plan for the celebration of the VIII Centenary of the foundation of the Order and ask for the opinion and suggestions of the Presidents. The need for financial cooperation for the work of adjustment and restoration of the General Curia was also brought up. The assembly favourable accepted the proposed requirements.

Here is an extract from the inaugural address of the Minister General to the Presidents, the entire talk is on the web-site <http://www.ofm.org/news/0524nwsPRESit.html>

It is said that ours are “difficult times”, which require firmness. “Difficult and trying” times (cf. VC 13) that have to be crowned with a new impulse. On the other hand, the situation we are going through is demanding that we do not “domesticate the prophetic words of the Gospel in order to adapt them to a comfortable style of life. On the contrary, we wish to accept the Spirit and to feel the internal evangelical urgency to be “born again” (Jn 3, 3) on both the personal and institutional levels”

(LgP 2).

The hour has struck for us to return “to the essentials of our experience of faith and of our Franciscan spirituality in order to nourish from within our fragmented and unequal world, which is hungry for meaning, with the liberating offer of the Gospel just as Francis and Clare of Assisi did in their time” (LgP 2). The time has come, and we cannot leave it until “tomorrow”, to focus on the only thing necessary, to concentrate on the essential elements of our “forma vitae” and of going out, decentralising ourselves, in order to go to come into contact with mankind and to give witness to the Good News of the Gospel to it.

To focus, concentrate and decentralise ourselves, are the three great movements of one single intuition: to re-found the consecrated life and, in our case, the Franciscan life; to bring down fire on the earth (cf. Lk 12, 49); to have the courage to sell all one has and to buy the pearl of great price (cf. Mt 13, 45-46). Courage and creativity, as Francis and Clare had, that is what the world and the Church itself are asking of us. Courage and creativity that begin with quiet discernment and, at the same time, gospel audacity, which leads us not only to contemplate history, no matter how grandiose it may be, but to construct it (cf. VC 110). Courage and creativity that presuppose a constant effort on our part not only to focus on the theological clarity of our identity (orthodoxy), but to end up with new forms, new structures (orthopraxis).

(Fr. José Rodríguez Carballo ofm)

ITALY – *Italian Language Course at the Antonianum in Rome*

As is customary, an Italian language course has been organised at the Antonianum in Rome in 2004 for those Friars that wish to learn.

The course will take place between the 29th August and 24th September, four weeks with 80 hours of lessons. The overall cost of the lessons is 300 euro.

To this must be added the daily quota of 24 euro for

board and lodgings.

Inscriptions should be addressed, by the student’s Minister Provincial, to the Secretary General for Formation and Studies at the General Curia:

fax +39 06.68491385 o

email formgen@ofm.org

CURIA GENERALE – *Establishment of new Entities in the Order*

The number of Entities in our Order is growing. In the “tempo forte” of May, the General Definitory established the “Province of St. Michael the Archangel”, in the Ukraine, formerly a dependent Custody of the Immaculate Conception Province of Cracow (Poland). The Custody was founded by Polish Friars in 1993. It has

18 Houses, in which 63 Friars, of whom 9 are temporary professed and 7 are novices, besides 15 postulants operate. There are 3 OFM Bishops, Maksymilian Leonid Dubrawski, Stanislav Szyrokoradiuk and Antal Majnek, in the Ukraine. The juridical erection of the new Province is fixed for the 17th June 2004.

The Custody of St. Clare in Mozambique, up to now dependent on the Province of Portugal, has been made “autonomous”. Founded by the Friars Minor of the Portuguese Province in 1898, it now covers the south and centre of Mozambique. The Mozambique Entity has 10

Houses in which 49 Friars, 13 of whom are students and 6 are novices, in addition to 7 postulants, live. The Cardinal Emeritus of Maputo, Alexandre Dos Santos and the Bishops Adriano Langa and Ilario da Cruz Massinga are also Friars Minor.

POLAND – *The first Franciscan Fraternity of hermits in Poland*

The Province of the Assumption, Katowice, in Poland, stimulated by the Priorities of the Order, decided during its Chapter of 2000 to establish a Fraternity to live in accordance with St. Francis’ Rule for a Hermitage.

The Friars that took up the project have gone through a time of trial and discernment in the Convent of Wielun. A small house in the mountains, given by benefactors, was re-structured for use as a hermitage in 2003. The Minister Provincial blessed the new Hermitage on the 26th December 2003. The first two Friars, Raphael and Syrach, began the hermit life and Br. Medard joined them a month later.

The small Fraternity follows the Rule for Hermitages and is open to receive others, not only Friars, but also laity, who wish to live for a time in silence and prayer in a Franciscan-hermit life style. That of Jaworzynka is the first Franciscan Hermitage in the history of the Province.

To communicate with the Friars of the Hermitage:

Pustelnia MB Anielskiej

Jaworzynka 425

43–476 Jaworzynka POLSKA

Tel. 00.48 (33) 8559117

e-mail syrach@plusnet.pl

Small/Big news

- The text of **You are all Brothers**, an aid for ongoing formation on Chapter III of the General Constitutions, is ready in the English, Portuguese and Spanish languages. It can be requested directly from the General Secretariat for Formation and Studies.
- The General Definitory approved two new Missionary Foundations. The first, in Namibia, is entrusted to the Province of Our Lady of Peace, in South Africa, and the second, in the Sudan, is under the care of the Holy Family Province in Egypt. Both of the foundations will

be open to the contribution of Friars from other Entities.

- MEFRA, the Central European Conference of Ministers Provincial, decided on the publication, before 2005, of the German language edition of the principal Franciscan texts. The work will gather together the Franciscan “sources” available in various other texts.
- During the ‘tempo forte’ of May 2004, the Definitory General assigned **Br. Andrzej Kulba**, the Province of St. Hedwig, Poland, to the Fraternity of the General Curia.

Agenda of the Minister General

- from 29th May to 2nd June – Visit to the Franciscan Custody of Immaculate Conception of the BVM in Venezuela.
- from 5th to 11th June – Visit to Prov. Most Holy Redeemer, Split (Croatia) and Holy Cross Prov., Sarajevo (Bosnia).
- from 16th to 18th June – Chapter of the Custody of St. Michael the Archangel in the Ukraine.
- from 20th to 29th June – Visit to Prov. St. John Capistran and Prov. St. Mary in Budapest, Hungary, and to the Prov. of St. Stephan, King, in Cluj-Napoca, Rumania.

New Ministers Provincial

- **Br. Helmut Schlegel**, Prov. St. Elizabeth of Turingen (Germany).
- **Br. Maximilian Wagner**, Prov. St. Anthony of Padua in Bavaria (Germany).
- **Br. Viktor Papez**, Prov. Of Holy Cross in Ljubljana (Slovenia).
- **Br. Pierbattista Pizzaballa**, Custody of the Holy Land.

New Visitators General

- **Br. Antonio Franjic** (Vicar General) for the College of Penitentiaries of St. John Lateran (Italy).
- **Br. Ambrogio Van Si** (Definitory General) for the College of St. Bonaventure in Grottaferrata (Italy).
- **Br. Francesco Bravi** (Definitory General) for the International College of St. Anthony in Rome (Italy).
- **Br. Massimo Fusarelli** (Sec. Gen. Formation and Studies) for the Fraternity “Fr. Gabriele M. Allegra”, Rome (Italy).
- **Br. Rodrigo Carbajal** (Prov. Holy Faith in Colombia) for the Missionary Province of St. Anthony in Bolivia.
- **Br. Mario Favretto** (Venetian Prov. of St. Anthony of Padua) for the Seraphic Province in Assisi (Italy)
- **Br. Giuseppe Maiolo** (Prov. VII Holy Martyrs of Calabria) for the Prov. of the Assumption of the BMV, Lecce (Italy).

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